


Approved by: Juan Williams, Commissioner	Policy Number: 12-064 (rev. 05/20/2024)
Signature: 	Supersedes: 11-014, 95-028, 91-022, 91-021, 88-022, 87-033, 87-032, 87-026, 87-025, 86-022, 85-036, 85-034, 84-030
Application: Executive Branch Agencies and Employees, Human Resource Officers	Effective Date: October 1, 2013
Authority: T.C.A. § 4-3-1703, T.C.A. § 8-30-104, T.C.A. § 8-30-313	Rule: Chapter 1120-05

Performance Management Program

The purpose of the Performance Management Program is to facilitate the creation and nurturing of a performance-based culture where the individual employee's performance is aligned with the agency and administration's objectives and employees are appropriately rewarded for the results they achieve. The Performance Management Program is a systematic process used to define the standards of performance, expected work outcomes, and competencies for all employees, provide ongoing performance feedback, offer the employee developmental opportunities, and document an objective and fact-based record of the employee's performance.

Agency Participation and Employee Eligibility

All agencies in the State Service, as defined in Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) § 8-30-102, shall be required to participate in the Performance Management Program. Other boards and commissions within the Executive Branch may be included if approved by the commissioners of the Departments of Human Resources (Commissioner) and Finance & Administration.

Employees within the State Service who are excluded from the salary schedule or have a salary schedule conducted and implemented pursuant to a statutory pay plan are not eligible to participate in the Performance Management Program. Specifically excluded are commissioned officers in the Departments of Safety & Homeland Security and Commerce & Insurance, as well as wildlife specific classifications in the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

Performance Management Roles and Responsibilities

Rater Role: The rater is the person measuring an employee's stated performance standards, work outcomes, and competency. Typically, the rater is the employee's direct supervisor or manager. The rater creates the employee's individual performance plan (IPP), provides feedback, and conducts a final review discussion with each employee, each review cycle.¹

¹ Raters/Reviewers with employees on protected leave (i.e., FMLA, ADA, Military Leave, Paid Parental Leave, Sick Leave Bank, Short/Long Term Disability, Workers' Compensation), shall provide a rating to an employee during the rating period, as long as the employee worked for at least 120 days of the performance review cycle, and has completed at least one (1) interim review. See [DOHR Policy 24-001](#) for more information.

DOHR Policy: Performance Management Program	Policy Number: 12-064 (Rev. 05/20/2024)
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Reviewer Role: The reviewer is the person responsible for ensuring that the performance management process is properly conducted. The reviewer's input and approval are required at each of the procedural steps prior to a discussion with the employee.

Reviewers shall review each of the procedural steps to determine that:

- (1) IPP's are written at the "Meets Expectations" level of performance by stating performance standards and expected work outcomes that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant to the strategic objective of the employee's agency, and time sensitive (S.M.A.R.T.);
- (2) The review process has been completed as required, to include the initial performance planning discussion, a minimum of two interim reviews, and an annual review of the employee's overall performance with assigned ratings and justifications objectively describing performance;² and
- (3) Performance feedback is documented and provided to employees throughout the performance cycle.

The reviewer approves all final reviews with ratings of "Exceeds Expectations," "Meets Expectations," and "Needs Improvement".

Appointing Authority Role: The appointing authority or designee acting in this role must approve all annual reviews with ratings of "Exceptional" or "Unacceptable" prior to the discussion with the employee.

Performance Management Procedural Steps

The following procedural steps list the requirements of the Performance Management Program for each employee, each cycle:

- (1) IPP. An initial discussion between the rater and the employee which details the performance management process and establishes expected performance standards, behaviors, and work outcomes. The rater must create a new IPP and document the discussion of this plan with the employee at the beginning of each performance management cycle. The IPP shall contain 4-6 work outcome statements and must be S.M.A.R.T.
- (2) Interim Reviews. Required periodic discussions reviewing the employee's performance of stated expectations, work outcomes, competencies (providing constructive performance feedback/coaching); discussing ways in which the employee can enhance performance; and, if appropriate the consequences of "Unacceptable" or "Needs Improvement" performance. These periodic reviews must be recorded in Edison or documented in writing if the employee does not have access to Edison.

² See footnote 1, if applicable.

