

Performance Evaluations

1001.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the Saratoga Springs Police Department performance evaluation system.

1001.2 POLICY

The Saratoga Springs Police Department shall use a performance evaluation system to measure, document and recognize work performance. The performance evaluation will serve as an objective guide for the recognition of good work and the development of a process for improvement.

The Department evaluates employees in a non-discriminatory manner based upon job-related factors specific to the employee's position, without regard to sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability or other protected classes.

This policy is not applicable to the probation period of recruit officers or officers during their field training as required for Municipal Police Training Council (MPTC) certification and by Saratoga Springs.

The process of performance appraisal should be viewed as a serious supervisory function designed to achieve specific objectives, including:

- A. To maintain and improve employee performance
- B. To reward exceptional work habits and correct inappropriate ones
- C. To identify training needs (Individual and department)
- D. To provide data for consideration in selection of the most qualified personnel for assignments, promotions and other personnel actions
- E. To provide data for consideration in disciplinary actions, when appropriate

1001.3 TYPES OF EVALUATIONS

The Department shall use the following types of evaluations:

Regular - An evaluation completed at regular intervals by the employee's immediate supervisor. Regular evaluations shall be conducted annually. A midyear performance review will be completed in July and submitted with the annual evaluation.

When an employee transfers to a different assignment in the middle of an evaluation period and less than six months has transpired since the transfer, the evaluation should be completed by the current supervisor with input from the previous supervisor.

Special - An evaluation that may be completed at any time the Chief of Police or Assistant Chief of Police determine an evaluation is necessary to address less than standard performance. The evaluation may include a plan for follow-up action (e.g., performance improvement plan (PIP), remedial training, retraining).

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1001.3.1 RATINGS

When completing an evaluation, the supervisor will identify the rating category that best describes the employee's performance. The definition of each rating category is as follows:

Excels in Standard - Performance is well beyond that required for the position. It is exceptional performance, definitely superior or extraordinary.

Above standards - Performance is better than demonstrated by a competent employee. It is performance superior to what is required, but is not of such nature to warrant a rating of outstanding.

Meets standards - Performance of a competent employee. It is satisfactory performance that meets the standards required of the position.

Needs improvement - Performance is less than the standards required of the position. A needs improvement rating shall be thoroughly discussed with the employee.

Below Standard - Performance is inferior to the standards required of the position. It is inadequate or undesirable performance that cannot be allowed to continue.

Does Not Apply- The rating category does not apply to the current work assignment of the employee.

Supervisor comments may be included in the evaluation to document the employee's strengths, weaknesses and requirements for improvement. Any job dimension rating marked as unsatisfactory or outstanding shall be substantiated with supervisor comments.

1001.4 EVALUATION PROCESS

Performance evaluations of all employees below the rank of Lieutenant shall be conducted in accordance with the guidelines established in the Saratoga Springs Police Department Employee Performance Appraisal System Supervisor's Guidebook. [See attachment: Employee Performance Appraisal System Supervisors Guidebook_.pd](#)

Supervisors should meet with the employees they supervise at the beginning of the evaluation period to discuss expectations and establish performance standards. Each supervisor should discuss the tasks of the position, standards of expected performance and the evaluation criteria with each employee.

Performance evaluations cover a specific period and should be based upon documented performance dimensions that are applicable to the duties and authorities granted to the employee during that period. The criteria upon which employees are evaluated are listed in the appendix to this policy. Evaluations should be completed by each employee's immediate supervisor. Other supervisors directly familiar with the employee's performance during the rating period should be consulted by the evaluating supervisor for input.

Assessment of an employee's job performance is an ongoing process. Continued coaching and feedback provides supervisors and employees with opportunities to correct performance issues as they arise and to acknowledge good work. Periodic discussions with the employee during the

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course of the evaluation period are encouraged. Supervisors should document all discussions in the prescribed manner.

Non-probationary employees demonstrating substandard performance shall be notified in writing as soon as possible in order to have an opportunity to remediate the issues. Performance that is below standard shall be documented on either a Performance Observation Form or Job Counseling Memorandum or other appropriate Department forms.

All supervisors shall receive instruction in the rating procedures and rater responsibilities as a precondition of involvement with the performance evaluation system.

