

# Mississippi State Personnel Board

## **PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM (PDS)**

### **OPERATIONS MANUAL**

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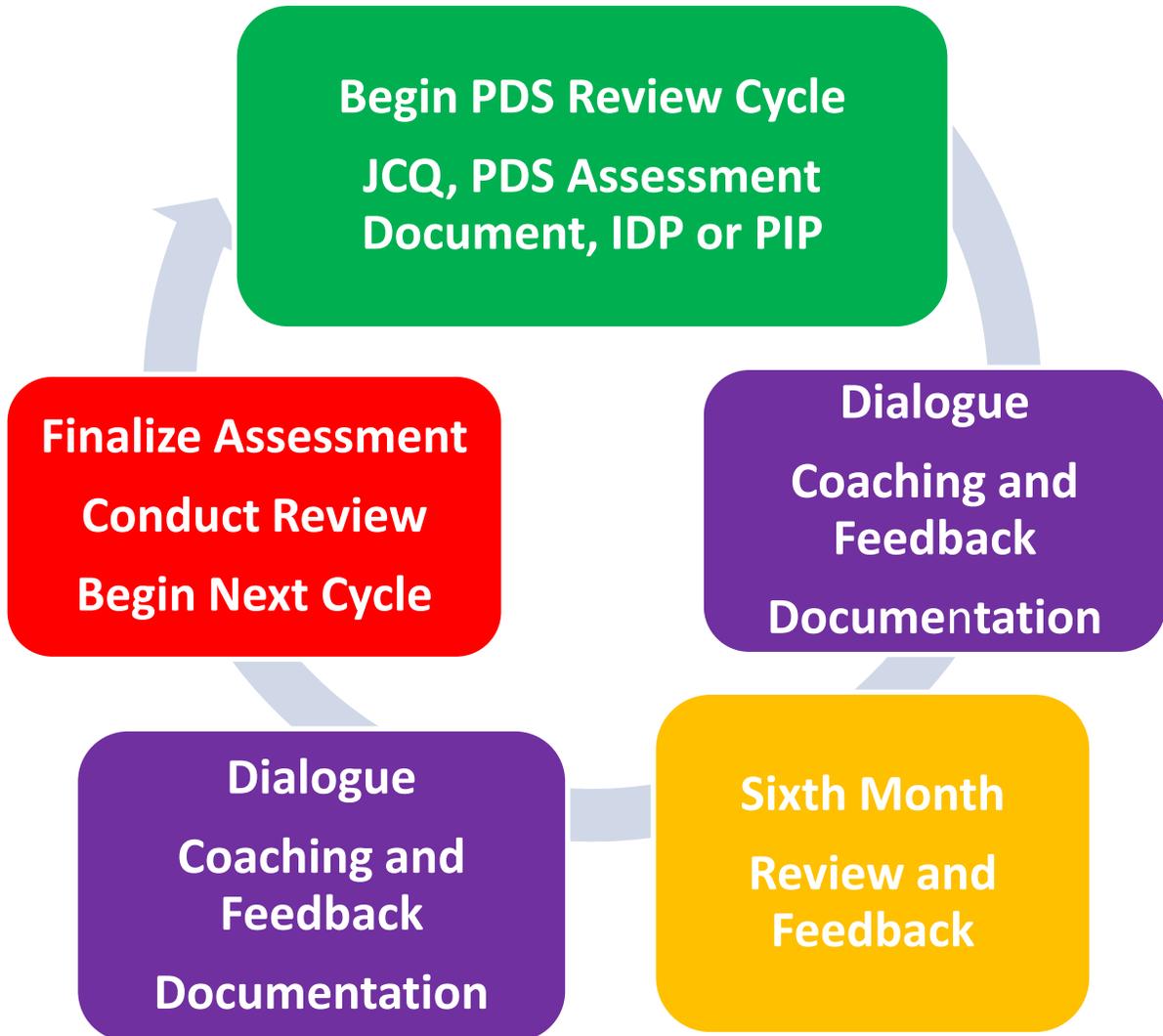
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# PDS Flowchart



# PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM OVERVIEW

## WHAT

### APPLICABILITY

- Every employee whose position is under the salary setting authority of the MSPB shall have their performance assessed at least once annually.
- Assessments must be based only on the employee's performance of his or her assigned duties compared against the competencies/behavioral anchors for those duties.

### DESCRIPTION - The PDS is:

- A competency-based system
  - A competency is a skill, trait or behavior that leads to a desired, superior result.
  - The PDS Assessment document contains those job duties, competencies and behavioral anchors that define a Successful (2) performance.
  - The competencies are aggregated into the following three areas:
    - Public Sector Competencies (for all state employees)
    - Technical Competencies (job-specific)
    - Management Competencies (for those in supervisory positions)
- Designed to be a participative process between the supervisor and employee
- Designed to be simple and effective
- Based on continuous dialogue, coaching and feedback
- Intended to maximize performance, development and engagement of employees
- Intended to maximize the performance of the organization as a whole

### REVIEW PERIOD:

- A time period of **at least 90 days** and **not more than 365 days** for which an employee's performance is reviewed.

