

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

FSIS NOTICE

31-19

9/12/19

END OF THE YEAR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

I. PURPOSE

This notice provides instructions to all FSIS Rating Officials for completing their Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 performance ratings of record, progress reviews, and interim ratings for their subordinate employees. [Departmental Regulation \(DR\) 4040-430, Employee Performance Management](#) sets forth the policies for the FSIS Performance Management System.

II. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

A. **Employee Accomplishment Report:** An employee's personal record of accomplishments, achievements and performance throughout the appraisal period.

1. Effective August 15, 2018, all non-bargaining unit employees must submit accomplishment reports to their respective Rating Officials no later than October 1;
2. Bargaining unit employees are not required, but still encouraged to complete accomplishment reports; and
3. Rating Officials may request accomplishment reports earlier; however, they are to give employees an opportunity to add to the report should they want to include end of the year accomplishments through September 30.

B. **Rating of Record:** The formal evaluation and summary rating of an employee's performance as compared to the elements and standards for performance over the entire appraisal period. The following applies:

1. The official annual appraisal period is October 1 through September 30;
2. The rating of record is to be completed at the end of the appraisal period, provided to the employee by October 30, and uploaded into the [Performance and Award Manager \(PAM\)](#) system on the [Office of Human Resources \(OHR\) Portal](#);
3. The minimum rating period is 90 non-consecutive days on a performance plan within the current appraisal period; and
4. The minimum rating period does not have to be served under the same Rating Official or Reviewing Official.

C. **Interim Rating:** A written appraisal of an employee's performance conducted **before the end** of the appraisal period. Interim ratings are:

DISTRIBUTION: Electronic; All
Field Employees

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1. Required by supervisors for the following scenarios:
 - a. Permanent changes for the employee, including reassignment, promotion, transfer or resignation, if the employee served 90 or more days on a performance plan in the former position;
 - b. A detail or temporary promotion of 90 or more days; or
 - c. Permanent or temporary changes in supervisors, including details of more than 90 days, reassignments, retirements and resignations.
2. To be based on expectations formally communicated in a performance plan; and
3. To be provided to the employee within 15 days of a position change and to the new Rating Official of record for consideration in assigning a final rating of record.

D. Advisory Assessment: An informal, written record of an employee's performance while on assignment to another supervisor for a period of at least 60 but fewer than 90 days. Advisory assessments are:

1. Required for situations such as a promotion or detail, or a temporary promotion for a period of at least 60 but fewer than 90 days;
2. To be based on clearly communicated and documented expectations, which serve as an addendum to the employee's formal performance plan;
3. To summarize the employee's primary responsibilities during the abbreviated performance period (if not already described in a performance plan), the date range of the performance, the employee's contributions, and a general descriptive assessment of the employee's performance, but not an actual rating; and
4. To be entered into PAM and provided to the employee within 15 days of the position change, and considered by the Rating Official of record when they assign an interim rating or a final rating of record.

III. INABILITY TO RATE AN EMPLOYEE

- A. When an employee has been on standards for less than 90 non-consecutive days at the end of the appraisal period (September 30), the employee cannot be rated for the performance year.
- B. If an employee's standards are set with fewer than 75 days before the end of a performance year, the standards may carry through to the next appraisal period.

IV. FINAL RATING OF RECORD FOR EMPLOYEES ON A DEMONSTRATION OPPORTUNITY PERIOD

Rating Officials are required to issue a final rating of record for any employee who is on a demonstration opportunity (DO) period at the end of the appraisal period. A DO was previously known as a performance improvement plan and was renamed per DR 4040.430. Employees can be placed on a DO at any point during the appraisal period up to and including September 30. Should an employee be placed on a DO with a scheduled duration later than October 30, 2019, the rating official is to issue the employee a summary rating of "unacceptable" for the appraisal period because the employee's performance is deemed as "does not meet" in a critical element.

V. DOCUMENTATION

Rating Officials and Reviewing Officials are responsible for ensuring that performance management documentation is accurately and properly recorded in PAM. After the plan or appraisal has been approved by the Reviewing Official in PAM, the Rating Official is required to:

1. Present a copy of the performance plan or performance appraisals (either electronic or hard copy) to the employee;
2. Meet with the employee to discuss the plan or appraisal and obtain the employee's digital or physical signature;
3. Digitally or physically sign the employee's performance plan or appraisal;
4. Obtain the Reviewing Official's digital or physical signature on the appraisal or notate on the document "Approved in PAM by {Reviewing Official's Name}" with the date the Reviewing Official approved it;
5. Complete the performance plan or appraisal certification sections in PAM by including the names and dates on which the performance plan or appraisal was physically or digitally signed by the employee and Rating Official in accordance with DR 4040-430. The Reviewing Official can either physically sign, digitally sign, or notate approval of the plan or appraisal; and
6. Upload the entire signed appraisal (AD-435) form into PAM. This includes the elements, narratives, addendums to the plan, and complete signatures (including signatures from the quarterly progress reviews).