1001.5 EVALUATION FREQUENCY

Supervisors shall ensure that all employees they supervise are evaluated at the beginning of each calendar year.

Those employees, including entry-level officers who are required to successfully complete a probationary period should be evaluated at the direction of the Chief of Police.

1001.6 EVALUATION INTERVIEW

When the supervisor has completed his/her evaluation, a private discussion of the evaluation should be scheduled with the employee. The supervisor should discuss the evaluation ratings and respond to any questions the employee may have. The supervisor should provide relevant counseling regarding advancement, specialty positions and training opportunities. Any performance areas in need of improvement and goals for reaching the expected level of performance should be identified and discussed. If the employee has reasonable objections to any of the ratings, the supervisor may make appropriate adjustments to the evaluation. The reason for such adjustments shall be documented.

Employees may write comments in an identified section of the evaluation. The supervisor and employee will sign and date the evaluation.

1001.7 APPEAL

An employee who disagrees with his/her evaluation may provide a formal written response that will be attached to the evaluation, or may request an appeal.

To request an appeal, the employee shall forward a written memorandum within three days to the evaluating supervisor's Division Commander or the authorized designee. The memorandum shall identify the specific basis for the appeal and include any relevant information for the reviewer to consider. The Division Commander or authorized designee will review the basis of the appeal and submit the findings to the employee and Chief of Police.

1001.8 CHAIN OF REVIEW

The signed performance evaluation and any employee attachment should be forwarded to the evaluating supervisor's Division Commander or the authorized designee. The Division

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Commander or the authorized designee shall review the evaluation for fairness, impartiality, uniformity and consistency, and shall consider any written response or appeal made by the employee.

The Division Commander or the authorized designee should evaluate the supervisor on the quality of ratings given.

1001.9 RETENTION AND DISTRIBUTION

The original performance evaluation and any original correspondence related to an appeal shall be maintained by the Chief of Police in accordance with the Personnel Records Policy.

A copy of the evaluation and any documentation of a related appeal shall be provided to the employee and also forwarded to the Chief of Police.

Attachments

Employee Performance Appraisal System Supervisors Guidebook_.pdf



Employee Performance Appraisal System

Supervisor's Guidebook

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I. Introduction

The performance appraisal system is designed to be integrated with the mission and purpose of our agency and reflect organizational goals and objectives. It is designed to provide employees with feedback on the full spectrum of their work. It will identify a member's strengths, as well as specific areas where the member may improve. It is intended to promote teamwork, foster communication and develop the leadership skills of our supervisors. The appraisal will allow the organization to acknowledge past performance by helping the Department Administration identify personnel for promotions and assignment.

The rating system will involve semi-annual evaluations and the completion of a simple form at the end of a one year rating period. It is designed to compare the behavior of a member to the established standard for a specific job related task. If done properly, the rating will enhance the feedback to our members, recognize excellent work and assist a member who needs to improve job performance. Conferences between the rater and subordinate are structured to enhance communication throughout the organization.

This product is modeled after other evaluation systems from across the country. While no single performance appraisal instrument is perfect, this system should provide an effective personnel management tool and strengthen our agency's professionalism and accountability. In summary, the new performance appraisal will provide members with a tool to guide them in performing their daily job tasks in order to provide more effective police service to the public.

II. Purpose

This performance evaluation system is designed to serve as an objective method of measuring, documenting and recognizing work performance.

When conducted properly, the evaluation process serves as an objective guide for individual and organizational development. The performance appraisal will identify employee strengths as well as areas in which the employee may need to improve performance. In addition to individual development, the appraisal process will help to identify areas which the department may need to address as a whole.

Performance appraisal is a serious and important supervisory function. Performance appraisals are utilized by the department to achieve specific objectives including; maintaining and improving individual and department performance, rewarding exceptional work and correcting deficiencies, identifying training needs, and providing data for consideration in making assignments and promotions as well as during disciplinary actions, when appropriate.

III. The Appraisal Process

One of the most important aspects of a supervisor's duties is the training and development of subordinates. Training is an ongoing function that never ceases. The supervisor has the responsibility to both superiors and subordinates to improve and develop members under their command. Supervisors have a significant role in the effective implementation of the performance appraisal process.

