

Iowa State University

Performance Management Program For Professional and Scientific Employees

I. INTRODUCTION

Iowa State University recognizes the importance of performance management. This ISU Performance Management Program for Professional and Scientific employees is required by policy. See [Professional and Scientific Performance Management Policy](#). The University believes that planned communication with valuable feedback regarding performance is critical to continuous improvement, professional development and excellence. Furthermore, supervisors are charged with the responsibility of growing, managing and rewarding talent, and the supervisor's evaluation of and communication with employees will be a measured expectation of that supervisor's management and supervision. This responsibility requires consistent measurement instruments of job-related expectations, which are communicated to the employee and reinforced through regular communication.

- A. **BACKGROUND.** The University acknowledges its intention to comply with applicable Federal law, Iowa State statutes and Board of Regents Policy regarding pay equity and comparable worth. Additionally, ISU accepts its responsibility for striving for excellence and competing in world markets.
- B. **RATIONALE.** An exceptional environment is an environment that acknowledges and advances excellence through the reward, award and recognition of employee performance as an integral part of employee growth and assessment.

II. PURPOSES OF ISU PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Program is a set of procedures and guidelines that help implement the Performance Management Policy. It is the procedure supervisors and employees will use in establishing expectations, measuring progress toward those expectations, and managing performance. Since it has been the practice of a majority supervisors to use performance evaluations to inform the salary decision-making process, this program expects that evaluations will be conducted at least annually.

Therefore, the following are critical to the success of this Program:

- A. **BASIC COMMUNICATION TOOL.** Communication is the most critical factor in the evaluation and development of performance. The program offers guidelines and timelines to both employees and their supervisors. The best outcome of the Program is when both the supervisor and employee have an effective communication of expectations and both have an understanding of how expectations will be measured and rewarded. (See **Outline for Conducting an Effective Performance Review [PDF]**.)

- B. **SUPERVISORS WITH CONSISTENT AND CREDIBLE EVALUATION TOOLS.** If utilized properly, the Guidelines for Supervisors, which is a set of tools and samples for supervisors provided within this program, will allow the supervisor to determine how the position's duties contribute to the goals of the unit and how and to what degree the performance of the incumbent helps satisfy those goals. Performance can be measured in terms of knowledge and skills, but also could include attitude and behavior. Supervisors would be well-served to develop a communication template that allows them to communicate expectations to employees regardless of the specific or unique job duties. Supervisors may also get assistance in communicating expectations on the [University Human Resources website](#).
- C. **EMPLOYEES RECEIVE CONSISTENT AND CREDIBLE MEASURES.** Employees can use the tools within this program and the supervisor's expressed priorities to establish priorities, plan workload, and pursue skill-development opportunities.
- D. **DOCUMENTATION.** In the positive context and within the intent of this program, the tools utilized in assessing performance, which includes attitude and behavior, can be used to document performance that is deserving of monetary considerations or other rewards or acknowledgements. Conversely, the tools can also document non-performance, and guide appropriate corrective action or disciplinary action. (See **Measuring and Assessing Performance** [PDF].)
- E. **INFORMAL AND FORMAL COMMUNICATION.** For the purpose of this program, the key roles are those of the supervisor and employee being supervised and evaluated. The supervisor is responsible for communicating general assessments of performance informally on a regular basis and in writing at least once a year or during the sixth month after there has been a reassignment or reclassification of a position with an incumbent.
- F. **TIMELINES.** While performance may be measured at any time, this program intends that formal, written reviews occur at least annually, on or around three months (new hires) or the sixth month after there has been a reassignment or reclassification of a position with an incumbent.
- G. **REASONABLENESS.** It cannot be said often enough that communication is critical, but equally important is that the expectations must reasonably reflect the duties and responsibilities of the position held by the employee being evaluated.

III. **REWARD AND RECOGNITION**

When an employee is rated as "Excellent", "Outstanding", "More Than Satisfactory", "Meritorious", or "Exceptional", or any other language that shows that the employee has "exceeded expectations," the employee may be eligible for reward, recognition, advancement, and/or a developmental opportunity. The [University's Exceptional Performance Pay Program](#) for non-organized Professional and Scientific employees is such a program. The Guidelines can be viewed on the [UHR web site](#).

- A. **REWARD AND RECOGNITION.** An employee exceeds expectations when demonstrating extra initiative or creativity in performing job duties and responsibilities, when assisting others, or otherwise advancing the goals of the unit and the vision of the University. When an employee exceeds expectations in this way, the policy and this procedure support appropriate recognition or reward when possible.
- B. **OTHER REWARDS.** While “exceeds expectations” may lead to a financial reward for employees based on performance, salary is not the only means of reward and recognition. Employees may also receive travel, educational or other growth opportunities as a means of recognition.
- C. **TEAM REWARDS.** Supervisors should be creative about recognizing and rewarding team accomplishments.

Supervisors should encourage an environment of excellence by naming or supporting nominations of P&S employees who could qualify for university, P&S, alumni or Regents recognition programs. [P&S Council Awards](#)

IV. **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

Iowa State University endorses a performance management system. The resource “**P&S Performance Management Program Guidelines for Supervisors [PDF]**” provides direction and guidance regarding the following elements:

- Job expectations (qualifications and duties)
- Measurement of job expectations
- Performance evaluation guidelines
- Meets or exceeds expectations
- **Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) [PDF]** for unsatisfactory performance or behavior
- Discipline for unsatisfactory performance or behavior
- Discharge for unsatisfactory performance or behavior

V. **CORRECTIVE ACTION, DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE**

Iowa State University has the authority and responsibility to assign, guide, coach and discipline employees. The expectation is that supervisors will satisfy these responsibilities in a fair, consistent, and reasonable manner. Also, ISU employees are expected to satisfy job performance expectations and standards of conduct and behavior that communicate professionalism. When an employee does not meet the specified standards of performance and behavior, corrective action, discipline or discharge may be warranted.

VI. **SUMMARY DISMISSAL**

Termination of employment by summary dismissal is a serious action. It is a separate policy from PMP. The full policy and procedures for supervisors and grievance rights for employees are on the [University Human Resources website](#).

VII. COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

See [P&S Dispute Resolution Policy](#) and [P&S Dispute Resolution Procedures \[PDF\]](#).

An employee may address complaints and grievances through informal and formal means. Employees may file complaints and grievances on various aspects of their work environment and conditions and on the management actions that adversely impact the employee's environment and conditions. Employees may also file appeals on the decisions made or actions taken on his/her grievance. However, the employee should be aware of the steps to follow in grievances and appeals. The ISU Performance Management Program treats the first objection of the employee to the supervisor's action as the grievance. The grievance is the first step in opposing a supervisor's personnel action, corrective action, disciplinary action or discharge, and the route the grievant follows depends on whether he/she has lost his/her job or income.

VIII. EMPLOYEE RECORDS

Corrective action, a non-punitive action, is typically recorded in supervisor's notes and in departmental employee files.

Discipline and discharge actions must be transmitted to University Human Resources to become part of the official employee record.