#### 1. Probationary Employee

- The **Review Period** will begin within 14 days of the hire date of the employee
- The **Sixth Month Review and Formal Assessment** will be conducted within 14 days of the sixth month of the hire date (or earlier in cases where completion of required job training results in reclassification)

#### 2. State Service Employee

- The **Review Period** will begin within 14 days of the hire date of the employee
- **Subsequent Review Periods** will begin:
  - Within 14 days of the date the employee changes supervisors or jobs – OR-
  - Within 14 days of the end of the twelfth month of the PDS Assessment period

- **Mid-Cycle Review Session** will be conducted within 14 days of the sixth month of the beginning of the PDS Review period

**NOTE: A valid assessment is one completed as a result of an employee's job performance for at least ninety days and no more than 365 days.**

**DOCUMENTS** - Each new review period will begin with:

- The **JCQ**, from which the duty statements on the PDS Assessment document will be selected
- A new and/or updated **PDS Assessment** document
- An **Individual Development Plan (IDP)** a component of the PDS Assessment – OR -
- A **Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)** for employees whose performance is assessed as Unsuccessful (1)

**GOALS**

- Provide a structured, competency-based system to assure superior performance aligned with the organization's goals and requirements
- Allow for documented and defensible personnel decisions
- Align, develop and leverage the potential of each employee
- Improve the quality and quantity of services

**NOTE: This system, like all such systems, will achieve its goals only if:**

- ✓ **There is ongoing dialogue, coaching and feedback.**
- ✓ **There is thorough and continuous training of managers and employees.**
- ✓ **The integrity of the system is maintained through oversight by the Director of Human Resources or other agency designee.**

# PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM OVERVIEW

## WHY

### PDS BENEFITS

- Provides a structured system to assure successful employee and supervisor performance aligned with organizational goals and requirements
- Creates documented and defensible personnel decisions
- Assesses performance of duties by assessing competencies and behavioral anchors that describe those duties
- Moves from strictly “measurability” to include “observability,” taking into account personal traits
- Helps employees perform at a higher level by communicating expectations, valued behaviors and supporting superior performance
- Employees know what is expected of them on the job
- Employees know what competencies and behavioral anchors separate the unsuccessful performer from the successful performer
- Employees receive regular, objective, specific performance feedback.
- Creates joint ownership of the performance development process
- Identifies training and development needs
- Helps determine whether employees are in the correct job
- Improves employee engagement and retention of successful performers

# PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM OVERVIEW

## HOW

### Phase 1

- **Training of supervisors and employees**
- **Planning - Supervisors work with subordinates to:**
  - Define job duties
  - Define job competencies
  - Select behavioral anchors
  - Set goals
  - Develop PDS Assessment document
  - Develop IDP
- **Set up Supplemental Employee Performance Folder (SEPF)**

### Phase 2

- **Ongoing Dialogue, Coaching and Feedback**
  - Encourage frequent dialogue
  - Provide ongoing feedback and support
  - Listen
  - Encourage
  - Document
  - Track progress on PDS and IDP or PIP
  - Review performance

### Phase 3

- **Prepare for Final Review**
  - Review documentation
  - Prepare the final assessment
  - Have the final assessment approved by the First Level Reviewer
  - Conduct final review meeting and get required signatures
  - Begin a new PDS Assessment period
  - Resume and/or begin a new or revised IDP ( unless the employee is put on a PIP)

# PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM PROCESS

## OVERVIEW OF COMPETENCIES AND BEHAVIORAL ANCHORS

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A **competency** is a skill, trait or behavior that leads to a desired, superior performance result. A **competency model** defines the core competencies associated with outstanding performers and links the culture of an organization to job performance.

A competency model attempts to clarify the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that make for successful performance in any job. The value of the model comes from the definition of each competency and its behavioral examples.

The competencies are aggregated into three areas – public sector, management, and technical. **Public Sector Competencies** are those competencies desired in every employee. Integrity, customer service, and dependability would be examples of such competencies. **Management Competencies** are assigned to various management and supervisory job classes and include areas such as coaching and resource management. **Technical competencies** are job or job class specific and help define expectations and outcomes of job task performance.

Within each competency family, a number of **behavioral anchors** specifically define how a competency is exhibited through behavior. Behavioral anchors provide employees with clear understanding of the behaviors they will be required to demonstrate.