In order to properly conduct performance appraisals, supervisors will:

- 1- Discuss the implementation of the appraisal system with the second line supervisor prior to the start of the rating period. First and second line supervisors will identify any job tasks that **DO NOT APPLY** to members under their command. Some tasks may be done infrequently, but nevertheless are important tasks that should be performed properly when required. They should be included in the rating. Most police officer positions will require between 23 and 29 tasks to be rated.
- 2- Conduct an initial interview with the subordinate as a means of communicating organizational goals and objectives. Individual goals and expectations as well as any concerns of the member should be addressed. The supervisor will advise the member of any job tasks that do not apply to the member's job assignment.
- 3- Provide feedback throughout the rating period. The best way to reinforce desirable behavior and correct unacceptable behavior is with immediate feedback. The interview at the end of the rating period should not be the first time subordinates receive feedback about their performance. Supervisors will conduct **semi-annual meetings** with personnel assigned to them. Documentation of the semi-annual meetings will be included in the annual appraisal of the employee.
- 4- Documentation is an important key to this appraisal system. Supervisors should seek to complete the most accurate, comprehensive and objective appraisal possible. Seek input from a variety of sources and accurately document behaviors for a written record to refresh the supervisor's memory and to justify the ratings given.
- 5- Focus only on observable, job-related behavior and how that behavior compares to the established standard. The appraisal should not attempt to rate the perceived attitudes, values or personality of the member.
- 6- Meet with the second line supervisor to discuss each member's rating and to review documentation gathered over the course of the rating period.
- 7- Schedule an appropriate time and place for the appraisal interview. Give subordinates encouragement and an opportunity to complete narrative sections.
- 8- Take the time to listen to the employee and discuss specific guidelines for improvement. Be willing to assist subordinates in reaching those goals.

IV. Types of Ratings and Timetables

Regular Ratings:

Regular Ratings shall be conducted annually. The Employee Performance Appraisal Instrument shall be completed no later than February 15 annually.

Special Ratings:

Special ratings shall be conducted in the following circumstances:

1. If any member receives an “Unsatisfactory” rating in overall performance in a Regular Appraisal. Special Ratings completed pursuant to this section will be conducted at intervals designated by the Chief of Police.
2. A Special Rating MAY be conducted as part of administrative action for substandard performance.
3. A Special Rating MAY be conducted at the direction of the Chief of Police or Assistant Chief of Police. The reason for a special rating completed pursuant to this section shall be documented by the Chief of Police or Assistant Chief of Police.

V. Instructions for Completing the Appraisal Instrument

Completely fill out all administrative boxes on page one of the Employee Performance Appraisal Instrument.

Documentation:

Documenting job related behavior has always been required of supervisors. This evaluation instrument has a series of job tasks and each job task has a standard of behavior that indicates what is expected of the member. Documentation is required for behavior that either exceeds or falls below what is expected in a specific job task.

Documentation should note behavior that is either well above or well below expectations. It is not necessary to document behavior that meets the standard. For example, minor mistakes on reports or an occasional late report is expected behavior. Although, these items should be noted, they would not normally be included as documentation unless there was a persistent or serious problem. Supervisors are given discretion regarding documentation of behavior that is marginally above or below the standard. Second line supervisors have the responsibility of insuring that first line supervisors are properly documenting the work of their subordinates.

Responsibility for documentation does not rest on raters alone. ALL supervisors are responsible for the documentation of observed behavior. Documentation completed by other supervisors will be forwarded to the member's first line supervisor and will be considered in the appraisal for that period.

Any documentation MUST be brought to the attention of the member and acknowledged prior to being included in a performance appraisal. The acknowledgment indicates that the matter was brought to the attention of the member. The supervisor will determine, and note, the tasks the observed behavior applies to. All documentation will be kept in the member's performance appraisal folder, to be reviewed and applied at the end of the rating period. Documentation from supervisors of special details will be forwarded to the member's assigned shift/unit for inclusion in the appraisal for that period.

Documentation MAY consist of Letters of Commendation or Censure, community awards, notes from supervisors regarding observed behavior and any other written material

regarding the member's performance during the rating period. Documentation will be retained in the Shift/Unit commander's file cabinet inside the member's personnel jacket for a minimum of one year after the end of the rating period.