DOHR Policy: Performance Management Program

Policy Number: 12-064
(Rev. 05/20/2024)

- (3) Final Review. A documented review of the employee's overall performance for the current review cycle. The final review will provide the employee with a rating of performance for each work outcome, competency and overall performance. Each rating must be justified by objective, fact-based statements by the supervisor/rater.³
- (4) Rating Period. The period in which an employee may be rated for overall performance. For employees on the standard performance review cycle. This period begins June 1st and ends on July 31st. For employees on a probation cycle, this period shall be no more than sixty (60) days from the end of the probation period. Employees may not receive final ratings outside of the rating period. Performance documents may not be cancelled during the rating period without approval of the Commissioner.

Completion of any procedural step may not occur within thirty (30) days of another procedural step within the same review cycle. This allows the employee time to perform to stated expectations.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Performance Review Cycles

The standard performance review cycle begins on each August 1st and ends July 31st of the following year. Raters will use this review cycle for all full-time employees, with the exception of those serving a probationary period (this includes employees in a Career Path pursuant to [DOHR Policy 12-023](#)).

The steps included in the standard review cycle are designed to be completed throughout a twelve (12) month period, with two (2) interim reviews, or as prescribed by the Commissioner. However, due to probation periods ending within the standard review cycle, or alterations to the employee's performance plan, it may be necessary to have a reduced or short review cycle. A short cycle is defined as a period of at least 120 days but no more than 180 days from the date of the performance plan and includes at least one (1) interim review.

In these instances, the timeframe for completion of the IPP, at least one interim review, and the final review shall be at least 120 days from the date of the performance plan with no less than thirty (30) days between each step in the review cycle. This timeframe is designed to allow the employee an opportunity to understand and perform to the stated expectations, receive feedback, and improve performance, if necessary, prior to a final review.

Employees who complete a probationary performance review period shall transition to the standard performance review cycle once the probationary period is complete, even if the transition occurs in the middle of the standard performance review cycle. Employees who complete the probationary period and transition to the standard performance review cycle, shall complete all procedural steps with no less than thirty (30) days between each step from the date of the discussion. See examples below:

³ See footnote 1, if applicable.

DOHR Policy: Performance Management Program

Policy Number: 12-064
(Rev. 05/20/2024)

- (1) An employee who successfully completes a probationary performance review period between August 2nd and December 31st of any year will begin a standard review cycle that covers the time period from the end of the probationary due date through July 31st of that year with two (2) interim reviews. This will allow the employee to transition to the standard twelve (12) month review cycle beginning August 1st.
- (2) An employee who completes probation between January 1st and April 1st, shall begin a short review cycle. All required procedural steps with at least one (1) interim review, should be completed by July 31st, ensuring there are at least 30 days between each step. An employee who completes probation after April 1st may start a new review cycle beginning on August 1st of the standard review cycle.

Request for Administrative Review

An employee may request an administrative review at the end of the designated review cycle when the employee believes that one of the procedural steps has been violated. Ratings and/or comments assigned by the supervisor do not constitute a procedural violation. An employee may file a written request for review along with any appropriate documentation to the agency appointing authority within fourteen (14) calendar days after the date of the annual review, or the employee's return to work after a period of protected leave⁴. In no event shall a request for review be filed more than twelve (12) months from the date of the final review. The appointing authority shall respond in writing to the employee within fourteen (14) calendar days. If the employee is not satisfied with the decision of the appointing authority, the employee may file a written request for administrative review along with any relevant documentation to the Commissioner within fourteen (14) calendar days of the appointing authority's decision. The Commissioner will review all written material and shall respond to the employee in writing within fourteen (14) calendar days. The decision of the Commissioner is final and not subject to further review.

Performance Review Documents

For situations where an employee does not have access to Edison, a paper-based version of the performance document is available on www.teamtn.gov. After all signatures are secured, the rater will route the paper version of the annual review to the agency performance management coordinator for entry into Edison. When using a paper-based version of any form, the rater must ensure that the reviewer approves the document prior to discussion with the employee. Paper documents must follow all procedural steps.

⁴ Protected leave includes FMLA, ADA, Military, Paid Parental Leave, Sick Leave Bank, Short/Long-Term Disability, Worker's Compensation.

DOHR Policy: Performance Management Program	Policy Number: 12-064 (Rev. 05/20/2024)
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Records

The annual performance review and any of the documented procedural steps, shall not be considered public records under T.C.A. § 10-7-503, and not open for public inspection.

Questions regarding this policy may be directed to the Office of People, Performance and Culture.