

For: FAS, FSA, and RMA Employees, except Foreign Service Employees

FY 2004 Performance Management Systems

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Overview

A Overview

The performance management is the system used to define, monitor, evaluate, and appraise employee performance. It is also used to make decisions about training, within grade increases, promotions, and other performance-related actions. Meaningful and frequent communication between supervisors and employees is vital for quality performance outcomes.

The FY 2004 performance plans (elements and standards) should have been established, **discussed, signed, and dated by October 30, 2003.**

B Purpose

This notice provides an overview of FFAS performance management systems that began October 1, 2003, and end September 30, 2004.

C Labor Relations Obligations

Where exclusive representation exists, this notice does not apply until bargaining takes place. Where contract language addresses these policies and procedures for bargaining unit employees, contract language prevails.

<p>Disposal Date</p> <p>January 1, 2005</p>	<p>Distribution</p> <p>All FAS, FSA, and RMA employees, except foreign service employees; State Offices relay to County Offices</p>
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Notice PM-2410

2 Performance Appraisal Process

A Planning Performance

Supervisors shall ensure that within **30 calendar days** of the appraisal cycle that a performance plan is established or revised and discussed with the employee, or within 30 calendar days of the following:

- appointment
- promotion
- temporary promotion or detail for 120 calendar days or more
- reassignment
- change to lower grade
- each time a work assignment changes significantly.

B Number of Elements

For the:

- 2-Tier (Pass/Fail) Performance Management System, a minimum of 2 elements, but no more than 5 elements are required

Note: All elements are critical. The National Office shall see 5-PM, Exhibit 4 and State and County Offices shall see 5-PM, Exhibit 6 for complete guidance.

- 4- or 5-Tier Performance Management Systems, at least 3 elements, but no more than 10 elements are required.

Note: One critical element is required. See 5-PM, Exhibit 8 for complete guidance.

If there is a disagreement as to the content of performance elements and standards, the rating official's decision prevails. If the employee refuses to sign the performance plan after discussion with the rating official, the rating official should note this in the appropriate block. **Lack of the employee's signature and date on the performance does not negate implementing the plan.**

Note: Electronic signatures are acceptable for ICAMS users. Presenting hard copies of the performance plan to the employees is not required. The ICAMS electronic performance plan is the "filed" performance plan, and does not have to be stored/filed in a hard copy Employee Performance File (EPF).

2 Performance Appraisal Process (Continued)

C Monitoring Performance

It is in the best interest of the supervisor and employee that periodic progress reviews are held to discuss the following:

- whether performance expectations are being met
- necessary revisions to performance plans
- strengths and weakness
- training needs
- work barriers, etc.

A progress review must be conducted when an employee reaches the approximate midpoint between the date the employee's performance plan was issued and the end of the appraisal period unless the length of this period is less than 90 calendar days.

Note: Quarterly reviews are encouraged and **may be initiated by the employee.**

D Rating Performance

The minimum appraisal period under an approved performance plan is 90 calendar days and no longer than 15 months for a rating of record to be conducted.

Note: Before their rating of record, the appraisal period could be extended to allow employees to complete either:

- an Opportunity to Improve (OTI) for the 2-Tier (Pass/Fail) Performance Management System
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for the 4- or 5-Tier Performance Management System.

Supervisors must be aware of the following before completing an employee's performance appraisal.

- Elements and standards were established at the "Results Achieved" or "Meets Fully Successful" level and **communicated to the employee.**
- **The employee has served under those elements and standards in the current position for 90 calendar days or more.**

2 Performance Appraisal Process (Continued)

E Inability to Rate

When a rating of record cannot be prepared by the end of the designated appraisal period (September 30), the appraisal period shall be extended 90 calendar days. Once the minimum appraisal period has been completed, a rating of record **must** be issued.

The employee's signature indicates receiving the rating, it does **not** represent agreement with the rating. If the employee refuses to sign the rating of record, the rating official should note this in the appropriate block and indicate the date the rating was issued.

F Policies and Procedures

For policy and procedure for performance appraisals, see either of the following:

- ICAMS user manual
- http://hr.ffas.usda.gov/policies/perf_mgt_services.htm.

3 Ratings of Record

A Detail or Temporary Promotion

A rating of record is required at the conclusion of a detail or temporary promotion. The rating official to whom the employee was detailed will document the employee's accomplishments and forward the information to the employee's permanent supervisor for consideration of the rating record.

Note: This guidance applies to any employee detailed within USDA. When an employee is detailed outside USDA, the permanent supervisor should make a concerted effort to obtain information about the employee's performance before completing the annual performance rating of record.

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3 Ratings of Record (Continued)

B Departure or Interim Rating

- **Supervisory Change.** Each individual who supervised an employee for 90 calendar days or more during the appraisal period should discuss the performance with the employee, prepare feedback comments, and forward them to the current rating official.
- **Position and Supervisory Change.** When an employee who has occupied a position for at least 90 calendar days leaves that position, **the supervisor or rating official should prepare feedback comments on the employee’s performance and forward them to the new supervisor/rating official.**
- **Position Change Without a Supervisory Change.** When an employee changes position, but retains the same supervisor (that is, the employee was promoted or reassigned within the same organization), **the supervisor should prepare written documentation of the employee's performance. This information must be considered in the employee's rating of record.**

C Contacts

If additional information is needed, contact the appropriate office according to the following.

IF the supervisor is located in...	THEN contact...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAS • FSA National Office • RMA 	Performance Management, Benefits, and Awards Branch, HRD at 202-418-8973 or TTY 202-418-9116.
1 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APFO • KCCO • KCAO • KCFO • KC-ADC • KC-ITSTO • State Offices 	KCAO, PD, Employee and Labor Relations Branch at 816-926-6643 or TTY 816-926-3063.
County Office	State Office.

3 Ratings of Record (Continued)

D Filing Grievances

Ratings of record may be grieved and shall be handled under the administrative grievance procedure or applicable negotiated grievance procedures. See:

- 15-PM, Exhibit 4, for FFAS GS employees
- 22-PM, Part 10.5, for CO County Office employees.

Nonbargaining unit employees must grieve their performance appraisals under the Agency grievance procedure. Bargaining unit employees must use the negotiated grievance procedure.