Rating Categories:

Rating categories for each job task are as follows:

1 = Below Standard

2= Needs Improvement

3 = Meets Standard

4 = Above Standard

5 = Excels in Standard

D = Does not Apply

To complete the Job Tasks and Performance Standards section of the appraisal instrument, carefully review the expected standard for each job task. Based on the available documentation indicate the rating for the member for each job task using the following guidelines:

- Absent any documentation a member must be given a rating of "Meets Standard" (3).
- Four forms of documentation are required for a member to receive a rating of either (1) "Below Standard" or (5) "Excels in Standard".
- Two forms of documentation are required for a rating of either (2) "Needs Improvement" or (4) "Above Standard"
- Ratings may be prorated for rating periods of less than one year
 - o Example: If an officer is being rated for the final three months of the year after coming off an extended injury period and received one POF rated above standard in job task "Officer Safety," the member may be rated as "Above Standard" (4) in job task number 2, "Officer Safety" during their annual appraisal.
- Contradictory documentation should result in a rating of "Meets Standard"

- Examples: During a regular rating period an officer receives four negative POFs and four POFs “Above Standard” in job task number 16 “Evidence Procedures,” then the overall rating for the appraisal instrument for the employee in job task number 16 will be “Meets Standard” (3). During a regular rating period an officer receives two negative POFs and one positive POF in job task 18 “Accident Investigation” then the employee is rated on the appraisal instrument as 3 “Meets Standard.”
- A job task that does not apply to the employee should be marked as (D) “Does Not Apply”

Job Tasks and Performance Standards:

Every employee will be rated on those job tasks that are relevant to their assignment. The standards for each job task are defined on the Performance Observation Form and the Employee Performance Appraisal Instrument.

Police Officer: Teamwork Tasks (1 through 6) Administration Tasks (7 through 15) Investigation Tasks (16 through 19) Enforcement Tasks (20 through 25) Communication Tasks (26 through 31)

Police Sergeant: Teamwork Tasks (1 through 6) Administration Tasks (7 through 15) Investigation Tasks (16 through 19) Enforcement Tasks (20 through 25) Communication Tasks (26 through 31) Supervision Tasks (32 through 36)

Police Dispatcher: Teamwork Tasks (1 through 5) Administration Tasks (6 through 14) Communication Tasks (15 through 22)

Identification Officer: Teamwork Tasks (1 through 5) Administration Tasks (6 through 16) Knowledge Tasks (17 through 19) Communication Tasks (20 through 22)

Parking Enforcement Officer: Teamwork Tasks (1 through 6) Administration Tasks (7 through 15) Enforcement Tasks (16 through 19) Communication Tasks (20 through 21)

Supervisors may include a rating for a job task that is outside the above guidelines if the supervisor has observed behavior by the employee that would be applicable.

- Example: A police officer displays excellent leadership during a particular incident and is recognized by a sergeant who issued the officer a POF in job task number 32 “Assume Leadership Role”. Although typically not a job task that is rated during an annual appraisal for a line level police offer, the rating sergeant may include a rating for the officer in job task 32 “Assume Leadership Role.”

Overall Rating Categories:

The Performance Appraisal System is designed to focus on the full range of job tasks and responsibilities and determine how a member performs these individual tasks throughout the course of the rating period. Certain tasks have been identified as “Mandatory,” meaning that members must be rated on these tasks and that they must meet or exceed the standard for these tasks. There are two overall rating categories: “Satisfactory” and “Unsatisfactory.”

Members must meet both of the following two criteria to receive an overall rating of “Satisfactory

1. The member must “Meet” or “Exceed” the standard for all “Mandatory Tasks,” AND
2. The member must “Meet” or “Exceed” the standard in at least eighty-five percent (85%) of the rated job tasks.
 - o Example: Investigator Jones received a rating in 26 job tasks. In all “Mandatory Tasks,” Investigator Jones received rating of “Meets Standard.” Investigator Jones must also meet or exceed standards in 85% or more of the 26 total job tasks that were rated.

Narrative Comments:

In the appropriate section raters shall note awards, commendations, letters of censure, job counseling memorandums or other negative or disciplinary documentation. The rater’s comment section should include an overall description of the employee’s performance. Raters may

include information that is not easily captured in the Job Tasks Performance Standards section or provide information relative to the employees performance that is not captured in other sections of the appraisal instrument. Strengths and weaknesses of the employee may be addressed in this section.