## PDS CRITERIA

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**Job Duties; Public Sector, Technical and Management Competencies and their related Behavioral Anchors**

## PDS RATING SCALE

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### Competencies

- Yes - Successful (2)** – Competency **has been demonstrated**
- No - Unsuccessful (1)** – Competency **has not been demonstrated**
- ND - Not Demonstrated** - The supervisor has no objective basis for making an assessment

### Behavioral Anchors

- Yes** - Behavior **has** been demonstrated
- No** - Behavior **has not** been demonstrated
- ND** - There is **no objective basis** for making an assessment

## COMPONENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

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### PHASE I - PREPARATION

#### A. Training

Each agency is responsible for providing effective training for each individual who will be conducting assessments, as required in the Performance Development System. This training should be designed and delivered in such a manner as to ensure understanding of and ability to effectively utilize the system.

#### B. Planning: Dialogue

1. The planning session should involve **two-way communication between the supervisor and employee** about the job and should result in mutually understood specific performance expectations.
2. The PDS Assessment document for each employee should include public **sector competencies, technical competencies, and management competencies** (if the employee is a supervisor and/or manager).
3. It should be made clear to the employee that the **purpose of the process** is to:
  - Communicate valued performance behaviors
  - Facilitate a relationship built on shared understanding of performance expectations
  - Improve performance and employee engagement
  - Allow for targeted coaching and employee development

#### C. Planning: PDS Assessment Document

1. The supervisor and employee should review and make any changes necessary to the employee's **JCQ**.
2. A planning session must be held between the supervisor and employee within fourteen (14) days prior to the beginning of the assessment review cycle. During this session, the supervisor and employee should discuss **performance and career goals, duties** to be included on the PDS Assessment document, **competencies and behavioral anchors**.
3. Following this meeting, the supervisor will complete the **PDS Assessment document** and send it to the **First Level Reviewer** for approval.
4. A copy of the approved document will be provided to the employee for review and **discussion**.
5. Following a thorough discussion of this document, the **employee and the supervisor will sign and date the form**.

**NOTE: the employee does not have to concur with the duties, competencies or behavioral anchors, but he or she is required to sign, indicating he or she has had the document thoroughly reviewed with him or her.**

6. The **employee** will keep a copy of the document.
7. The **supervisor** will maintain the original in the employee's performance file (see SEPF below).
8. A copy will be sent to **HR**.

#### **D. Supplemental Employee Performance Folder**

1. The supervisor maintains a **Supplemental Employee Performance Folder (SEPF)** for each employee.
2. The SEPF, the contents may be reviewed by the employee at any time, should contain **only information relevant to the employee's PDS Assessment document**, i.e. the **JCQ, assessment document, any supporting documentation, and the IDP or PIP**. It **should not** contain any information regarding disciplinary issues or information that should be kept in the employee's personnel file. Any questions regarding this issue should be directed to Human Resources.

#### **E. Change in Position or Manager**

1. Employees who have been under the current PDS Review period for at least 90 days and who are moving from one position or one supervisor to another must have an exit assessment (closeout) by their current supervisor and a new assessment put into place within fourteen (14) working days by their new supervisor.

#### **F. Changes**

Any changes to the PDS Assessment document that are required during the assessment period should be thoroughly discussed by the supervisor and employee. Those changes should be reflected on the PDS Assessment document and should be initialed and dated by the supervisor and employee.

### **PHASE II – IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **A. Ongoing Dialogue, Coaching and Feedback**

##### **1. Dialogue**

Ongoing two-way communication between the employee and supervisor will facilitate the performance and development process.

##### **2. Coaching and Feedback**

Ongoing coaching and specific performance feedback should be provided by the supervisor consistently throughout each review period and documented if it might affect the assessment.

#### **B. Documentation**

Documentation related to the PDS Assessment document and subsequent performance expectations should be **collected by the supervisor and employee throughout the period** and maintained by the supervisor in the Supplemental Employee Performance Folder (SEPF).

#### **C. Mid-Cycle Reviews**

##### **1. Probationary Employees**

One (1) documented written assessment must be conducted at the end of the sixth month from the hire date for probationary employees unless completion of required job training results in reclassification.

## 2. State Service Employees

A minimum of one (1) documented progress review must be conducted during each rating period for state service employees. The primary intent of this review is to review the IDP, to continue with performance-related dialogue and to provide feedback that would allow time to make a course correction if necessary.

### D. Final Reviews

Each employee's job performance must be assessed, in writing, and reviewed with the employee at least once per assessment period.

**NOTE: An assessment cannot be done on an employee who has not been functioning under the specified assessment for at least ninety (90) days.**

#### 1. Assessment Review Meeting

##### ▪ When

The assessment is scheduled and conducted by the supervisor at least fourteen (14) working days prior to the end of the assessment cycle or fourteen (14) days prior to closing out the assessment early due to a change in jobs and/or supervisors.

