



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

National Operations Center
Denver Federal Center, Building 50
P.O. Box 25047
Denver, Colorado 80225-0047

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To: All National Operations Center Supervisors

From: Lynda B. Stelzer
Director, National Operations Center

Subject: Employee Performance Appraisal Plan (EPAP) Guidance for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010
Closeout and Establishment of FY 2011 EPAP

The purpose of this Information Bulletin is to provide guidance for accomplishing the close-out of FY 2010 EPAPs for all National Operations Center employees, as well as guidance on establishing new performance plans for FY 2011.

FY 2010 Close-out – Due Dates (DD): November 12, 2010

- Performance plans for FY 2010 must be completed within 30 days after the end of the performance appraisal period.
- The rating of record is the evaluation of employee performance against the elements and standards in an employee's performance appraisal plan. The rating of record is based upon work performed during the entire appraisal period.
- To receive a rating of record, the employee must be performing in a position supervised by the rating official and under an approved performance plan for the last 90 days. The performance period may be extended for up to a maximum of 90 days past the end of the appraisal period to allow for the rating of employees who have not been in the same position, under the same supervisor, or under performance standards for the full 90 days at the end of the appraisal period.
- If an employee does not have an opportunity to perform a critical element during the rating period, no rating will be assigned for that element and the words "Not Rated" should be written on the EPAP for that element.
- A narrative summary must be written for each critical element assigned a rating of "Exceptional," "Minimally Successful," or "Unsatisfactory." This narrative should

contain examples of the employee's performance that substantiate and explain how the employee's performance falls within the levels assigned. The narrative summaries are recorded on the EPAP or may be attached separately. A narrative summary is encouraged, but not required, for ratings of "Superior" and "Fully Successful."

- All ratings of record of "Exceptional," "Minimally Successful," and "Unsatisfactory" must be reviewed, approved and signed by the reviewing official and discussed with the Division Chief prior to discussion with the employee. A review of the summary rating is not required for ratings of "Superior" and "Fully Successful."
- Ratings of "Minimally Successful" or "Unsatisfactory" should be addressed with Stella Franco, Human Resources Officer or Bob Hamlett, Employee/Labor Relations Specialist for guidance. Please note that employees who receive a "Minimally Successful" or "Unsatisfactory" rating on any one element will receive an overall rating of either "Minimally Successful" or "Unsatisfactory" regardless of the overall points assigned.
- Customer Service Element: All employees must have a critical element related to customer service and receive a rating for this element.
- Parts A through B should be signed and dated.
- The final rating for each element should be noted on the EPAP, Part C, and a final rating calculated in Part D. After obtaining any necessary approvals, the supervisor should meet with the employee to discuss the summary rating, and obtain the employee's signature to indicate receipt of the EPAP. If an employee refuses to sign the EPAP, please annotate the original copy of the EPAP.
- All supervisors must have a standard in one of their elements, stating that they will be responsible for managing their program budgets within two percent of their budget limit, and will not exceed the budget limit.

Submit the original completed EPAP to Wade Frary, Human Resources Specialist, OC-110, upon completion by the due date, but no later than close of business November 12, 2010.

Performance Awards

Employees who receive an overall rating of record of "Superior" or "Exceptional" are eligible, and may be considered for a performance award. The following applies:

- Exceptional (Level 5) – Eligible for one or more of the following: a monetary award of up to 5 percent of base pay, a Quality Step Increase (QSI), Time-Off Award, and/or other appropriate equivalent recognition.
- Superior (Level 4) – Eligible for a monetary award of up to 3 percent of base pay, Time-Off Award, and/or other appropriate equivalent recognition.
- Employees who receive a "Fully Successful" rating are not eligible for performance awards.
- Our current delegation allows for the following: Immediate supervisors may award up to \$1,000 gross; Division Chiefs may award up to \$2,499 gross; and the associate and center Director may award up to \$4,999 gross and approve QSI's.

Performance awards are initiated by:

- Indicating the applicable percentage or gross dollar amount at the bottom of the original DI-3100 or DI-3100(S) EPAP form.
- Supervisors must write in the cost code allocation that they obtain from their division chief for performance awards.

If the dollar amount is over your designated threshold, the document used to initiate the award should be routed through your appropriate supervisory chain to obtain the proper approval. The individual designated to sign the award should do so at the bottom of the DI-3100 or DI-3100S form with a note annotating “approved.” All performance awards must be submitted to Wade Frary, OC-110, as part of the EPAP form.