Performance Appraisal Conference:

First line raters will schedule conferences with their employees no later than January 31 each year. The employee shall be given an opportunity to complete the optional narrative section for self-evaluation. The following topics should be discussed with the employee during the Performance Appraisal Conference:

- The performance appraisal system
- Job tasks and standards
- Any ratings of 1,2,4 or 5 in any Job Task received by the employee
- Department Goals and Objectives (when applicable)
- The rater's expectations of the employee
- Strengths and weaknesses of the employee
- Short and long term professional goals of the employee
- Requests for specialized training

At the conclusion of the conference the member may either:

1. Acknowledge the appraisal and sign the instrument (via digital signature), or
2. Appeal the appraisal by checking the appropriate box and sign the instrument.

Appeals:

If a member disagrees with the performance appraisal, the member will follow the procedure listed below:

1. Any member requesting an appeal must complete and submit a Performance Appraisal Appeal Form to the Second Line Supervisor of the involved rater within three (3) employee work days of receiving their evaluation.
2. The Second Line Supervisor will meet with the original rater and the appealing member to review the original Performance Appraisal and the Performance Appraisal Rating Appeal Form.
3. The reviewing supervisor will conduct the review process within five (5) work days of receipt, and may modify or accept the original appraisal. Appropriate reasons for such modification or acceptance must be stated on the Performance Appraisal Appeal Form. Extension of the five day period for review may be extended for "good cause" by the Chief of Police.
4. The member will confirm their acceptance or rejection in writing on the Performance Appraisal Appeal Form.
5. If the member rejects the findings of the command supervisor review, he/she may present a grievance in accordance with the procedures provided in the labor relations contract with the city.

VI. Substandard Performance

One of the main purposes of this appraisal system is to improve the performance of individual members for all job tasks. The Department recognizes that at times, performance can fall below what is expected. This appraisal system is designed to allow the supervisor to take corrective action before more serious work problems develop. The system allows for a variety of supervisory interventions to bring substandard performance up to required work behavior. Continued poor performance results in greater intervention and corrective measures including Disciplinary action.

Below Standard Rating:

If a member is rated 1 - "Below Standard" in any one non-mandatory task for a single rating period, the first line supervisor will address ways to improve behavior and meet the standard [Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)]. This must be documented on the appraisal instrument.

Continued failure to meet standards in any non-mandatory job task may result in Job Counseling or further administrative action.

Unsatisfactory Performance:

In any rating period that any member receives an overall rating of "Unsatisfactory", the second line supervisor, upon signing the instrument will:

1. Meet with the first line supervisor to develop a Performance Improvement Plan for the member.
2. Meet with the Chief of Police to initiate further administrative action if necessary.

VII. Application to Promotion Process

This performance appraisal is designed primarily for the development of personnel. The instrument is designed to focus on performance in individual job tasks. The Department has also recognized a need to acknowledge past performance and will include the performance appraisal as part of the promotion process. As a formal part of the selection process for promotions, performance appraisals completed during the previous five (5) year period on every member eligible for promotion will be provided to the appointing authority for his/her review during the selection process.

Performance Observation Form

Police Officer/Sergeant

TO:

FROM:

DATE:

A = Above Standard B = Below Standard / Mark those that apply with A or B and explain below.

TEAMWORK

- ___ 1. INTEGRITY (Mandatory Task) - Possesses knowledge of organizational standards as set forth within Department Rules and Regulations. Adheres to laws and Department standards of ethical behavior. Does not allow personal friendships, prejudices or animosities to influence official decisions or law enforcement action.
- ___ 2. OFFICER SAFETY (Mandatory Task) - Minimizes hazards to self and others by following Department policies and procedures as they relate to the member's current assignment. Recognizes dangerous and potentially dangerous situations and reacts to minimize them.
- ___ 3. SHARE INFORMATION - Exchanges ideas and information with other members regarding criminal activity and community concerns.
- ___ 4. ASSIST OTHERS - Assists other members when requested or required. Displays respect and courtesy towards others in the workplace.
- ___ 5. NOTIFY SUPERVISOR - Keeps the supervisor informed of all important matters within member's assigned area and reports without delay any unusual conditions or occurrences.
- ___ 6. RESPONSE - Responds to scene or incident when required. Exercises common sense regarding response when not specifically required.