##### ▪ What

- The supervisor and employee discuss the employee's strengths and accomplishments and any areas that were assessed as unsuccessful.
- If there are differences in the two perspectives, these are discussed and used as an opportunity to clarify questions and issues.
- The supervisor and employee review and set priorities for development needs, goals and work product.
- The supervisor and employee discuss training and development activities and strategies that will allow the employee to achieve the designated goals.

**NOTE: If the PDS has been correctly implemented throughout the assessment cycle, this meeting should go smoothly and there should be no surprises.**

### E. Final Assessment Determination

The supervisor closes out the completed PDS Assessment document and routes to the First Level Reviewer for final approval.

### F. Final Assessment Meeting

1. The completed PDS Assessment document is presented to the employee for his/her review.
2. The document is signed and dated by the supervisor and employee.

**NOTE: The employee does not have to concur with the assessment, but he or she is required to sign indicating that the document has been explained to him or her.**

3. If the overall rating is Successful (2), the supervisor and employee complete an Individual Development Plan (IDP) and agree on a communication strategy to ensure that the development plan is working throughout the next performance cycle.
4. If the overall rating is Unsuccessful (1), the manager and employee complete a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).

## G. Individual Development Plan (IDP)

### 1. Initial Meeting

The initial PDS planning meeting and the formal Assessment Review (if it resulted in a Successful (2) performance) should involve a joint discussion between the supervisor and employee to create an IDP for the employee. The discussion should include the employee's career and job goals.

### 2. Components of the IDP

The competencies and/or behavioral anchors selected may be based on the PDS assessment, the employee's career and/or job goals, self awareness, anticipated changes to the job and/or the employee's responsibilities.

- The IDP should include no more than three (3) **specific competencies and/or behavioral anchors** to be developed or enhanced.
- The **goals/desired outcomes** are developed for each of the three areas identified.
- The **developmental activities** needed to achieve the desired outcomes are determined.

**NOTE: The activities should be distributed as follows: 70%-Challenging, Uncomfortable, Stretching Tasks/Assignments; 20%-Studying and Working With Others To See Useful Behavior And Get Feedback, 10%- Thinking Differently Or Finding New Ways To Think About Things (Courses, Reading, Etc.)**

- The **time frames** within which the employee is expected to achieve the desired outcomes are determined.
- An evaluation of the **effectiveness of the developmental activities** in achieving the stated goals is **conducted at the conclusion of each activity**.

**NOTE: The IDP should target no more than three competencies and/or behavioral anchors at a time.**

## H. Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

### 1. Unsuccessful Performance

Unsuccessful performance, as indicated by an overall assessment of 1 at the time of the final written assessment, must be backed by appropriate documentation and result in a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).

### 2. Review and Implementation of the PIP

- The Performance Improvement Plan must be reviewed by the Human Resources Director or his/her designee prior to being presented to the employee.
- Upon approval, the Performance Improvement Plan must be discussed with the employee and be signed off on by both parties within fourteen (14) working days of the final assessment meeting.

### 3. Overview of the PIP

- The PIP will specify what competencies and/or behavioral anchors will be targeted for improvement, based on the PDS Assessment Final Review; when, where and how often the supervisor and employee will meet during the PIP period; and the type of support to be given by the supervisor (coaching, counseling, training, etc.), the

specific actions to be taken by the employee and specific performance expectations of the supervisor.

- The plan will be set for a time period of ninety (90) days for performance improvement to occur and must include a re-assessment date.
- On the specified re-assessment date, the supervisor and employee will meet to review expectations and progress of the employee in meeting those expectations.
- If the employee's performance is **Successful (2)** at that time, the IDP will be re-activated.
- If the employee's performance is **Unsuccessful (1)** at the time of the re-assessment, the Human Resources Director will be informed immediately and will determine what action will be taken.

### **PHASE III – SYSTEM BENEFITS, OVERSIGHT AND INTEGRITY**

#### **A. Benefits**

##### **1. The PDS provides the tools to:**

- Improve productivity, job satisfaction and employee engagement
- Identify career tracks and promotional opportunities
- Increase/improve employee competencies and employee engagement
- Plan and prepare for future job assignments
- Support probation or dismissal actions
- Increase turnover of poor performers
- Reduce turnover of superior performers
- Improve organizational performance

#### **B. Competencies being assessed are consistent within departments**

#### **C. Supervisor Accountability**

Each supervisor should have a duty statement and related competency and behavioral anchors on his/her PDS Assessment document that addresses the effective implementation of the Performance Development System.

#### **D. Monitoring and Evaluation of the System Integrity**

The Human Resources Director or agency designee will monitor the system internally for consistency, quality and effectiveness, ensuring uniformity across all areas of the organization.