VI. SCENARIOS FOR COMPLETING INTERIM RATINGS AND FINAL RATINGS OF RECORD

A. A Consumer Safety Inspector (CSI) served under the same performance plan from October 1, 2018, to September 30, 2019, but under different supervisors throughout the year. Frontline Supervisor (FLS) #1 supervised the CSI from October 1 – November 30 (2 months); FLS #2 supervised the CSI from December 1 – August 31 (9 months); and FLS #3 supervised the CSI from September 1 - 30 (1 month). FLS #1 is to prepare an advisory assessment in PAM. FLS #2 is to prepare an interim rating in PAM. Since FLS #3 is the supervisor of record on September 30, FLS #3 serves as the Rating Official for the entire appraisal period and is to complete the rating of record. FLS #3 is to incorporate the advisory rating from FLS #1, the interim rating from FLS #2, and accomplishments from September 1-30 to create the rating of record in PAM. The Rating Official is to consider the nature of assignments and the length of time covered by the interim rating and advisory assessment to determine the final rating.

B. A Public Health Veterinarian (PHV) served under the same performance plan and FLS #1 in the Atlanta District from October 1, 2018 – August 1, 2019 (10 months) prior to being transferred to the Springdale District. FLS #1 is to prepare an interim rating in PAM for the 10-month appraisal period. FLS #2 in the Springdale District inherited the PHV performance plan and is to communicate expectations with the employee covering the appraisal period from August 2, 2019 – September 30, 2019 (2 months). FLS #2 serves as the Rating Official for the entire appraisal period and is to complete the rating of record. FLS #2 will incorporate the interim rating from FLS #1 and accomplishments from August 2 – September 30 to create the rating of record in PAM. The Rating Official is to consider the nature of assignments and the length of time covered by the interim rating to determine the final rating.

C. A GS-7 Food Inspector (FI) was placed on a performance plan on October 1, 2018. The employee was promoted to a CSI on June 30, 2019. FLS #1, who served as the supervisor for the GS-7 FI, is to provide an interim rating in PAM for the previous position at the lower grade level ending the day before

the promotion (i.e., promoted on June 30, end date of interim rating is June 29). FLS #2 provides the employee with the CSI performance plan to cover June 30 – September 30. Since FLS #2 is the supervisor of record on September 30, FLS #2 serves as the Rating Official for the entire appraisal period and is to complete the rating of record. FLS #2 is to incorporate the interim rating from FLS #1 and accomplishments from June 30 – September 30 to create the rating of record in PAM. The Rating Official is to consider the nature of assignments and the length of time covered by the interim rating to determine the final rating.

D. The following two scenarios cover employees who left the agency prior to October 30:

1. An FI was hired and placed on a performance plan on June 20, 2019. Four months later, the employee was offered another position in a different Agency. The employee's official last day on the job was October 15, 2019. Given the employee was on standards for more than 90 days, the Rating Official is to provide the final rating of record in PAM by October 15.
2. An employee was hired and placed on a performance plan on August 1, 2019. Two months later, the employee was offered another position in a different Agency. The employee's official last day on the job was October 1. Given the employee was under a performance plan for less than 90 days, no rating can be given to the employee. The supervisor should select "Yes" when asked "Would You Like To Mark This Employee As Ineligible For Performance Plan?" in PAM. The option is for employees who are not eligible for a performance plan or appraisal. Upon selecting this option, the supervisor will need to:
 - a. Select the "Ineligible For Plan" option and "Employee is not eligible per hiring parameters—explain;"
 - b. Enter text in the "Plan Ineligible Explanation" field – Ex: "Served less than 90 days under standards;" and
 - c. Select "Save & Submit."

VII. QUESTIONS

Refer performance management policy questions regarding this notice to the Office of Human Resources, Human Resources Business Systems Division, Program Management and Information Systems Branch (PMISB), Performance and Awards Team at PerformanceManagement@fsis.usda.gov. PAM system-related questions should be directed to the PMISB Human Resources Information Systems Team at HRSystemRequest@fsis.usda.gov.



Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy and Program Development