ADMINISTRATION

- ___ 7. RULES, REGULATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS (Mandatory Task) - Maintains working knowledge of department policy, procedures, rules, regulations and other instructions, and applies them in a manner consistent with the member's current assignment and the departments mission, goals, and objectives.
- ___ 8. EQUIPMENT / VEHICLE MAINTENANCE - Maintains vehicles and equipment, including personally issued equipment, uniforms and the department operations manual in compliance with Department standards. (Supervisor will inspect manual during rating)
- ___ 9. STATION ADMINISTRATION - Completes station administrative duties delegated by supervisory personnel. Participates in station maintenance to facilitate a clean and efficient work place.
- ___ 10. TIME MANAGEMENT - Regularly prioritizes tasks and manages time allowing assignments to be completed in a timely fashion.
- ___ 11. REPORTS / PAPERWORK - Completes clear and accurate documents requiring minimal correction. Regularly submits in a timely fashion.
- ___ 12. STATION OPERATIONS - Takes responsibility for station operations such as radio, telephone, NYSPIN terminal and computerized records system commensurate to assignment.
- ___ 13. PERSONAL APPEARANCE - Exercises proper care and attention to person, clothing, and equipment consistent with Department Rules and Regulations and current assignment.
- ___ 14. SICK TIME - How many sick days were used by employee during rating period? ___
- ___ 15. TARDINESS - How many times was employee late during rating period? _____

INVESTIGATION

- ___ 16. EVIDENCE PROCEDURES - Follows Departmental procedures in collecting evidence, examining and securing scenes. Documents all investigative steps taken and is able to account for steps not taken. Is familiar with the current available forensic identification techniques and their appropriate use.
- ___ 17. CRIMINAL / NON-CRIMINAL CASES - Conducts thorough criminal and non-criminal investigations. Documents information received and investigative steps taken, and can account for those steps not taken. Informs complainant of case status and/or refers complainant to appropriate resource.
- ___ 18. ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION - Secures scene to ensure public safety, requests assistance as necessary, conducts interviews and documents information to determine cause. Clears scene in a timely manner. Takes appropriate corrective and/or enforcement action.
- ___ 19. CRIME PREVENTION - Conducts checks of commercial, residential, and/or remote areas, as well as high crime areas, in an effort to prevent and detect crime. Provides information to the public regarding crime prevention.

ENFORCEMENT

- ___ 20. PENAL LAW - Maintains working knowledge of the Penal Law and other criminal laws. Applies them in a manner

consistent with member's current assignment.

- ___ 21. CRIMINAL PROCEDURE LAW - Maintains working knowledge of the Criminal Procedure Law and applies it in a manner consistent with member's current assignment.
- ___ 22. VEHICLE AND TRAFFIC LAW - Maintains working knowledge of the Vehicle & Traffic Law. Takes proper and appropriate enforcement action on both hazardous and nonhazardous violations consistent with member's current assignment.
- ___ 23. POST INTEGRITY - Complies with Department policy regarding post discipline and actively patrols assigned post.
- ___ 24. KNOWLEDGE OF PATROL AREA - Has working knowledge of roads and landmarks in assigned area. Is able to select direct routes of travel from one point to another. Is aware of unique geographical conditions and hazards in assigned area.
- ___ 25. KNOWLEDGE OF COMMUNITY - Interacts with community to address their concerns and crime problems. Identifies resources and develops lines of communication.

COMMUNICATION

- ___ 26. MEDIA - Utilizes the news media to insure dissemination of accurate information to the public or assist in investigations with the least possible disruption of Department activities.
- ___ 27. CITIZENS - Displays respect, courtesy and sensitivity in citizen contacts. Is open-minded and communicates without bias or prejudice. Readily conveys information and maintains open lines of communication with complainants, victims, witnesses and citizens.
- ___ 28. PUBLIC SPEAKING - Is knowledgeable about, and prepared to present subject matter during speaking assignments. Speaks clearly so that information is readily understood. Listens well, interacts and gives appropriate responses.
- ___ 29. OTHER AGENCIES - Maintains working relationship with various agencies consistent with current assignment. Provides and requests assistance when appropriate.
- ___ 30. COURT / DISTRICT ATTORNEY - Prepares for court, confers with DA when applicable. Testifies in a clear and articulate manner.
- ___ 31. MEDIATE DISPUTES - Mediates non-criminal disputes, offering possible avenues of resolution, in an effort to maintain order and prevent the commission of any criminal offense.

