

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
Farm Production and Conservation Mission Area  
Business Center  
Washington, DC 20250

**FSA/RMA Notice PM-3033**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>FPAC NOTICE</b>  | <b>FPAC-N 4040-007</b>                        |
| <b>Subject:</b> Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Individual Development Plans (IDPs)   | February 6, 2020                              |
| <b>Approved By:</b> Robert Stephenson, Chief Operating Officer,<br>Farm Production and Conservation Business Center | <b>Expiration Date:</b><br>September 30, 2020 |

**1. PURPOSE**

This notice:

- a. Explains the FY 2020 IDP requirements for Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) employees, and
- b. Provides guidance and contact information for employees to complete an IDP.

**2. SCOPE**

- a. **All** FPAC Business Center (BC), Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS), and Risk Management Agency (RMA) permanent, full-time, part-time, labor obligation and collective bargaining agreement employees are **required** to complete IDPs annually. This also includes:
  - (1) Pathways Program participants,
  - (2) Presidential Management Fellows,
  - (3) Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program participants,
  - (4) All non-bargaining unit employees, and
  - (5) Any employees requesting an IDP.
- b. USDA promotes the use of IDPs as a positive way to develop effective and engaged employees. Reference: Departmental Regulation (DR) 4040-410, dated February 7, 2011.

**3. LABOR MANAGEMENT OBLIGATION**

Where contract language addresses the policies and procedures in this notice for bargaining unit employees, contract language prevails.

**4. DEADLINE FOR COMPLETING AND APPROVING IDPS**

- a. The deadline for completing and approving IDPs in AgLearn is **March 13, 2020**.
- b. USDA has developed an Executive Development Plan (EDP) in AgLearn. SES members with a career appointment are required to complete a plan in AgLearn by March 13, 2020.

## 5. ENTERING AN IDP IN AGLEARN

- a. Employees are **required to use AgLearn** to complete IDPs.
- b. Employees will log into AgLearn at <https://aglearn.usda.gov/totara/dashboard/> to access the IDP. To access the FY2020 IDP, click one of the following:
  - (1) “Learning Plans” in the “My Learning” box,
  - (2) “My IDP - FY2020” from the main menu, or
  - (3) “My IDP - FY2020” in the middle of the page.

The Learning Plans page will be displayed. Click the “My IDP – FY2020” link to begin entering information for the plan.

- c. The following resources are available to learn more about creating and submitting an IDP in AgLearn.
  - (1) A job aid titled [Creating-and-Submitting-IDP-508 in Ask AgLearn Now](#).
  - (2) Web-based courses:
    - (a) [Guide to Completing Your Individual Development Plan](#)
    - (b) [AgLearn User Training Completing and Submitting an IDP 107](#).
  - (3) Videos:
    - (a) [How to Create an IDP](#)
    - (b) [How to Submit an IDP](#).
  - (4) For supervisors: [AgLearn Supervisor Training Approving IDPs 205](#).
  - (5) A recording of the [USDA FY 2020 IDP Webinar for Federal Employees](#) is available in AgLearn. Once on the page, CLICK “Webinar recording (October 2019)”. The webinar shows employees the changes to IDP’s and explains how to create and submit a plan for FY 2020.
- c. Once an IDP has been submitted in AgLearn the supervisor will receive a notification from the system.
- d. Every new permanent, full-time and part-time employee is **required** to have an IDP completed within 90 calendar days after reporting for duty. Employees who are newly promoted or moved to a new position will update their IDP within 90 calendar days.

## 6. ASSESSING TRAINING NEEDS

- a. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) **requires** agencies to assess individual training needs. IDPs:
  - (1) are tools used to meet the OPM requirements and to assist employees and their supervisors in identifying training needs,
  - (2) are methods used to develop the core competencies employees need to improve performance in their current positions,
  - (3) assist employees in maintaining their current level of job proficiency,
  - (4) ensure that employees are encouraged to obtain the necessary skills for greater job responsibility, and
  - (5) will be reviewed and approved by each employee's supervisor by **March 13, 2020**.
- b. IDPs are an important part of succession planning and developing skills for an employee's current position.

