



West Virginia Department of Transportation Policy: **Employee Performance Appraisals** *Issued by the Secretary of Transportation*

Policy No: DOT 3.8

Issue Date: 04/15/2000

Revised: 04/22/2022

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1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures relating to employee performance appraisals, their purpose, and goals.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy includes procedures applicable to all West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) employees, of all classifications, excluding the Parkways Authority. These procedures supersede all prior procedures and memorandums on this subject.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Agency:** Any authority, bureau, commission, or Division, or similar cabinet subpart of the WVDOT.
- 3.2 **Agency Head:** Chief executive officer of any agency.
- 3.3 **Organization:** A hiring unit within the WVDOT.
- 3.4 **Permanent Employee:** Any classified employee who has completed the probationary period prescribed for the job classification, or any classified-exempt employee who was hired to fill a position for an unlimited period of time, notwithstanding the agency's right to terminate the employee for cause or at the employee's will.
- 3.5 **Probationary Employee:** An employee in the first six (6) calendar months of employment for permanent employees hired from a WVDOT certified register. During this period, there is a possibility for non-retention due to unsatisfactory performance.

4.0 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1 Both the supervisor and the employee should view employee performance appraisal as an opportunity for improvement. In this exercise, the supervisor has the opportunity to gauge the progress of the employee, plan methods to assist the employee in realizing their potential, and obtain information relating to personnel decisions (about promotion, demotion, salary advancement, and training).
- 4.2 Effective employee performance appraisal is dependent upon constructive communication between supervisors and employees. This communication must be two-way.
- 4.3 Supervisors must be completely honest with employees in evaluating their work. By this, employees who have not succeeded in their performance will know areas in which they need to improve and strategies to progress positively. If the

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supervisor believes the employee is capable of better work, they should stress that confidence to the employee and be willing to explore methods of improvement. This should be considered, by both the employee and the supervisor, to be constructive criticism.

- 4.4 Furthermore, equal feedback should be given when employees are excelling in their roles. Positive feedback can be just as impactful as constructive feedback.
- 4.5 Conversely, the employee must be free to express any concerns during the appraisal. The employee may be able to offer suggestions on how the supervisor can help them improve job performance. If the employee has a problem with any aspect of the supervision that has been given, the supervisor should be willing to hear and address the employee's concern appropriately.
- 4.6 Supervisors may encourage employee feedback in several ways, such as encouraging written responses, allowing for open discussion, and involving the employee in setting performance objectives.
- 4.7 By establishing open communication and following the policies and processes outlined in this policy, supervisors can expect a quality work effort from their employees, and employees can expect a fair appraisal of their accomplishments on the job.

5.0 EVALUATION POLICIES

The goal of the performance appraisal process is to lead the employee into a course of action that will allow for growth, upward mobility, and increased productivity. The following policies establish the foundation on which the process stands.

5.1 Defining the Position

- A. All supervisors will define the job duties and work standards for each employee classification under their supervision.
- B. All supervisors will explain the job duties and work standards to each subordinate employee at the start of each performance appraisal period.
 - 1. This will be completed by using the first page of the DOT Employee Performance Appraisal (EPA) Form.

5.2 Defining the Type of Rating and Rating Period

- A. Supervisors will rate each employee's work performance **at least** every twelve (12) months. However, supervisors may be required to utilize shorter rating periods as defined in this section.
- B. The "Type of Rating" section of the EPA form is defined as:
 - 1. **Initial-** The first page of the EPA outlines job information to be used in the Initial Counseling Session at the beginning of a rating period.

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2. **Annual-** The rating period begins January 1st and ends December 31st of each year. Supervisors may have to change the rating period because of conditions listed in item C of this section.
 3. **Probationary-** The rating period begins when a permanent employee is hired and ends at the conclusion of their six-month, or applicable, probationary period.
- C. A change in an employee's position may require a change to the rating period.
- D. Any change in the rating period requires closure of the previously started appraisal period. The former supervisor holds an Annual/Final Review Session and completes the EPA Form. The new supervisor holds an Initial Counseling Session and begins the next appraisal period.
- E. As best practice, an Annual/Final EPA Form will be completed if the employer has worked in the organization three (3) months or longer.