SUPERVISION

- ___ 32. ASSUME LEADERSHIP ROLE (Mandatory Task - Supervisors) - Sets example for others by regularly performing at or above all standards. Enables others to enhance performance by providing resources, advice, and support. Supports actions of members with supervisors when necessary. Is open to suggestions and credits others for their contributions. Identifies and properly uses the best attributes of others. Promotes fair treatment of others.
- ___ 33. DELEGATING/DECISION MAKING (Mandatory Task - Supervisors) - Obtains sufficient information to exercise a decision making role. Displays willingness to make decisions when necessary and/or required and accepts responsibility for decisions made. Delegates tasks to ensure efficient operation.
- ___ 34. EVALUATING PERFORMANCE (Mandatory Task - Supervisors) - Continuously and accurately documents subordinate's behavior and compares that with standards. Confers with subordinates and helps set professional goals.
- ___ 35. ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS - Conducts thorough investigations of administrative matters involving personnel in compliance with Department procedures. Takes investigative actions when necessary and makes appropriate notifications.
- ___ 36. PLANNING - Schedules and deploys personnel consistent with the routine needs of assigned area. Identifies and documents unusual events and concerns affecting assigned area and plans to deal with potential incidents.

Explain:

Supervisor's Signature

Date

Member's Signature

Common Rating Errors

In order to be effective, ratings must be accurate representations of the performance of the employees that are rated. Multiple ratings, completed over time by multiple supervisors generally tend to be very accurate. When employee ratings are found to be inaccurate the fault usually can be found, not in the system or the paperwork, but rather in the rater. Supervisors who do not take their responsibility to accurately assess performance or who simply go through the motions, are usually the culprit when an employee's ratings are inaccurate and therefore useless in terms of developing the employee or for use in promotion or disciplinary proceedings. Often supervisors receive little, if any, training in either the system they are required to use or the skills necessary to be an effective rater. Often raters are unaware that they are contributing to an inaccurate rating for an employee by committing one or more common rating errors which are discussed below.

The error of **leniency** is the most common rating error. Supervisor who are guilty of this rating error make the mistake of rating employees higher than they should. The employee is typically given rankings than are either not a realistic appraisal of their performance or are not justified by available documentation. Mainly supervisors who overrate employees do so because they fear having to confront an employee over poor performance or fear having to justify a low rating. Additionally, supervisory personnel often want to be liked and are lenient with employee ratings in order to gain favor with subordinates.

Lenient ratings are detrimental to employees, the supervisor and the organization. An employee that is consistently rated higher than is justified will often not have an accurate impression of their own performance. Poor habits may become ingrained and the officer will never recognize that they may need to improve in certain areas. The supervisor will lose credibility with both the subordinate and superiors who all will generally recognize an overly lenient appraisal when they see one. No amount of sugar-coated language can change the reality of an underperforming subordinate and the credibility of the supervisor is sure to suffer as a result. Finally, the error of leniency affects the organization as it tends to spread throughout the supervisory ranks and as a result, high performing officers will soon wonder if their efforts are

worth it. Additionally, administrators considering assignments and promotions will find the ratings conducted by supervisors who fall victim to the error of leniency as useless.

An example of leniency follows:

Officer X routinely fails to handcuff prisoners during court or for transport to the county jail. Sergeant A is good friends with Officer X and observes Officer X routinely fail to properly handcuff prisoners during transports. Sergeant A fails to address Officer X's handcuffing deficiency either verbally or in writing. Sergeant A does not want to admonish his friend or confront the behavior. During the annual performance appraisal Officer X is rated as "Meets Standard" in the category of "Officer Safety Procedures."

Clearly Officer X is not observing good officer safety techniques when transporting prisoners, and he likely knows it. Additionally, during an assignment or promotion process, superior officers who do not observe Officer X on a regular basis will have an inaccurate record of Officer X's performance upon which to base a personnel decision.

