

Checklist for Meeting Regulatory Requirements: Performance Appraisal Systems

INTRODUCTION

There are a number of regulatory provisions that guide the design and development of performance appraisal systems. These provisions are presented on the following pages. They are organized around four key components of a performance management system:

- Overall policy
- Planning
- Monitoring
- Rating.

Regulatory provisions are initially presented for all General Schedule employees. The provisions that apply specifically to Senior Executives (SES employees) and senior professionals (SL and ST) follow.

References: 5 U.S.C. chapter 43; 5 CFR part 430

Review the items listed below, and check the boxes as appropriate.

OVERALL POLICY

The overall policy for the agency's performance appraisal systems should reflect the following:

The agency has OPM approved performance appraisal systems, and has established agencywide policies for the application and operation of performance appraisal for employees covered. [5 CFR 430.204(b), 430.209(a), and 430.312]

(Note: Agency must also obtain OPM approval prior to implementing changes that modify any element of the system subject to regulatory requirements. [5 CFR 430.209(a)])

At a minimum, coverage of systems includes General Schedule (GS), prevailing rate, senior professionals (SL and ST employees), and senior executives. [5 U.S.C. 4301(2) and 5 CFR 430.202(a)(2)]

The agency identifies employees covered by appraisal system(s). [5 CFR 430.204(b)(2)]

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OVERALL POLICY (CONTINUED)



The agency periodically evaluates the effectiveness of its performance management system(s) and implements improvements as needed. [5 CFR 430.311(b)]



The agency designates an official appraisal period for which a performance plan shall be prepared, during which performance shall be monitored, and for which a performance appraisal shall be prepared. [5 CFR 430.206(a)]



The system includes method(s) for ongoing appraisal, including, but not limited to, one or more progress reviews during each appraisal period. [5 CFR 430.207(b)]



The agency determines the number of performance levels at which critical and non-critical elements may be appraised. [5 CFR 430.206(b)(7)]

(Note: Performance plans established under programs using only two summary levels (Pass/Fail) shall not include non-critical elements. [5 CFR 430.206(b)(6)])



The agency determines the pattern of summary levels that may be assigned in a rating of record. [5 CFR 430.208(d)]



At a minimum, standards are established at the "Fully Successful" level for all critical elements. [5 CFR 430.206(8)(i)(B)]



The agency establishes criteria and procedures to address employee performance for employees who are on detail, who are transferred, or for other special circumstances as established by the agency. [5 CFR 430.205(b)]

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PLANNING

The performance appraisal systems address planning by:



Establishing employee performance plans including critical elements and performance standards. [5 CFR 430.204(b)(1)(i)]



Communicating performance plans to employees at the beginning of an appraisal period. [5 CFR 430.204(b)(1)(ii)]



Planning and communicating performance elements and requirements that are linked with strategic planning initiatives. [5 CFR 430.304(b)(1)]



Establishing an official performance appraisal period, of at least 90 days, for which an annual summary rating must be prepared. [5 CFR 430.304(5)(c)(1)]



Ensuring employees have current written, or otherwise recorded, performance plans based on work assignments and responsibilities. [5 CFR 430.206(b)(3)]



Providing performance plans to employees at the beginning of the rating period (normally within 30 days). [5 CFR 430.206(b)(2)]



Ensuring performance plans include at least one critical element that addresses individual performance. [5 CFR 430.206(b)(4)]

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MONITORING

The performance appraisal systems address monitoring by:

Evaluating each employee during the appraisal period on the employee's elements and standards. [5 CFR 430.204(b)(1)(iii)]

Recognizing and rewarding employees whose performance so warrants. [5 CFR 430.204(b)(1)(iv)]

Assisting employees in improving unacceptable performance. [5 CFR 430.204(b)(1)(v)]

Monitoring progress in accomplishing elements and requirements. [5 CFR 430.304(b)(3)]

Completing progress reviews during the appraisal period. [5 CFR 430.207(b)]

RATING

The performance appraisal systems address rating by:

Reassigning, reducing in grade, or removing employees who continue to have unacceptable performance, but only after an opportunity to demonstrate acceptable performance. [5 CFR 430.204(b)(1)(vi)]

Properly completing ratings of record as soon as practicable after the end of the appraisal period based on agency guidelines. [5 CFR 430.208(a)]

Properly deriving and assigning summary rating levels. [5 CFR 430.208(b)]

Having unacceptable ratings (Level 1) reviewed and approved by a higher level management official. [5 CFR 430.208(e)]

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SES EMPLOYEES AND SENIOR PROFESSIONALS

The following provisions apply to Senior Executives (SES employees) and to senior professionals (SL and ST employees) where annotated.



The system prohibits appraising and rating a career appointee's performance within 120 days after the beginning of a new President's term of office. [5 CFR 430.304(5)(c)(1)(i)]



When an SES employee is detailed or temporarily reassigned for 120 days or longer, the gaining organization must set performance goals and requirements for the detail or temporary assignment; appraise the SES employee in writing; and factor the appraisal into the initial summary rating. [5 CFR 430.307(b)]



SES employees are consulted on the development of performance elements and requirements. [5 CFR 430.304(b)(2)]



Each SES employee's performance is monitored during the appraisal period and feedback is provided to the SES employee on progress in accomplishing the performance elements and requirements. Advice and assistance on how to improve are provided. [5 CFR 430.306]



A progress review is held at least once during the appraisal period. At a minimum, SES employees must be informed about how well they are performing against performance requirements. [5 CFR 430.306]



At least annually, each SES employee's performance is appraised against requirements using measures that balance organizational results with customer and employee perspectives. [5 CFR 430.304(b)(4)] (Note: See 5 CFR 430.307(a)(2) for more information.)



Performance information is used to adjust pay, reward, reassign, develop, and remove SES employees or make other personnel decisions. [5 CFR 430.304(b)(5)]



Performance standards appear reasonable and provide appropriate distinctions between levels for SES employees and senior professionals (SL/ST). [5 CFR 430.404(i)]