5.3 **Appraising Employee Performance**

Since employee appraisal should be an ongoing process, there will be defined counseling sessions, the Initial and the Annual/Final, as well as counseling sessions as performance requires.

- A. When assessing an employee's performance, supervisors will only consider how well the employee has performed the assigned duties against the established work standards.
- B. Supervisors will restrict their consideration of an employee's performance to their work during the specified period.
- C. Throughout the rating period, supervisors will document the work performance of each employee, when appropriate, for positive and negative events.
- D. Documentation should be written on Form AH-503, "Record of Significant Occurrence", providing the following information:
 1. Employee's name, date, and time (if appropriate) of the event;
 2. Description of the event;
 3. Description of praise or corrective instructions offered to the employee (if appropriate); and
 4. Employee response (if applicable).

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- E. Documented disciplinary issues or events will also be taken into consideration.
- F. Supervisors are to keep all appraisal records private.
- G. Supervisors are required to rate employees (just before the Annual/Final Review Session) in four (4) specific sections:
 - 1. Job Knowledge and Skills;
 - 2. Work Performance;
 - 3. Interpersonal Relations; and
 - 4. Work Habits.
- H. Supervisory employees will be rated in two (2) additional categories:
 - 1. Leadership, and
 - 2. Management.
- I. Under each of the general categories listed above (G. and H.) are specific points to be considered and graded. Each point will be graded "Unsatisfactory", "Needs Improvement", "Meets Expectations", "Exceeds Expectations", or "Outstanding".
- J. All of the individual ratings will be scored, resulting in an employee being rated "Unsatisfactory", "Needs Improvement", "Meets Expectations", "Exceeds Expectations", or "Outstanding" (as an overall rating).
- K. A manager (typically, the supervisor's supervisor) will review employees' overall performance and the ratings as assigned by the supervisor.
- L. Supervisors requiring additional information or guidance in appraising or evaluating employees should contact the Human Resources (HR) Division.

5.4 Evaluation Tracking System

The completed EPA forms must be sent to the HR Division to be entered and filed.

6.0 APPRAISAL PROCESSES

6.1 Initial Counseling Session

This session will be held during the first quarter of the calendar year for annual appraisals and during the first thirty (30) days for all other rating periods. It may be held immediately following the previous Annual/Final Counseling Session. Supervisors will schedule the Initial Counseling Session within a reasonable time of advance notice. Prior to the Initial

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Counseling Session, the supervisor will complete the first page of the DOT EPA Form. During the session, the supervisor will do the following:

- A. Review the job responsibilities of the position with the employee and explain what level of performance is expected.
- B. Explain that this counseling session initiates the "Initial Performance Period", during which the employee will be expected to perform the tasks, duties, and responsibilities that have been communicated to them.
- C. If this is a "Special" session to improve work performance, use the Employee Performance Review (EPR) Form to develop a plan for improvement with the employee. Specify the rating period for this "Special" session.
- D. Advise the employee of the Rating Scale found on the EPA Instructions sheet. Relate the ratings to the Performance Standards and Expectations from page 1 of the EPA Form. Discuss the additional completed pages with the employee.
- E. Supervisors should use Form AH-503, "Record of Significant Occurrence", to document both positive and negative performance of the employee during the Initial Performance Period.
- F. Edit page 1 of the EPA form, documenting revisions to the Responsibilities and Performance Standards and Expectations resulting from this counseling session. Both the Supervisor, rater, and the Employee will sign and date the form in acknowledgment, not necessarily agreement.
- G. All additional documentation, such as the Form AH-503 or Form AH-501, **must be** included when the EPA is finalized.
- H. Ensure that the completed EPA Forms, as applicable, are sent to the HR Division for entry and filing.

6.2 Mid-Point Counseling Sessions

- A. Mid-Point Counseling Sessions utilize the EPR Form to address a probationary period ending or "Special" performance management, as needed, throughout the rating period. The use of the EPR Form is not required for permanent employees but is recommended as a performance management tool.
- B. During this session, the supervisor will do the following:
 - 1. Review with the employee their Responsibilities and Performance Standards and Expectations.
 - 2. Review the employee's performance and the Progress Evaluation and Performance Development Needs.