Sergeant A may feel relieved that they have not had to confront their friend, however, by allowing the error of leniency to affect the appraisal, Sergeant A has done a disservice to Officer X, other officers and supervisors, and the department.

Other common rating errors that good supervisors must guard against are; **personal bias**, the **halo effect**, and **overweighting or recency**.

The rating error of personal bias occurs when a supervisor tends to rate subordinates they like or dislike, higher or lower, than is justified. Often this error occurs when the supervisor "favors" employees they identify with, get along with, or have the same beliefs as, or if there is a personality conflict, the supervisor might tend to be more harsh with employees they do not get along with. Another form of the personal bias error is when supervisors believe that "if someone works for me, they must be good." Good supervisors examine their ratings objectively to ensure they have avoided the error of personal bias, which destroys the validity of the ratings. Awareness of this particular rating error is important as the SSPD system can have a tendency to facilitate this error, for example:

Officers X and Y both work for Sergeant A. Sergeant A has always encouraged DWI enforcement and when Sergeant A was a patrolman, Sergeant A made many arrests for DWI. Officer X also expresses support for DWI enforcement and aggressively seeks out DWI enforcement opportunities. As a result Officer X is frequently assigned to DWI patrol. Officer Y does not get along with Sergeant A and does not believe DWI enforcement should be a priority. Several times Officer Y and Sergeant A have had discussions about the proper priority that DWI enforcement should take in the department. They simply do not agree.

During the course of the year Officer X makes 100 DWI arrests while Officer Y makes 50. Officer X is regularly assigned to DWI patrol on weekend nights while Officer Y is assigned to Caroline Street. Additionally, officer Y was on extended injury leave for two months during the year. Sergeant A issued four performance observation forms during the course of the year to Officer X and therefore Officer X was rated as “Exceeds Standards” in the category of VTL Enforcement. Officer Y was issued no performance observation form for his DWI enforcement efforts and is rated as “Meets Standard” in VTL Enforcement.

Sergeant A will need to carefully examine his ratings of each employee to ensure that he is failing to properly recognize Officer Y’s good work in DWI enforcement due to his dislike of Officer Y and his attitude regarding DWI enforcement. Sergeant A also needs to be aware of his personal bias toward Officer X to ensure that he is not rating Officer X too highly in this area based upon their mutual belief in the priority of DWI enforcement.

** It is important to note that Sergeant A is not to compare Officer X to Officer Y but rather to consider each employee in relation to the VTL enforcement standard and each officer’s separate ability and performance in that area. **

The Halo Effect and the error of Recency are also rating errors that are easy to fall into, especially over the long term and in narrative sections of the appraisal instrument. The halo effect rating error occurs when the overall general impression of an officer affects specific rating categories. If a supervisor considers an officer as a “good” officer overall, that supervisor has a tendency to excuse specific instances of poor performance. While an officer may very well be an otherwise excellent officer, sometimes areas that need improvement remain unaddressed by a supervisor who lets their overall impression of a subordinate unduly affect specific rating

categories. For example, an officer that performs at or above standards in all categories may still have difficulty with report writing. A supervisor may not address deficiencies in this area because the officer does very well in VTL enforcement, evidence collection procedures, time management etc... An opportunity for improvement is thus lost.

Recency is an error in which a supervisor is unduly influenced by one major, or several noteworthy instances near the time of the appraisal. Either good or bad, we tend to remember best what has been most recently perceived. If a particularly positive noteworthy event occurs close to the end of the evaluation period, a supervisor may then write in glowing terms a narrative description of the employee's overall performance, when in fact the employee has not performed at such a level over the course of the entire rating period. Good documentation throughout the rating period and thoughtful consideration of the facts will help an effective supervisor avoid making this rating error.

Ratings errors are easy to make. A supervisor does not even have to have any ill-intent to make some of the common rating errors. As leaders of the police department we do, however, have obligations to our officers, the department and each other to try to minimize errors when it comes to our performance evaluations. Invalid or inaccurate performance appraisals can have a very detrimental effect on all department employees. Becoming aware of and keeping these common rating errors in mind when conducting performance evaluations can go a long way in making our department better. As individual supervisors, if we can improve in this area, we must.

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