

## Management Program Guidelines for Supervisors

The supervisor's responsibilities in performance management begin with describing the duties of the position and the performance expectations for that position to the employee, calibrating acceptable to outstanding performance, whenever possible. The following guidelines are intended to assist supervisors in making the Iowa State University (ISU) Merit Performance Management Program a positive and effective process for improving, recognizing and managing performance.

### **A. CLEAR EXPECTATIONS**

Clear job descriptions and well-defined performance standards and goals are essential to effective supervision and sound performance management. Every position should have measurable performance standards that are communicated to the employee. These standards may change from year to year, but the employee should know in advance the performance that the supervisor is going to measure and what outcomes determine satisfactory and above satisfactory performance.

Each merit employee's Position Description (PD) should list specific duties and responsibilities for the job within their department. The supervisor and employee should work together to keep the PD current, accurate, and meaningful.

### **B. PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK**

Supervisors should develop a securely maintained desk file for each employee in which actual work samples of 'above satisfactory' and 'below satisfactory' performance are retained after feedback has been shared with the employee. This ongoing record of work performance helps with summarizing key efforts, outcomes and deliverables throughout the performance evaluation period.

The annual performance evaluation process involves a written performance evaluation that incorporates a summary of communications and performance outcomes that occurred throughout the year. The routine feedback that was given throughout the performance evaluation cycle will prepare the employee for the performance appraisal with no surprises. The employee's self-assessment should be incorporated into the evaluation, and an overall rating of 'Satisfactory' or 'Unsatisfactory' is given.

### **C. MANAGING PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT**

When an employee is given an overall 'Unsatisfactory' rating which indicates a significant deficiency with performance, the supervisor and employee need to confer regarding these issues and develop a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). A PIP is a corrective action plan that outlines the supports and resources provided to support the employee's success, and it states the expected level of performance and outcomes, as well as prescribed timelines, for the employee to meet expectations. During the initial PIP development meeting, these expectations and the consequences for failure to meet them are discussed in detail. Feedback sessions are required between the supervisor and employee during the course of the PIP. If the employee meets the expectations specified in the PIP, documentation will be provided to the employee signed by the supervisor to indicate the performance or behavior improvement. In the event an employee's performance or behavior does not improve, the supervisor may take disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. The supervisor has the option to extend the PIP if there is evidence that additional time would allow the employee to reach the expected level of performance.

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### D. DISCIPLINE

Disciplinary action may be necessary in certain circumstances, if corrective action has not improved behavior, if the behavior is not sustained, or if it is so egregious as to warrant discipline. Discipline may include a written warning, an unpaid suspension, or discharge. If a situation warrants corrective action, it should be taken with the objective of correcting inadequate performance or misconduct.

### E. DISCHARGE

Discharge results in the loss of employment and income, therefore, supervisors must consult with their department chair or director and the Office of Employee and Labor Relations in University Human Resources before taking action.

Grounds for termination are affected by factors including the persistence or severity of the concern, prior performance and conduct, and management's assessment of all the relevant factors. Neither exhaustive nor sequential steps are required, and every action need not be taken in each case, but depends up on the relevant circumstances of each case. The following circumstances justify such action, but this list is not all-inclusive.

- Insubordination
- Inadequacy in performing assigned duties
- Negligence
- Inefficiency
- Incompetence
- Insubordination
- Rehabilitated alcoholism or narcotics addiction
- Dishonesty
- Unlawful discrimination
- Failure to maintain a license, certificate, or qualification necessary for a job classification or position
- Any act or conduct which adversely affects the employee's performance or adversely affects the employing agency
- Any other good cause for discharge or suspension

A department head must notify the affected employee of the discharge and the reasons for this action in writing within 24 hours after the discharge. A copy of the notice of discharge will be sent to the department to the Vice President of Human Resources and will be maintained in the employee's official personnel file.