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3. Refer to any Form AH-503's that may have been completed to refresh the employee's memory on any notable examples of positive or negative performance during the Initial Performance Period.
4. Allow the employee to respond in writing if they desire in the Employee Comments/Response section. If additional pages are necessary, they must be attached to the finalized EPR Form.
5. If necessary, develop an attainable Plan for Improvement in conjunction with the employee.
6. Conclude this session by stating that this meeting may be followed up in approximately three (3) months to evaluate performance after this counseling session. This three (3) month follow-up is best practice to manage employee performance. The Annual/Final Review Session will take place according to section 6.3.
7. Complete and sign the Acknowledgement section of the EPR Form, which does not indicate there is agreement on the results, but instead, acknowledgment.

6.3 **Annual Review Session**

- A. The Annual Review Session must be held within three (3) months following the end of the rating period for annual appraisals and within thirty (30) days following the end of all other rating periods.
 1. Prior to the Annual Review session, supervisors will complete the EPA Form rating the employee's performance in each category for the entire rating period. Comments are required at the end of each section. Comments expand upon the selected rating, which in turn, provides more thorough feedback for employees.
 2. The individual ratings must then be calculated on page 11 under Rating Calculation. The factor count must be manually entered, but other calculations are automatic within the EPA Form. Select the Final Rating from the dropdown field as appropriate.
 3. Before the Annual Review Session, the EPA Form must be submitted to the appropriate manager for review. If the manager disapproves, the matter must be resolved between the manager and supervisor. If the manager concurs, or after agreement is reached, the EPA Form is signed and returned to the supervisor.
 4. After management approval, supervisors will schedule the Annual Review Session with the employee
 5. At the Annual/Final Review Session, Supervisors will:

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- a. Discuss with the employee the actual appraisal covering the entire Performance Period and Final Rating,
 - b. Refer to any Form AH-503's that have been maintained as a way of documenting and justifying the employee's ratings,
 - c. Allow the employee to respond in writing if they so choose,
 - If the supervisor decides to use additional documentation, it must be made a part of the official record of the evaluation.
 - d. Complete the Goals/Comments section with the employee,
 - e. Complete the Finalization/Signature section which documents acknowledgement, not necessarily agreement, and
 - f. Provide the employee with a copy of their EPA Form.
6. If, during the Annual Review Session, information is revealed that would (in the supervisor's opinion) warrant changing one or more of the category ratings, except for scheduling a new Annual Review Session, steps must be repeated to calculate a new Final Rating.
7. At this point, the Initial Counseling Session for the next Rating Period may commence or be scheduled.
8. Upon completion of the Annual Review Session, all employee evaluation forms, and additional documentation must be grouped in alphabetical order and submitted to the HR Division, preferably by mail, before the announced deadline. If a scanned copy is sent to the HR Division instead of mailing the original documentation, the original documents must be filed in the employee's administrative file.
9. Supervisors should retain a file copy of all forms used.

7.0 RELEVANT MATERIALS/DOCUMENTS

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|-----|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 7.1 | AH-503 | Record of Significant Occurrence |
| 7.2 | EPA Form | Employee Performance Appraisal Form |
| 7.3 | EPR Form | Employee Performance Review Form |
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8.0 CHANGE LOG

April 22, 2022 –

- Reformatted policy to DOT.
- Significantly reconfigured policy to reflect current procedures using DOT EPA and EPR Forms.

Effective Date of Policy: 04/22/2022

Approved by:



Jimmy D. Wriston, P.E.
Secretary of
Transportation
Commissioner of
Highways



Date

*The Secretary of the West Virginia Department of Transportation or the Commissioner of Highways may, pursuant to the authority vested with the Secretary and Commissioner in W. Va. Code §5F-2-2, §17-2A-1 et seq., and §17-2-1 et seq., waive the requirements of this policy if the circumstances, in the Secretary or Commissioner's sole discretion, warrant such action.