**Developing employees and their performance is not one part of a supervisor's job---it IS the supervisor's job. Effective performance development not only improves individual employee performance and employee engagement, it improves the performance of the entire organization.**

# **PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM APPENDICES**

- 1. PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM CHECKLISTS**
  - A. PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM TRAINING CHECKLIST**
  - B. PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST**
  
- 2. INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM GUIDES**
  - A. GUIDE FOR CONDUCTING ASSESSMENT SESSIONS**
  - B. GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS**
  - C. GUIDE FOR PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLANS**
  - D. DOCUMENTATION GUIDE**
  - E. FEEDBACK GUIDE**
  - F. ELEMENTS OF SUPPLEMENTAL EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE FOLDER (SEPF)**
  
- 3. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

# PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM TRAINING CHECKLIST

## 1. Beginning a Review Period (within 14 days of beginning a review cycle)

### • The Performance Development System Overview

\_\_\_ Ensure that the employee understands the **Performance Development System**:

### • The JCQ and PDS Review Document – Joint Process

\_\_\_ Review the JCQ and update if necessary.

\_\_\_ Select and/or revise the **essential duties** from the JCQ to be included on the PDS document.

\_\_\_ Discuss the **essential duties** as well as the **competencies and related behaviors** to be included on the PDS document.

\_\_\_ Thoroughly review the PDS document.

\_\_\_ Send the PDS document to the **First Level Reviewer** for final approval.

### • Supervisor Expectations

\_\_\_ Explicitly state **expectations** related to the duties, competencies and behaviors.

\_\_\_ Explain **how the ratings will be determined**.

\_\_\_ Explain **what the employee can do to meet expectations**.

\_\_\_ Explain what happens **if the employee does not meet expectations**, i.e. if he or she has a final score on the PDS Review document below 2.

### • Documentation

\_\_\_ Discuss the **documentation process**.

\_\_\_ Explain **the employee's role in documenting his/her performance**.

### • Supplemental Employee Performance Folder (SEPF)

\_\_\_ Discuss what it is and what it contains

### • Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

\_\_\_ Explain the PIP process and implications.

### • Individual Development Plan (IDP)

\_\_\_ Discuss the IDP process

\_\_\_ Discuss employee's **performance and career goals** and identify **three areas that will be targeted** for the IDP.

\_\_\_ Jointly develop the IDP.

### • Final PDS Review document

\_\_\_ The First Level Reviewer approves the final PDS Review document.

\_\_\_ If there changes, the final meeting provides an opportunity to discuss those changes. If there are no changes, the final meeting is an opportunity to have a final review of the document, if necessary, and to get the required signatures.

\_\_\_ Give employee copy of his/her approved PDS Review document.

\_\_\_ Supervisor and employee sign and date the PDS document.

\_\_\_ The original is placed in the employee's SEPF.

- The employee gets a copy.
- The First Level Reviewer gets a copy.
- HR gets a copy.

## 2. During the Review Cycle

### • Coaching and Feedback

- Continuous performance coaching and feedback from the supervisor
- Two-way communication throughout the process
- Ongoing observation and documentation
- Joint problem solving, if necessary
- Revision of PDS Review document and/or IDP if necessary

## 3. The Mid-Cycle Review

### • Prepare for official Review and Feedback Session.

- Review documentation related to employee's performance.
- Write comments for those behaviors/competencies that would be rated "No" if a rating were to be done, giving examples of specific behaviors that need to be changed.
- Have the employee assess his/her performance for this period and be prepared to discuss with the manager.
- Schedule a meeting with the employee.

### • Conduct official Review and Feedback Session.

- Discuss the employee's assessment of his/her performance.
- If there are discrepancies between the employee's and the manager's assessment, discuss those as they come up.
- Attempt to resolve the discrepancies.
- Review and discuss any other written comments with employee.
- Allow employee to ask questions and write his/her own comments.
- Specifically address any issue that suggests a problem
- Manager and employee sign and date the Review and Feedback Form.
- Employee is given a copy of the form.
- The original form is placed in the employee's SEPF.
- A copy goes to HR.

## 4. Ending the Review Cycle (within 14 days of ending a review cycle)

### • Prepare for the Final Review

- The final assessment meeting is scheduled no later than fourteen (14) working days prior to the end of the assessment cycle.
- Discuss the employee's assessment of his/her performance.
- If there are discrepancies between the employee's and the manager's assessment, discuss those as they come up.
- Attempt to resolve the discrepancies.
- Review and discuss any other written comments with employee.

- \_\_\_ Allow employee to ask questions and write his/her own comments.
- \_\_\_ Manager and employee sign and date the Review and Feedback Form.
- \_\_\_ Employee is given a copy of the form.
- \_\_\_ A copy is placed in the employee's SEPF.
- \_\_\_ The original goes to HR.
- \_\_\_ If the overall rating is 2/"Yes", the manager and employee complete an individual development plan and agree on a communication strategy to ensure that the development plan is working and begin a new cycle.
- \_\_\_ If the overall rating is less than 2/"No", the manager and employee complete a performance improvement plan and agree on a communication strategy to ensure that the improvement plan has every opportunity to work.
- \_\_\_ If a PIP is successful, a new PDS cycle is begun.
- \_\_\_ If a PIP is not successful, the supervisor should consult with HR to determine any further action.

