

5 CFR AND DODI 1400.25 V431 EXCERPTS

(Lesson 3 – Planning Performance)

5 CFR § 430.206. Planning Performance

(a) *Appraisal period.*

(1) An appraisal program shall designate an official appraisal period for which a performance plan shall be prepared, during which performance shall be monitored, and for which a rating of record shall be prepared.

(2) Each program shall specify a single length of time as its appraisal period. The appraisal period generally shall be 12 months so that employees are provided a rating of record on an annual basis. A program's appraisal period may be longer when work assignments and responsibilities so warrant or performance management standards can be achieved more effectively.

(b) *Performance plan.*

(1) Agencies shall encourage employee participation in establishing performance plans.

(2) Performance plans shall be provided to employees at the beginning of each appraisal period (normally within 30 days).

(3) An appraisal program shall require that each employee be covered by an appropriate written, or otherwise recorded, performance plan based on work assignments and responsibilities.

(4) Each performance plan shall include all elements which are used in deriving and assigning a summary level, including at least one critical element and any non-critical element(s).

(5) Each performance plan may include one or more additional performance elements, which—

(i) Are not used in deriving and assigning a summary level, and

ii) Are used to support performance management processes as described at § 430.102(b).

(6) A performance plan established under an appraisal program that uses only two summary levels (pattern A as specified in § 430.208(d)

(1) shall not include non-critical elements.

(7) An appraisal program shall establish how many and which performance levels may be used to appraise critical and non-critical elements.

(8) Elements and standards shall be established as follows

(i) For a critical element

(A) At least two levels for appraisal shall be used with one level being "Fully Successful" or its equivalent and another level being "Unacceptable," and

(B) A performance standard shall be established at the "Fully Successful" level and may be established at other levels.

(ii) For non-critical elements, when established,

(A) At least two levels for appraisal shall be used

- (B) A performance standard(s) shall be established at whatever level(s) is appropriate.
- (iii) The absence of an established performance standard at a level specified in the program shall not preclude a determination that performance is at that level.

DODI 1400.25 V431 EXCERPT – Planning Performance

3.3. Planning Performance. Employee and supervisor engagement that provides opportunity for employee input is the first step in establishing ongoing communication and understanding of performance expectations and organizational goals throughout the appraisal cycle. This results in effective performance planning. Specific performance measures will be used to determine whether expectations and goals are being met. Each employee must have a written performance plan established and approved normally within 30 calendar days of the beginning of the appraisal cycle or the employee's assignment to a new position or set of duties. The supervisor will communicate the performance plan to the employee after it has been approved in accordance with DoD Component procedures.

a. Employee Performance Plan. The performance plan will clearly document for each employee how the expected outcomes and results are linked to the organization's goals and objectives and how his or her performance will be measured throughout the appraisal cycle. The performance plan includes the employee's performance elements and performance standards for the appraisal cycle. Changes to mission, organizational goals, work unit priorities, or assigned duties that occur during the appraisal cycle may necessitate revisions to the performance plan.

b. Performance Elements. Performance elements describe the expectations related to the work being performed. All performance elements must clearly align with organizational goals. For ratings of record, each ratable element will be assigned a performance element rating. For assistance with alignment of performance elements to organizational goals, supervisors should review organizational plans and may consult with their performance improvement officer, or equivalent, as necessary. The USD(P&R) must approve DoD-wide performance elements for groups of employees, as needed. The two types of performance elements are:

(1) **Critical Elements.** Performance plans must have a minimum of one critical performance element, and each element must have associated performance standards that define expectations. A critical element is a work assignment or responsibility of such importance that unacceptable performance on the element would result in a determination that an employee's overall performance is rated as "Unacceptable." Critical elements are only used to measure individual performance; supervisors must not establish critical elements for team performance.

(2) **Supervisory Element.** All performance elements related to supervisory duties are critical elements. The number of supervisory performance elements on performance plans for supervisors will equal or exceed the number of non-supervisory (technical) performance elements. The requirement for the number of supervisory performance elements to exceed the number of non-supervisory elements does not apply to employees coded as 'Supervisor (CSRA)' (Civil Service Reform Act code '4' in DCPDS).

c. Performance Standards. Performance standards describe how the requirements and expectations provided in the performance elements are to be evaluated. Performance standards must be provided for each performance element in the performance plan and must be written at the “Fully Successful” level. The standards should include specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely (SMART) criteria, which provide the framework for developing effective results and expectations. SMART standards objectively express how well an employee must perform his or her job to achieve performance at the “Fully Successful” level by providing standards that are:

(1) Specific. Goals are sufficiently detailed in describing what needs to be accomplished.

(2) Measurable. The accomplishment of the performance element is clear and can be quantified or substantiated using objective criteria.

(3) Achievable. Goals are realistic, yet challenging and can be accomplished with the resources, personnel, and time available.

(4) Relevant. The critical element aligns with or links to organizational mission and success.

(5) Timely. Goals will be completed within a realistic timeframe.

d. Developing and Communicating Performance Expectations. Written performance plans must be developed and approved by supervisors, clearly communicated to employees, and acknowledged by employees.

(1) Normally within 30 days of the beginning of each appraisal cycle, supervisors and employees should discuss performance goals for the upcoming cycle. Supervisors must allow employees the opportunity to provide input into their performance elements and standards. While employees have the opportunity to provide input into their performance plans, supervisors must develop and approve the performance elements and standards.

(2) Supervisors must communicate each approved performance plan and how the performance expectations link to any organizational goals with their employees. This also provides an opportunity for the supervisor and employee to achieve a common understanding of the performance required for mission success.

(3) The date of the meeting or communication will be documented in the MyPerformance appraisal tool or on the DD Form 2906 and acknowledged by the employee.

e. Modifying the Plan During the Appraisal Cycle. A performance plan is a flexible, living document and should be reviewed and discussed throughout each appraisal cycle. Plans may be modified as organizational goals and priorities or employee responsibilities change. All approved modifications to performance elements or standards must be discussed with and communicated to the employee, and the employee should acknowledge the revisions in the MyPerformance appraisal tool or on the DD Form 2906. If considering a change to an element or standard within 90 calendar days of the end of the appraisal cycle when work requirements change or new duties are assigned, the supervisor may:

Revise the element or standard at the beginning of the next appraisal cycle;

Update the plan and, if the employee does not have an opportunity to perform the new element(s) for the minimum 90-calendar-day period, do not rate the revised element(s); or

Extend the appraisal cycle by the amount of time necessary to allow 90 calendar days of observed performance under the revised element or standard. Extending the appraisal cycle will affect the start date of the employee's subsequent appraisal cycle; however, the subsequent appraisal cycle should still end March 31 of the following calendar year.