

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, DC

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# FSIS DIRECTIVE

4430.5  
Revision 1

10/23/17

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## SUPERVISORY TOOL FOR ASSESSMENT RESULTS

### I. PURPOSE

This directive provides revised procedures for supervisors in the Office of Field Operations (OFO) who conduct, document, and report on Supervisory Tool for Assessment Results (STAR) assessments. FSIS has revised this directive in its entirety.

#### KEY POINTS:

- *Introduces a revised STAR Assessment template*
- *Introduces new instructions for conducting a STAR assessment*
- *Incorporates content from a STAR guidance document into this directive*

### II. CANCELLATION

FSIS Directive 4430.5, Supervisory Tool for Assessment Results (STAR), 9/29/09

### III. BACKGROUND

A. STAR assessments are a tool that supervisors use to assess the knowledge and proficiency of field-level supervisory personnel. STAR assessments provide a firsthand, onsite observation of how well field-level supervisors conduct and oversee the performance of FSIS inspection and verification procedures in federally inspected establishments.

B. This directive applies to OFO field-level supervisory personnel who rate the performance of in-plant, subordinate supervisory personnel. STAR assessments are used by Front-line Supervisors (FLSs) to assess Supervisory Public Health Veterinarians (SPHVs) and for SPHVs to assess Supervisory Consumer Safety Inspectors (SCSIs). The supervisory positions covered by STAR assessments include:

1. SPHV;
2. SCSi; and
3. HACCP-Based Inspection Models Project (HIMP) establishment supervisory personnel

C. STAR assessments are not designed to assess FLSs, although FLSs will be evaluated on how well they carry out the STAR assessments.

D. Potential benefits of STAR assessments include:

1. Encouraging effective communication between supervisors and subordinates through the assessment and feedback process;
2. Identifying and addressing the need to improve field-level supervisors' knowledge of job requirements;
3. Encouraging correlation with supervisors to ensure consistency in inspection methods and applications;
4. Identifying and addressing performance problems in accordance with policies and procedures that are outlined in [FSIS Directive 4430.3](#), *Performance Evaluation Plan*;
5. Recognizing and rewarding on-target or noteworthy supervisory performance; and
6. Addressing common or group needs identified through STAR assessment results, such as at a work unit or district meetings (e.g., areas in which multiple supervisors are having difficulty understanding or executing job requirements).

E. OFO field-level supervisors are to conduct a minimum of one in-person STAR assessment for each in-plant, subordinate supervisor during the performance rating cycle. Field-level supervisors have flexibility in determining when to conduct the assessment and whether to assess all elements and sub-elements during one visit or multiple visits over the course of the rating cycle.

#### **IV. OVERSIGHT OF STAR ASSESSMENTS**

A. To ensure consistency and effectiveness in performing daily food safety, food defense, and management and supervisory activities, OFO executives, managers, and field-level supervisory personnel are to conduct an oversight review of STAR assessments and provide appropriate feedback.

B. To carry out this oversight, minimum expectations for review of STAR assessment results are as follows:

1. The FLS reviews 50 percent of the STAR assessments conducted by the SPHV;
2. The district management team reviews at least 1 STAR assessment per circuit performed by the FLS; and.
3. The Executive Associate for Regulatory Operations (EARO) reviews 5 percent of the district management reviews.

## **V. STAR ASSESSMENTS AND THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

A. STAR assessments do not replace the Agency's performance management system. OFO uses STAR assessments, which apply to supervisory in-plant occupations, to assess employees' knowledge of their job requirements. STAR assessments are:

1. Designed to provide supervisors with a structured process to look at specific elements of the job;
2. Used to provide feedback to employees to identify, address, and correct areas where there is a need for improvement in performance; and
3. Do not provide or assign a performance rating. STAR assessment data can be used, with other data and information about an employee's performance, to determine the performance rating.

B. Performance management is mandated by 5 U.S.C. Chapter 43 and is a statutory requirement for Federal agencies. Every Federal agency is required to have a performance management system under which supervisors identify and set performance expectations and monitor employee performance. FSIS monitors employee performance by way of a midyear progress review and rates performance annually by assigning a summary level rating. Summary level ratings are expressed as Outstanding, Superior, Fully Successful, Marginal, or Unacceptable.

C. Supervisors are to use their judgement when combining data from STAR assessments that are completed during the rating period and other information regarding an employee's performance. The performance rating is to reflect the employee's performance for the entire rating cycle.

D. The STAR Assessment template does not replace any existing performance appraisal processes or FSIS forms. Supervisors are to continue using AD-435E and the PRT to set performance expectations, conduct progress reviews, and rate employees annually on their performance.