# Performance Development System Implementation Checklist

- **Beginning the Review Period**

- \_\_\_ Within 14 days of the beginning of the review period, discuss with the employee the important duties, individual development plan, competencies and behavioral anchors of the job. With the employee there should be a joint conversation and agreement regarding the employee's individual development plan.
- \_\_\_ Complete the PDS Assessment document.
- \_\_\_ Review the PDS assessment with the First Level Reviewer for approval and obtain signature and date.
- \_\_\_ Meet with the employee, review and finalize the PDS assessment and obtain the employee's initials on each page of the assessment and get the employee to sign and date Part A. Section 1.
- \_\_\_ Provide the employee with a copy.
- \_\_\_ Provide the Human Resources Office with a copy
- \_\_\_ Put originals in Supplemental Employee Performance Folder (SEPF)

- **During the Review Period**

- \_\_\_ Provide continuous coaching and feedback to the employee.
- \_\_\_ Place employee and supervisor performance documentation in the SEPF.
- \_\_\_ Review and update the IDP with the employee as needed.
- \_\_\_ Conduct at least one formal Review and Feedback session of the behavioral anchors for the competencies being assessed during the sixth month of the review period for the permanent employee. If the employee is a probationary or new employee, conduct the review during the third and ninth months.
- \_\_\_ During the formal Review and Feedback session, complete Section D, and go over with the employee the R&F Column on the PDS Assessment.
- \_\_\_ Have the employee sign and date Part A. Section 2.
- \_\_\_ Provide the employee with a copy.
- \_\_\_ Put the originals in the SEPF.

- **At the End of the Review Period**

- \_\_\_ Within 14 days of the end of the review period, review the documentation in the SEPF and assess the employee's performance against the competencies that were determined at the beginning of the assessment review period with the employee.
- \_\_\_ Discuss the assessment with the First Level Reviewer.

- \_\_\_ Record the assessments of the behavioral anchors for each competency required for the job in Section D, and make written statements regarding the reasons for your assessment in the “Results” section of each competency. ***In the case of an “Unsuccessful” assessment, written statements explaining the reasons are required.***
- \_\_\_ Calculate the overall performance assessment.
- \_\_\_ Record overall performance assessment in Part A. Section 3.
- \_\_\_ Obtain signature and date from First Level Reviewer of the PDS Assessment
- \_\_\_ Conduct an assessment review interview with the employee to discuss the performance assessment and documentation.
- \_\_\_ Obtain employee signature and date in Part A. Section 3.
- \_\_\_ Review and discuss the accomplishments listed in the IDP.
- \_\_\_ Provide the employee with a copy of the PDS Assessment document.
- \_\_\_ Retain copies in the SEPF.
- \_\_\_ Route the original to the Human Resources Office.

- **The New Review Period**

- \_\_\_ The time of the assessment review interview may also be used as the time to begin the next review period.
- \_\_\_ If the previous PDS Overall Competency Assessment was Successful (2), the IDP should be updated to include any additional competency development and activities needed for the new review period and continued for the new review period.
- \_\_\_ If the previous PDS Overall Competency Assessment was Unsuccessful (1), a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) must be developed with all competencies and activities identified that will be required of the employee during the PIP 90 day period in order to achieve a Successful assessment in the job position. The IDP will not be updated or active during the PIP 90 day period.
- \_\_\_ At the end of the 90 day PIP if the employee has achieved the Successful level of job performance, the PIP is closed, signed and dated by the First Level Reviewer, Reviewing Supervisor and employee. At this time, the IDP of the employee should be activated again, updated with new competencies and goals to be developed and continued.
- \_\_\_ Within 14 days of the beginning of the new review period, the PDS Assessment document should be completed to begin the review period. The assessment review cycle begins again.

# PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

## GUIDE FOR CONDUCTING ASSESSMENT SESSIONS

### Planning

- Plan what will be discussed related to the PDS.
- Anticipate questions and be prepared to respond to them.
- Prepare to provide specific information regarding what will be assessed, how it will be assessed and what is required to achieve a score of 2.

### Physical Setting

- Conduct the session in a comfortable, private setting.
- Create an air of informality by sitting on the same side of the desk as the employee or by sitting at a table.

### Considerations

- Block out sufficient time to conduct the session in a relaxed manner.
- Eliminate distractions and interruptions.
- Understand that the employee may be nervous.
- Put the employee at ease by being empathetic, i.e. putting yourself in the employee's place.