## 7. THE IDP PROCESS

- a. The IDP process:
  - (1) is a cycle of planning, implementation, and evaluation between an employee and their supervisor for the mutual benefit of both the employee and the Agency, and
  - (2) requires reviewing job requirements and making informed decisions about developmental needs.
- b. A critical factor throughout all phases of the IDP process is interactive and effective communication between the employee and their supervisor.
- c. The IDP process consists of the following steps:
  - (1) Pre-conference planning,
  - (2) Employee and/or supervisor conference,
  - (3) Selecting developmental activities,
  - (4) Preparing and submitting the IDP for approval in AgLearn, and
  - (5) Implementing and working toward IDP goals.
- d. Employees are encouraged to develop at least one of OPM's 28 Leadership Core Competencies. A list of competences and associated courses can be found at:  
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/nedc/?cid=nrcseprd1433427>.

## 8. ACTION

### a. Supervisors will:

- (1) meet with each employee to discuss their IDP before submitting IDP in AgLearn,
- (2) assist with IDP development by recommending goals/competencies and activities needed for each employee's current job responsibilities,
- (3) provide feedback to each employee on performance strengths, needs, developmental activities, and guidance in completing IDP, and
- (4) review and approve each employee's IDP by **March 13, 2020**.

### b. Employees will:

- (1) assess current skills and competencies and explore options for development,
- (2) discuss training needs for FY 2020 with their supervisor before submitting IDPs in AgLearn, and
- (3) complete IDPs in AgLearn and submit to their supervisor for approval prior to the due date.

### c. IDPs will be reviewed during mid-year and annual performance reviews. As performance plans and/or job assignments change, IDPs will be revised and approved.

### d. All training is subject to budgetary restrictions. Supervisory IDP approval is not a contract or guarantee of training. Employees will be held accountable for failing to complete training approved and paid for by obligated Agency funds.

### e. AgLearn is USDA's learning management system and has numerous online courses and books available to all USDA employees. Note the following:

- (1) Employees will search the AgLearn online catalog for free training before requesting similar courses with associated costs that require an external training request.
- (2) Supervisors must first ensure that courses on IDPs are not available for free in the AgLearn catalog before obligating Agency funds.
- (3) When using AgLearn, employees will **verify** their **supervisor's name**. In the upper right corner of the screen, click on "**Your Name**" and go to "**Profile**". Next, on the right side of the page in the "**Job assignments**" box, select "**Job Profile**". The current supervisor will be listed. If not, contact your AgLearn administrator according to the contact list in section 4.

## 8. ACTION (Continued)

- (4) Currently there is no print feature for Next Gen AgLearn IDPs. Employees who want a copy should create screen prints.
- (5) Employees are **required** to submit an IDP to their supervisor for approval. To create an IDP with no training requested, the employee will create a goal titled, “No Training Requested” and submit the IDP to the supervisor for approval. In the description, the employee will explain why no training is requested, (for example, retirement).

## 9. CONTACTS

- a. If assistance is needed with **eAuthentication and/or password resets**, do either of the following:
  - (1) CLICK “Forgot your password?” on the eAuthentication Login Screen, or
  - (2) Contact the eAuthentication Help Desk by email to [eAuthHelpDesk@ftc.usda.gov](mailto:eAuthHelpDesk@ftc.usda.gov) or telephone at 800-457-3642.
- b. If assistance is needed **creating an IDP**, employees will contact their local AgLearn Training Officer from the list at [https://usda.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/1705](https://usda.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1705).
- c. Direct questions about **reasonable accommodations** to Marvin Jones by either of the following:
  - (1) telephone at 202-401-0432
  - (2) email to [marvin.jones@usda.gov](mailto:marvin.jones@usda.gov).
- d. Direct **questions about this notice** to Mark Nelson, FPAC BC, Employee Development Section, HR specialist by either of the following:
  - (1) telephone at 816-926-3420
  - (2) email to [mark.nelson@usda.gov](mailto:mark.nelson@usda.gov).