## **VI. STAR ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

A. When conducting STAR assessments, supervisors are engaged in fulfilling their critical Supervision performance element. In addition, supervisors are fulfilling requirements related to the critical Mission Results performance element, as STAR assessments are a means by which supervisors ensure field-level supervisory personnel are carrying out their critical mission-related work activities. To receive a Fully Successful rating in these critical elements, supervisors are to successfully fulfill their responsibilities related to the In-Plant Performance System (IPPS.)

B. The supervisor plays a key role in ensuring that:

1. Decisions made by subordinate field-level supervisors are uniform, consistent and in accordance with applicable statutes, regulations, issuances, and other Agency policies; and
2. Duties performed by subordinate field-level supervisors are in accordance with prescribed inspection methods and procedures.

C. Supervisors also are to ensure that subordinate field-level supervisors are applying the appropriate inspection methods, using effective regulatory decision-making, documenting findings appropriately, and implementing regulatory enforcement actions properly.

## VII. STAR ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

A. OFO supervisory personnel are to use the following steps to assess subordinate field-level supervisory personnel on their job requirements.

B. **Assess the Performance Elements.** The critical performance elements and activities are tailored to supervisory in-plant inspection program occupations. The performance elements include:

1. Mission Results (Critical);
2. Supervision (Critical);
3. Civil Rights, Equal Employee Opportunity (EEO), and Diversity and Inclusion (Critical); and
4. Fostering Customer Service, Collaboration, and Partnerships

C. **Plan and Prepare for STAR Assessment.** Preparation is an important aspect of any STAR assessment. Before conducting the STAR assessment, the supervisor is to:

1. Review and assess Public Health Information System (PHIS) data and reports, where applicable, to identify potential problem areas to focus on during the assessment. The attachment to this directive outlines PHIS reports and other data sources supervisors can use to prepare for a STAR assessment. Supervisors are to also review these data sources to determine whether field-level supervisors responsible for maintaining PHIS at the plant level are keeping the establishment profile current, completing routine inspection tasks, properly entering data concerning scheduled procedures performed or not performed, entering directed procedures performed, and whether the field-level supervisors are reviewing the data entered into PHIS by the inspection personnel under their supervision. This data review will give the supervisor insight into the decisions made regarding which procedures to perform and at what frequency. The supervisor can use the standard reports to determine whether trends are developing, which indicate whether the field-level supervisors are on or off target in performing their verification duties.

2. Review noncompliance records (NRs) to determine whether the NRs are being written in accordance with [FSIS Directive 5000.1](#), *Verifying an Establishment's Food Safety System*.
3. Use the Animal Disposition Report in PHIS and the Humane Handling Activities Tracking System HATS Details and Summary and Slaughter Daily Totals Worksheet for Establishments to determine whether the inspector or the PHV is keeping the data current and is performing the appropriate humane handling procedures. The supervisor is to review the data to see if humane handling procedures performed are covering all humane handling activities over time, and that proper times are recorded for each activity.
4. Review any Food Safety Assessments (FSAs), Public Health Risk Evaluations (PHREs) and enforcement actions for the establishment or establishments related to the assessed employee where there was a recent FSA or enforcement action. The assessment in such cases can be used to determine the personnel's effectiveness in carrying out the verification plan and reporting on issues identified. The supervisor is to also review the verification plan and the personnel's verification reports and provide feedback to the employee.
5. Review feedback from previous STAR assessments to determine whether there are follow-up issues to cover during the visit. When a follow-up is required, supervisors are to make sure that the employee has completed the remedial assigned activities prescribed at the time of the prior STAR assessment. Supervisors are to also reassess the elements and sub-elements on which follow-up was indicated.
6. Identify new Agency directives and notices that are relevant to the employee's assignment and position. Supervisors are to use the STAR assessment as an opportunity to ensure that the employee has followed the instructions in any relevant new directives or notices.
7. Ensure that employees have successfully completed required training (e.g., on-the-job training or formal training courses). Training reports are available through AgLearn: <http://www.aglearn.usda.gov>. District office personnel can provide supervisors with training reports and information upon request.

D. When completing the STAR Assessment template, a supervisor is to document very briefly how she or he prepared for the STAR assessment visit, including information on the data sources that he/she used.

## VIII. METHODS FOR CONDUCTING A STAR ASSESSMENT

A. In general, supervisors are to use the following methods singularly or in combination when conducting STAR assessments:

1. Observe the employee performing verification tasks;
2. Review documentation, reports, and correspondence in the government files;
3. Observe plant conditions and compare them to inspection results and noncompliance records on file; and
4. Ask questions about inspection methods, regulatory decision-making, documentation, and enforcement procedures (e.g., types of regulatory control actions that can be taken and when; due process) to the Agency employee as they perform inspection verification activities. Provide hypothetical situations or scenarios to get the employee to describe what she or he would do in response to the situation.