### Communication

- Express concern for the employee's comfort.
- Explain the purpose of the session, how long it will take and the format. Make sure the employee understands this by asking for and answering any questions about the process.
- Begin by asking the employee to discuss his/her self-assessment. Listen, and try to understand the employee's perspective.
- Discuss, in a non-threatening manner, any areas in which there is a discrepancy in perspectives.
- Ask the employee for feedback on what the manager can do or what support can be provided to enhance performance.
- Be open-minded, and do not take any suggestions or negative comments personally.
- Review all factors to be evaluated and give specific examples and facts, using available documentation.
- Provide constructive suggestions for improvement.
- Follow the guidelines for giving and receiving feedback.
- Try to have balanced communication between the parties.
- End the session with a discussion of goals, and complete an individual development plan or performance improvement plan.

# PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

## GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

### Individual Development Plan (IDP)

#### Initial IDP Meeting

- Prior to beginning the initial PDS Review, discuss the IDP process and goals with the employee. Identify his or her career and job goals and any competency or behavioral anchor that could be developed or enhanced with targeted developmental activities.

#### Components of the IDP

- Include no more than three (3) **specific competencies and/or behavioral anchors** to be developed or enhanced.
- Identify the **goals/desired outcomes** for each of the three areas identified.
- Determine what **developmental activities** would provide the greatest likelihood that the desired outcomes will be achieved.
- Determine the dates by which each goal is expected to have been accomplished.
- Determine how it can be determined that the targeted goal has been achieved. The evaluation is about outcomes, not about activities.

# PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

## GUIDE FOR PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLANS

### Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

#### Unsuccessful Performance

- Unsuccessful performance, as indicated by an overall assessment of 1 at the time of the final written assessment, must be backed by appropriate documentation and result in a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).

#### Review and Implementation of the PIP

- The Performance Improvement Plan must be reviewed by the Human Resources Director or his/her designee prior to being presented to the employee.
- Upon approval, the Performance Improvement Plan must be discussed with the employee and be signed off on by both parties within fourteen (14) working days of the final assessment meeting.

#### Overview of the PIP

- The PIP will specify what competencies and/or behavioral anchors will be targeted for improvement, based on the PDS Assessment Formal Review; when, where and how often the supervisor and employee will meet during the PIP period; and the type of support to be given by the supervisor (coaching, counseling, training, etc.), the specific actions to be taken by the employee and specific performance expectations of the supervisor.
- The plan will provide a reasonable amount of time ninety (90) days) for performance improvement to take place and must include a re-assessment date.
- On the specified re-assessment date, the supervisor and employee will meet to review expectations and progress of the employee in meeting those expectations.
- If the employee's performance is successful (2) at that time, the IDP will be initiated.
- If the employee's performance is not successful (1) at the time of the re-assessment, the Human Resources Director will be informed immediately and will determine what action will be taken.

## PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM DOCUMENTATION

In these litigious times, one of the key defenses for any employer centers on creating and maintaining powerful documentation that employment matters are handled **fairly and consistently**. **The number one complaint by employees toward managers is that “they play favorites”!**

**Due Process** is quite simply the provision of that process which is mandated by law. **Only permanent state service employees have the right to due process.** Systems of due process may be complex or simple, but all systems, to be constitutional, must include the elements of **notice, hearing and review**. Thus, documentation in all employment arenas should strive to establish the existence of these three (3) elements.

### **ELEMENTS OF GOOD DOCUMENTATION**

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- A clear statement of purpose.
- Specific headings on who, what, why, when and where.
- A clear description of relevant facts.
- An objective rendition without personal opinion.
- Facts, not opinions.
- Recount of employee hearing opportunity.
- Recount of relevant policy.
- Proof of policy adherence.
- Clear statement of a course of action.
- Dates.
- Signatures of all relevant parties or documentation that a party refused to sign.
- Sound and consistent filing system.

### **COMMON DOCUMENTATION PROBLEMS**

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- Missing or insufficient
- Untimely
- Subjective
- Inconsistently practiced
- Over-documentation
- Improper filing
- Conflicts with other documentation or evidence

## **AVAILABLE SHORTCUTS**

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- Calendar entries.
- Memo forms.
- Good note taking during sessions and interviews.
- A plan for sessions.

## **TIPS FOR DOCUMENTING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AND/OR BEHAVIOR**

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- Use the performance development system.
- Make effective use of the competencies and behavioral anchors.
- Provide consistent feedback to reinforce and document notice.
- Document as a matter of routine, not just when you have a problem.
- Conduct and document counseling and corrective sessions quickly.
- Focus on behavior, not on people.

## **DISCIPLINARY/PERFORMANCE ACTION CHECKLIST**

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Following are some pointers to consider in making any recommendation of disciplinary or performance action.

