

**Iowa State University**  
**P&S Performance 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, being careful to calibrate acceptable to outstanding performance, where possible. The following guidelines are intended to assist supervisors to make the ISU Performance Management Program a positive and helpful tool for improving, recognizing and managing performance.

**A. REPORTING AND RECORDING PERFORMANCE.**

Each supervisor should develop a file for each employee in which written factual examples of specific occurrences of "better than satisfactory" or "less than satisfactory" performance are kept. Keeping a record of notable events involving an employee helps a supervisor to review and summarize work performance over several months. Furthermore, this documentation assists in recalling performance indicators throughout the year. This file should be a record that describes who, what, when, where, and the positive or negative results. Tools in this process include an accurate position description and responsibilities statement (PDR) and well-defined performance standards.

**Position Expectations:** Develop a clear position description and responsibilities statement (PDR) that clearly articulates standards and work goals of the position so that an employee can clearly see what would constitute a job well done. The PDR should align with the essential functions of the Job Profile. Each P&S employee's PDR should list specific duties and responsibilities for the employee's particular position in the department. The supervisor and employee should work together to keep the PDR current, realistic, and understandable.

**Measurement of Position Expectations:** A clear PDR along with well-defined performance standards and goals are essential to good supervision and good performance management. Every position should have measurable factors that will help identify performance standards. These standards may change from year to year, however, the employee should know in advance the standards the supervisor is going to measure and where possible, the quantity and quality that will indicate satisfactory performance on the position, as well as the standards for performance that exceeds expectations. Both levels of standards should include reference to attitude, behavior, and professionalism. Professional development activities must be part of the expectations for the employee. Clear understanding of performance standards and goals provides a greater probability of employee success. Goals and performance standards should be clear, so employees can evaluate their own work performance and understand their supervisor's evaluation.

**B. MANAGING IMPROVEMENT.**

Effective performance management involves a written performance evaluation document that incorporates a summary of communications occurring throughout the year. There should be no surprises when evaluation of work and feedback to the employee occur on a routine basis, and as work is processed and new instructions are given or revised. Managing improvement through effective evaluation may include offering continued training and discussions, self-directed learning, and other strategies that improve competence and ability.

**C. MANAGING DESIRED OUTCOMES.**

When an employee is rated “Needs Improvement” which indicates a serious problem concerning performance or behavior, the supervisor will be prompted in workday to work with their HR Partner and University Human Resources to prepare a **Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)**. A PIP is a corrective action that gives the employee an explanation of the deficient performance or problem behavior. The supervisor will set the expected level of performance or behavior and the action necessary for the employee to meet the expectations. The supervisor should discuss and outline for the employee in the PIP the expectations, the timeframe (which is not less than 90 days) for improvement, and the consequences for failure to meet the standards documented. At the close of the meeting, the employee should be reminded of the timeframe and the date of the follow up meeting. The PIP will be provided to the employee within twenty-four hours after the meeting and signed by both the employee and supervisor to acknowledge receipt. The supervisor must conduct the follow up meeting on the date noted to determine whether the employee is making progress in the correction of the issues outlined in the PIP or whether further corrective action is needed. 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 dismissal.

D. **CORRECTIVE ACTION.**

Corrective action is not intended to be punitive. The objective of corrective actions is to improve performance, conduct or behavior. If a situation warrants corrective action, the corrective action should be taken with the objective of correcting inadequate or poor performance, conduct and/or behavior. The supervisor may develop a performance improvement plan, as a strategy for helping employees improve performance. Supervisors must communicate to employees that failure to correct disciplinary problems may lead to discipline or discharge. While the desired outcome of corrective action is rehabilitation, skill building and performance improvement, unsuccessful efforts may result in discipline which may be applied in a manner consistent with the level of the non-performance or the misconduct. An inability or unwillingness to meet this expectation within the timeline may result in discipline or discharge.

F. **DISCIPLINE.**

Disciplinary actions may be necessary in certain circumstances, if corrective action has not improved performance or behavior, or if the performance or behavior is not sustained or if conduct or behavior is so egregious as to warrant discipline. Discipline constitutes a punitive action, which may include a written negative evaluation for the personnel file, an unpaid suspension, a demotion, and potentially discharge.

The decision to discharge an employee requires consultation with the Employee and Labor Relations in University Human Resources. However, nothing in this section should be interpreted to require exhaustive or sequential steps, and every action need not be taken in each case, but depends upon the relevant circumstances of each case. The following circumstances justify such action. This list, however, is not all inclusive.

- Violation of, or failure to comply with, state or federal law or published rules, regulations, policies, or procedures of the employing department or of the University.
- Discrimination or harassment as stipulated by ISU policy.
- Unauthorized possession by employees of dangerous weapons--concealed or unconcealed--on University property, on the worksite, in University vehicles, or in personal vehicles when on University property shall be a violation of ISU policy.
- Threats or acts that affect or are perceived to affect the safety, health, or well-being of another person.
- An act that causes disruption of work being performed.
- An act or conduct (on or off the job) that adversely affects the employee's performance and/or the accomplishment of the position.
- Failure or refusal to comply with a lawful request or to accept a proper assignment from an authorized supervisor.
- Inefficiency, incompetence, or negligence in the performance of duties.
- Possession of narcotics, alcoholic beverages, or other unlawful drugs on University property or while performing duties of employment, drinking alcoholic beverages or using unlawful drugs on duty, or reporting for duty under the influence of alcohol and/or unlawful drugs.
- Dishonesty of any kind including but not limited to theft of property, equipment, or funds belonging to ISU or to others; use of time, material, or facilities for purposes unrelated to the work of ISU; removal or borrowing of property, equipment, or funds belonging to ISU or others without permission; or misrepresentation for the purpose of obtaining employee benefits or privileges.
- Soliciting or accepting anything of value based on an understanding that one's official action or judgment will be influenced thereby.
- Using one's position for personal gain, including the use of confidential information received through one's position to obtain favor or financial gain (other than compensation provided by law) for oneself or others.
- Inappropriate handling or release of confidential or other information not authorized for release.
- Falsification, fraud, or omission of information in applying for a position.
- Unauthorized or improper use of any type of leave or abuse of meal or rest periods.

- Repeated tardiness or unauthorized leave, including unauthorized departure from the work area.
- Failure to maintain satisfactory working relationships with students, the public, other employees, or supervisors.
- Failure to obtain and/or maintain a current license or certification required by law or department standards as a condition of employment.
- Conviction of a felony.
- Insubordinate acts or language toward a supervisor or other official, leader or evaluator when those behaviors adversely impact the work or the work environment.
- Failure to use safety equipment or endangering self and others by engaging in unsafe practices.
- Any other behavior not in the best interest of the University.

F. *DISCHARGE/DISMISSAL.*

Other acts or omissions by an employee contrary to standards of work performance or employee conduct for a particular position may warrant discipline. The severity of the discipline and the decision to discharge an employee require consultation with Employee and Labor Relations in University Human Resources. Prior to final action, the respective dean, director, or vice president must approve the supervisor's action and notify the office of the senior vice president or president.

- The seriousness, persistence or severity of the individual employee's deficiencies in performance and/or conduct, prior performance and conduct, and management's assessment of appropriate can serve as rationale as grounds for termination.
- Termination/discharge results in the loss of employment and income, therefore, supervisors shall consult their respective dean or director, with the Employee and Labor Relations in University Human Resources.
- Final determination of an action to terminate is the decision of the respective dean, director, or vice president, who will notify the office of the senior vice president or president.
- *DISMISSAL*, as in [Summary Dismissal](#), is a separate personnel action. Please review the policy carefully before proceeding.