B. Supervisors are to properly plan, prepare, and execute the plan to document an effective STAR assessment.

**NOTE:** A supervisor does not have to conduct STAR assessments at all establishments on an employee's assignment. However, the supervisor is to ensure that the employee can demonstrate an understanding of the methodology relevant to the whole assignment and an ability to execute it.

C. When conducting an STAR assessment, a supervisor is to verify that the employee is:

1. Applying the appropriate inspection methodology, such as observing establishment employees conducting procedures, reviewing establishment records, and performing tasks;
2. Utilizing effective decision-making to determine whether there is noncompliance;
3. Documenting their findings appropriately, if required;
4. Implementing enforcement actions properly (e.g., verification plans for suspensions and Notices of Intended Enforcement (NOIEs)), when authorized to do so;
5. Implementing regulatory control actions; and
6. Performing required supervisory duties.

D. The supervisor is to meet with the employee at the end of the STAR assessment and provide verbal feedback on performance.

E. The supervisor is to complete the STAR Assessment template. The supervisor is to state whether the employee's understanding and ability to execute regulatory requirements was

satisfactory using Yes or No. A supervisor can document positive performance briefly in the narrative boxes. If the supervisor finds that performance of a sub-element is unsatisfactory, he/she is to clearly describe the deficiencies observed and discussed in the comment boxes.

F. The supervisor is to provide a copy of the STAR assessment to the employee within 2 weeks of the assessment, by either printing a hard copy for the employee or emailing a PDF copy.

G. When applicable, a supervisor's findings are to also include recommended actions that the employee is to take to improve her/his knowledge and execution of inspection methods (e.g., review relevant directives, review Inspection Methods training module) and a timeframe for completing action.

H. The supervisor is to follow the directions outlined in DR-4040-430, Performance Management, when an employee's performance is unacceptable in one or more critical elements at any time during the performance appraisal cycle.

I. The supervisor is to contact the appropriate district office for further guidance if misconduct issues are identified during the visit to conduct a STAR assessment.

J. The supervisor is to monitor follow-up items to ensure that they are accomplished.

K. The supervisor is to follow up on any sub-elements for which performance was found to be unsatisfactory during the next STAR assessment.

## **IX. STAR ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE AND MAINTENANCE**

A. A supervisor can access FSIS Form 4430-3, *Supervisory Tool for Assessment Results (STAR) Assessment Form* via InsideFSIS at: OFO Resources (Level 2 eAuthentication is needed to access this page).

B. This directive will be revised and reissued with new instructions once new storing and tracking methods for the STAR assessment are implemented.

**NOTE:** STAR Assessment templates are not filed in the Human Resource Operation's official personnel folder and the information is not included in the Performance Rating Tool (PRT), however supervisors are to maintain copies of the assessments in the employee's performance file.

## **X. QUESTIONS**

Refer questions on conducting STAR assessments to the appropriate District Office.



Assistant Administrator  
Office of Policy and Program Development

### DATA SOURCES FOR IPPS PREPARATION

Below is a chart outlining the reports and other data sources in PHIS, organized by sub-elements, you can use to prepare for an IPPS visit.

<b>Sub-Element</b>	<b>PHIS Reports</b>	<b>Data in PHIS</b>
<b><i>SPS/SSOP</i></b>	Noncompliance Records for an Establishment	Establishment Profile Task Calendar
	Task Summary and List for an Establishment	Inspection Verification Results
<b><i>HACCP</i></b>	Noncompliance Records for an Establishment	Inspection Verification Results
	Task Summary and List for an Establishment	
	Task Regulation Verified & Noncompliant Summary for an Establishment	
<b><i>Food Defense</i></b>	Task Summary and List of an Establishment	Inspection Verification Results
<b><i>Sampling</i></b>	In-Plant Residue Sampling Results	Establishment Profile

for an  
Establishment

Inspection  
Verification  
Results

Task Summary  
and List for an  
Establishment

Sample Collection  
Status for an  
Establishment

Sampling Form  
Results for an  
Establishment

Sampling Results  
for an  
Establishment

Sampling  
Schedule History  
for an  
Establishment

Sampling  
Schedule History  
with Results for an  
Establishment

***AM/PM Duties***

Pending  
Dispositions for an  
Establishment

Establishment  
Profile

Noncompliance  
Records for an  
Establishment

Animal Disposition  
Reporting

Disposition

***Humane Handling***

HATS Detail and Summary for an Establishment

Records  
Inspection Verification Results

Noncompliance Records for an Establishment

Task Summary and List for an Establishment

MOIs for Good Commercial Practice and Humane Handling for a District

***Export***

MOIs for an Establishment

***Economic Adulteration and Labeling Verification***

Noncompliance Records for an Establishment

Inspection Verification Results

Task Summary and List for an Establishment