- Was the incident which triggered your recommendation carefully investigated prior to recommending serious or final disciplinary action, i.e. did you talk with the employee to get his/her perspective on what happened?
- Was the investigation fair and objective?
- Did the investigation produce substantial evidence?
- Were the rules/penalties applied evenhandedly and without discrimination? If enforcement has been lax in the past, you will not likely be able to suddenly begin to crack down without first warning employees of the intent of the rules/penalties.
- Was the penalty reasonably related to the seriousness of the offense and the past record? For example, if Employee A's past record is significantly better than that of Employee B, the organization may give Employee A lighter punishment than employee B for the same offense.
- Was the employee adequately warned, where possible, of the consequences of his/her conduct? The warning may be either oral or written, but oral warnings should be followed with a memo for the record.
- Is the rule or standard that was violated published? Cite the rule and reference source from the publication.
- Did the employee have a copy of the rule violation?
- Are you consistent and unbiased in applying the rule/standard?
- Has the employee been warned previously for violation of this rule? If so, was the warning oral or written?
- Has the employee ever received a final warning for the violation of this, or any other published rule?
- Is there a factual written record showing the steps taken by the supervisor to correct the employee's improper actions prior to serious disciplinary action?

- Before applying discipline, review the employee’s past record. A good work record and long seniority may be viewed as mitigating factors in the employee’s favor on less serious matters.
- Earlier infractions are not used against the employee unless the employee was reprimanded at the time they occurred or warned that prior violations would be considered in any future disciplinary action. Failure to warn an employee of consequences of violating a rule is one of the most frequent reasons given by the Courts for setting aside discharges.

## **PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM FEEDBACK**

### **Feedback Goals:**

- Acknowledge and reinforce specifically what things are going well, i.e. answer the question, “How am I doing?”
- Identify where change is needed and exactly what change needs to be made, i.e. answer the question, “What do I need to do differently?”
- Increase common understanding of performance expectations.
- Improve future performance and communication.

### **Giving Feedback:**

- Address specifics, not generalities.
- Be descriptive and discuss behavior.
- Focus on finding solutions and looking toward the future.
- Ask for input.
- Be respectful of the dignity and opinions of others.

### **Receiving Feedback:**

- Listen carefully.
- Ask clarifying questions.
- Acknowledge what is being said.
- Take your time, and allow the speaker to do so as well.

# PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

## SEPF

### SEPF CONTENTS

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The Supplemental Employee Performance Folder (SEPF) should contain all data relevant to the job performance of the individual employee to whom it pertains. It should not contain disciplinary or personnel information. Appropriate SEPF information includes:

1. The original version of the current Performance Development System assessment document.
2. A copy of the previous assessment document, if available.
3. Examples of work, if appropriate.
4. Any performance-related information the employee wants to contribute, including a self-assessment.
5. Any valid performance-related information, positive or negative, from the manager or other sources.
6. Documentation of failure to demonstrate desired behavior for reasons beyond the employee's control, if appropriate.
7. Results of each review and feedback session.
8. The original version of the Individual Development or Performance Improvement Plan or and any follow-up documentation, if appropriate.

### SEPF ACCESS

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The SEPF must be maintained by the manager in a secure location (apart from the employee's personnel file) and shared ONLY with the employee, the first level reviewer and the Director of Human Resources.

All contents of the SEPF are available upon request to the employee.

# PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

## -DEFINITIONS-

### **DEVELOPMENT:**

- A set of learning experiences designed to maximize performance and engagement of employees throughout the organization.
- The strategic investment by an organization in the training and development of its members.

**FINAL ASSESSMENT:** The last assessment of the review period which results in a determination of Successful (2) Performance or Unsuccessful (1) Performance.

**FIRST LEVEL REVIEWER:** The Reviewing Supervisor's immediate supervisor.

**INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP):** A written action plan, jointly developed by the employee and the reviewing supervisor, to foster individual performance growth.

**PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM (PDS):** A system which assesses an employee's performance as either successful or unsuccessful and provides employees with a plan that fosters individual employee development.

**PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP):** A written action plan, jointly developed by the employee and the reviewing supervisor, to outline actions required to bring a final Unsuccessful (1) Performance assessment to a Successful (2) Performance assessment level.

**REVIEW PERIOD:** A time period of at least ninety days and not more than 365 days for which an employee's performance is reviewed.

**REVIEWING SUPERVISOR:** The last person to have supervised the employee for a minimum of a ninety day period at the time the Final Assessment is due.

**SECOND LEVEL REVIEWER:** The immediate supervisor of the First Level Reviewer.

**SUCCESSFUL (2) PERFORMANCE:** Assessment level indicating that an employee's overall performance is equal to or greater than that required for the position.

**UNSUCCESSFUL (1) PERFORMANCE:** Assessment level indicating that an employee's overall performance is below that required for the position.

**VALID ASSESSMENT:** An assessment completed as a result of an employee's job performance for at least ninety days and no more than 365 days.

