

SECTION VI

Accountability System

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The Accountability System

THE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

This section contains information specific to the Accountability system. The Accountability system provides consistent means to monitor and analyze agency performance on all aspects of human capital management policies, programs, and activities, which must themselves support mission accomplishment and be effective, efficient, and in compliance with merit system principles.

"Now more than ever, organizational leaders need to be adept at redefining goals and objectives to deliver improved return on human capital investment."

*2004 Workforce Diagnosis System Executive Summary
The Saratoga Institute*

Definition

A system that contributes to agency performance by monitoring and evaluating the results of its human capital management policies, programs, and activities; by analyzing compliance with merit system principles; and by identifying and monitoring necessary improvements.

Standard

Agency human capital management decisions are guided by a data-driven, results-oriented planning and accountability system.

Results of the agency accountability system must inform the development of the human capital goals and objectives, in conjunction with the agency's strategic planning and performance budgets.

Effective application of the accountability system contributes to agencies' practice of effective human capital management in accordance with the merit system principles and in compliance with Federal laws, rules, and regulations.

Applicable Merit System Principles

The following merit system principle is especially relevant to the Accountability system:

- All employees should maintain high standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest. (5 U.S.C. 2301(b)(4))

Metrics

This system is assessed based on documented evidence of a Human Capital Accountability System that provides for annual assessment of agency human capital management progress and results including compliance with relevant laws, rules, and regulations. The system will:

- Be formal, documented, and approved by OPM
- Be supported and resourced by agency leadership
- Measure and assess all human capital management systems for mission alignment, effectiveness, efficiency, and compliance with merit system principles, laws, and regulations
- Include an independent audit process with periodic review of human resources transactions to insure legal and regulatory compliance
- Ensure action is taken to improve human capital programs and processes and correct deficiencies
- Ensure results are analyzed and reported to agency management and OPM.

Agencies are required under 5 CFR 250.203 to submit the Agency Human Capital Accountability Report described by this system to OPM for review and approval on an annual basis. This Accountability Report supports the systems of oversight prescribed by 5 CFR 250.102.

Results

When the key elements of the Accountability system are effectively implemented, agencies will realize the following results:

Effectiveness Results

- The agency has documented its human capital management processes, measures, and results; evaluated its accomplishments; and reported findings to agency decisionmakers and other stakeholders.
- Agency leadership demonstrates commitment to the accountability system, based on OPM's requirements, through its actions and allocation of appropriate resources.
- The agency conducts a continuous assessment of its human capital practices to ensure they are sound, produce results, and adhere to merit systems principles, laws, and regulations. The agency provides an annual report, which identifies areas needing improvement. A process is in place that assigns responsibility for taking corrective action resulting in improved human capital strategies and program integrity.

Compliance Results

- In accordance with Civil Service Rule X, the agency has established and maintains a system of accountability that meets OPM's requirements for a sound human capital accountability system, measures effectiveness in meeting the requirements, and corrects deficiencies in meeting the requirements.
- As provided in the Chief Human Capital Officers Act of 2002 (CHCO Act) (5 U.S.C. 1103(c)), the agency holds managers and human resources officers accountable for efficient and effective human resources management in support of the agency's mission in accordance with merit system principles.

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- Human capital programs, activities, and practices are evaluated in accordance with law, regulation, and public policy within the Leadership and Knowledge Management, Results-Oriented Performance Culture, and Talent Management systems.

The following pages provide key elements and suggested performance indicators for this system.

ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM	
KEY ELEMENTS	SUGGESTED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<p><i>To ensure the agency's human capital practices support its mission and are based on merit system principles, the agency has an accountability system that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is designed and conducted in accordance with OPM requirements • Is formal and clearly documented, including description of agency system, statement of agency policy, key responsibilities, outcomes and measures, milestones, and results • Is fully supported by top management, including review and approval of the system and allocation of sufficient resources to promote and support the system • Ensures managers are held accountable for their human capital and human resources decisions and actions • Evaluates human capital results vis-à-vis agency mission goals and objectives and measures; assesses compliance of HC programs and decisions with laws, rules, and regulations; and identifies and resolves significant problems. The system should cover all human capital systems and include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Measures identified to address: 	<p><u>Effectiveness Indicators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human capital program management guidelines, authorities, processes, measures, and accountabilities are issued via agency policy and procedural issuances and are accessible to agency managers, supervisors, and employees. • Key leaders and subordinate managers and supervisors throughout the agency have at least one performance element relating to achieving human capital outcomes. • Human capital risks are tracked, documented, and reported to a central advisory or management board, and action is taken to mitigate high-risk areas. • Program and initiative implementation efforts include published plans that clearly outline roles, responsibilities, reviews, and desired outcomes. • Accountability for implementing improvement strategies for each initiative or program is assigned and resources are provided to accomplish the resulting actions. • Assessment results are provided to senior management and action is taken to communicate best practices, improve current practices, and correct problem areas. • A process is in place to identify problems that pose high risk to organizational integrity including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial or legal threats – Systemic violations of employee protections or veterans' preference – Potential loss of integrity in the public eye.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Success in supporting agency mission accomplishment ◆ Effectiveness of human resources (HR) programs ◆ Efficiency of HR processes ◆ Programmatic and transactional compliance with laws, rules, and regulations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Data collection and analysis processes to support the measures – Periodic review of HR transactions to ensure compliance with legal, regulatory, and specific agency requirements; corrective action taken in cases of noncompliance – An independent audit (i.e., one conducted by individual(s) outside of the operations management chain of command) to obtain and objectively evaluate evidence – Results used to improve human capital programs and the human capital accountability system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of workforce survey results related to the effectiveness of the Leadership and Knowledge Management, Results-Oriented Performance Culture, and Talent Management systems indicates employees perceive their agencies as high-performing workplaces where their skills and abilities are used well. • Human capital data are current and accurate as indicated by documentation. • OPM evaluations, agency reviews, and/or other human capital assessments indicate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Programs and processes are efficient, effective, and compliant. – The agency meets measures of success as reflected in strategic human capital plans.

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<p><i>To ensure the agency's human capital practices support its mission and are based on merit system principles, the agency has an accountability system that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluates specific human resources programs (recruitment and staffing, performance management, training, awards, other, etc.) • Provides for evaluation of human capital and human resources activities throughout the organization (e.g., component/geographic), including individual HR transactions • Ensures human capital results and merit system compliance are determined and reported to management and OPM • Evaluates the effectiveness of the accountability system itself • Promotes continuous improvement, which is reflected in updates to the strategic human capital plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual human capital programs are developed and implemented to do the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establish clear responsibility for the program – Establish clear authority for enacting and evaluating the program – Clarify consequences of success or failure – Identify baseline performance – Set program goals – Set program milestones – Identify key measures – Collect appropriate data – Track progress – Develop and implement an ongoing evaluation plan – Evaluate program results – Identify opportunities for program improvement – Implement improvements – Monitor success of improvements – Provide progress reports on schedule. <p><u>Compliance Indicators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with Civil Service Rule X, the agency has established and maintains a system of accountability that meets OPM's requirements for a sound human capital accountability system, measures effectiveness in meeting the requirements, and corrects deficiencies in meeting the requirements.

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KEY ELEMENTS	SUGGESTED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<p><i>To ensure the agency's human capital practices support its mission and are based on merit system principles, the agency has an accountability system that:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with the Executive Performance and Accountability Interim Rule (5 CFR 430 and 1330), the agency's appraisal system for senior executives provides for balance; in addition to expected results, the performance expectations for individual senior employees include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Appropriate measures or indicators of employee and/or customer/stakeholder feedback – Quality, quantity, timeliness, and cost effectiveness measures. • As provided in the CHCO Act (5 U.S.C. 1103(c)), the agency holds managers and human resources officers accountable for efficient and effective human resources management in support of the agency's mission in accordance with merit system principles.