



DODGE COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Owner Human Resources and Labor Negotiations Committee	Revision Date(s): 04/05/2022, 03/28/2023, 11/28/2023

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to adopt an equitable performance management system focused on creating a work environment in which employees are empowered to perform to the best of their ability. Managers play a critical role in the performance management system and are responsible for clarifying job duties, defining performance standards, and discussing and documenting performance throughout the year.

II. POLICY

A. PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

1. Performance evaluations are based on the principle of no surprises – nothing should appear on the performance evaluation that the employee has not seen or heard before. The performance evaluation process requires equal participation of employees and managers.
2. Employees shall receive a formal objective performance evaluation annually. The performance evaluation shall be based only on job related behavior and reflects the cumulative performance of the employee throughout the review period. Events that occurred outside of the rating period shall not be included.
3. All annual performance evaluations must be completed in UKG Pro.
 - a. Employee self-assessments are launched six weeks prior to the employee's anniversary date and due one month prior to the employee anniversary date.
 - b. Employee annual evaluations are launched to the managers one month before the employee's anniversary date and due on the employee anniversary date.
4. Full time and part time benefit-eligible employees whose position is on the Dodge County Compensation Schedule will progress through the wage schedule based on the employee's receipt of a "meets expectation" rating on the annual performance evaluation. Those employees in "open-step" will receive an open-step increase, as established in the annual budget.
 - a. Newly hired employees will be eligible for the yearly step or "open-step" increase after completing at least 6 months of employment.
5. Performance Ratings
The performance ratings are the objective opinion of the manager based on expectations. The Human Resources Department will review all annual performance evaluations to ensure proper documentation and justification is

provided. An overall score of Meets Expectations is defined as no more than two (2) competencies scored as "Needs Improvement" for non-supervisory staff and no more than three (3) competencies as "Needs Improvement" for supervisory staff.

Score Definition

- 1 **Needs Improvement:** Indicates a need to acquire skills, additional knowledge, and/or experience in the competency area. May need additional training. Scores in this area may be attributed to being new to the position or responsibility.
- 2 **Meets Expectations:** Has an understanding and grasp of the essentials to accomplish the duties assigned in the competency and position. Rarely needs direction; anticipates and provides assistance. Meets the competency within the scope of the position's job responsibilities, skills and knowledge of the job description, including any assigned specialty areas.

An employee who believes the performance rating is unfair or inaccurate may contest the evaluation as an appeal by rejecting the electronic evaluation and submitting a written rebuttal with examples and documentation to the manager within 10 days of receiving the evaluation. The manager will review and meet with the employee within 10 days of the written request to discuss and reconsider the evaluation. If the employee is dissatisfied with the outcome, the employee may submit a written appeal to the Department Head within 10 days. The Department Head must respond with a decision within 10 days. The Department Head decision is final with no other appeal option. Upon completion of the appeal process, the employee must electronically accept the evaluation to indicate completion of the appeal process, regardless if the employee agrees with the evaluation. All appeal documentation must be submitted to Human Resources upon completion of the appeal process for the employee file.

B. EMPLOYEE TRANSFER

An employee who is transferred into a different position may be required to serve an orientation period. The Department Head will make the determination of whether the employee will serve an orientation period, determine the length of the orientation period, and will make the determination at any time during the orientation period whether the employee has shown the ability to assume the responsibilities of the position. An orientation period may be extended if the Department Head determines that an additional amount of time is needed to effectively evaluate the employee's ability to assume the responsibilities of the position or may be extended by any days the employee is absent due to unpaid leave of absence or other extended absences.

C. NEW HIRE ORIENTATION PERIOD

All new full-time and part-time benefit eligible employees will serve a six (6) month orientation period. The orientation period may be extended by any days the employee is absent due to unpaid leave of absence or other extended absences. A new hire orientation period may be extended beyond the six (6) month period if the Department Head determines that an additional amount of time is needed to effectively evaluate the employee's ability to assume the responsibilities of the position.

The orientation period for new full-time Correctional Officers and 911 Communications Officers— employees of the Sheriff's Office will be one year. Please see the Sworn Association Agreement for probationary period requirements for Sworn Association employees.

Managers will be required to complete two orientation period evaluations, one at 3 months of employment and one 2 weeks prior to six months of employment. If the Department Head decides to extend the orientation period they must communicate in writing to the Human Resources Director the reason(s) why the extension is needed prior to the expiration of the six (6) month orientation period.

III. STANDARDS

A. FAILURE TO MEET PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Throughout employment, managers should have ongoing conversations with all employees about their performance. Employees need to be coached and counseled at the first signs of performance problems to facilitate improvement. In some cases, an employee may need additional training or resources to be able to fully perform in his or her job. Whenever possible, informal feedback, coaching, additional training and/or the development of a performance improvement plan should be conducted prior to any disciplinary procedures depending on the severity of performance deficiency. However, according to Policy 105-Discipline, "certain types of employee problems are serious enough to justify either a suspension or termination of employment without going through the progressive discipline steps."

1. A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is a tool to provide an employee with performance deficiencies the opportunity to succeed. It may be used to address failures, to meet specific job goals or to improve behavior-related concerns. Outcomes of a PIP may vary, including improvement in overall performance; the recognition of a skill or training gap; or possible employment actions such as a transfer, demotion or termination.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. PERFORMANCE IMROVEMENT PLAN (PIP)

1. Department Heads must contact the Human Resources Department to discuss whether a PIP is the appropriate action for the situation.
2. The PIP must include:
 - a. Information on what acceptable performance levels are and how the employee's current performance is deficient. Specifics regarding the unacceptable performance should be given including dates, data and detailed explanations. Attach the job description and any relevant employer policies to further clarify expectations.
 - b. Specific and measurable objectives that are achievable, relevant and time-bound (otherwise known as SMART goals).
 - c. Guidance on what management will do or provide to assist the employee in achieving these goals, such as additional resources, training or coaching.
 - d. Details on how often the manager and employee will meet to discuss progress. This is often done once a week, but may vary depending on the circumstances.
 - e. Clearly stated consequences for not meeting the objectives of the plan. Options may include demotion, transfer to a different position, discipline or termination.
3. The Human Resources Director or his/her designee must approve all Performance Improvement Plans (PIP's) prior to the plan being issued to the employee.

4. The duration of the PIP will depend on how long it would reasonably take to improve the specific deficiency(s) identified, but will not be in effect for more than one year. The initial PIP document and all follow up documentation will be maintained in the employee's personnel file.
 - a. When the employee has responded positively by meeting plan objectives, possibly before the expiration date of the plan, the Department Head with the approval of the Human Resources Director or his/her designee, should formally close the PIP, recognize the employee's success and allow the employee to continue employment. The Department Head should recognize this positive occasion for the employee, however, the manager must also ensure the employee understands that continued good performance is expected.
 - b. When the employee is committed to improvement, but falls short of the objectives within the established timeline, consideration maybe given to extend the plan to additional time to succeed. Additionally, if objectives were found, in retrospect, to not be realistic or fully within the employee's control, the plan might be ended successfully, based on the improvements achieved. Prior to the extension of the PIP the Department must consult with the Human Resources Director or his/her designee.
 - c. If an employee is unable to improve or if performance worsens Human Resources must be consulted immediately. With the guidance and involvement of Human Resources, possible reassignment, demotion, discipline or termination should be considered, based on the specific circumstances and under Policy 105-Discipline.

V. **GUIDELINES**

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