Please ensure you use the most current EPAP Form. DI-3100S dated September 2009 for supervisors and DI-3100 dated September 2009, for all other employees are accessible at: <http://www.doi.gov/hrm/guidance/di-3100s2011.doc>, supervisory; or <http://www.doi.gov/hrm/guidance/di-3100.doc>, non-supervisory.

Establishing FY 2011 Performance Plans

Performance plans for FY 2011 must be established within 60 days from the beginning of the new performance cycle. The most recent version of the EPAP must be used, and can be found at the links listed above. Please be sure that the correct supervisory or non-supervisory form is used.

The FY 2011 EPAP for supervisors has been modified for FY 2011 to include President Obama’s Hiring Reform initiative. Performance plans must display the following characteristics:

- **Strategic Alignment:** At least one critical element, and preferably all elements, should align with and support organizational goals and targets that are established in an organization’s annual performance/strategic plan and/or that have been included in the Senior Executive Service (SES) members’ performance plans. Alignment should be clear so that employees can see how their performance plans support achievement of organizational goals. Including a generic statement in performance plans that employees’ performance requirements support organizational goals is not adequate for communicating alignment. Similarly, restating organizational goals without including the metrics for determining performance against those goals is not adequate.

A copy of the section on goals and measures from the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) Strategic Plan for FY 2007–2012 should be used as a guide in determining appropriate strategic linkage. Each employee is required to have at least one GPRA measure on their performance plan.

The complete Strategic Plan is accessible at:
http://www.doi.gov/.../strat_plan_fy2007_2012.pdf.

- **Results-focused:** Critical elements and standards should be written in terms of expected results. While it may be desirable to include critical elements that focus on competencies such as teamwork or customer service, at least one critical element must hold an employee accountable for achieving a result that directly supports organizational goal achievement.
- **Credible Measures:** Employee performance plans should include credible measures of performance. General measures of performance related to quality, quantity, timeliness, and/or cost effectiveness have been described in the generic benchmark standards for non-supervisory employees. Those benchmark standards can be used, but must be augmented with specific measurable criteria for quality, quantity, timeliness, and/or cost effectiveness at least to the “Fully-Successful” level for each critical element so that employees understand how their performance will be evaluated. These measures must be appropriate to the employee’s level of responsibility within the organization, and must provide for distinguishing between rating levels. Where benchmark standards are not provided, standards specifically developed, when appropriate, must be utilized for individual positions.
- **Customer Service Element:** All employees must have a critical element related to customer service. Draft language is attached for your use. The language can be modified to meet the needs of your organization, so long as the standards specify that employees will be held accountable for "how" they do their jobs related to treatment, responsiveness, etc., to both internal and external customers.
- **Supervisory Standards:** Separate benchmark standards apply for the mandatory supervisory element. The supervisory EPAP was revised in 2010 and may be accessed at the previously mentioned link. It must be used for all supervisory employees, and the only modification allowed is augmentation of the standards with measurable criteria. Note: The Office of Personnel Management does not require development of measurable standards for the supervisory element.
- **Mandatory Training:** All supervisors and employees must be provided training in performance management. The training tool that is attached to each EPAP accomplishes that goal, and should be delivered to each employee when plans are established. The employee must sign the EPAP form indicating the training information was provided.
- **Employee Involvement:** Employees must be engaged in the process of determining critical elements and performance standards. The EPAP requires supervisors and employees to sign verifying employee involvement was solicited.
- **Division chief Obligation:** Division chiefs must send certifications to Wade Frary stating that FY 2011 Performance Plans have been initiated by November 30 for their entire division.

Please be advised that there were minor modifications to the Performance Appraisal Handbook and 370 DM 430 in 2009 to implement findings from recent Merit System Protection Board decisions concerning Minimally Successful Benchmark Standards for employees. For the 2011 performance cycle, the Supervisory DI-3100S was amended to add “Hiring Reform” to the first supervisory element as required by the Hiring Reform initiative.

If you have any questions or need assistance regarding this guidance, please contact Wade Frary at 303-236-2682.

Signed by:
Lynda B. Stelzer
Director, National Operations Center

Authenticated by:
William Mills
Records Administrator

1 Attachment
1-Critical Elements and Performance Standards (2 pp)

Distribution:
OC-110, William Mills
OC-521, BLM Library