

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

Prepared by the Evidence-Based Practice Performance Appraisal Workgroup
as part of the PA Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy

For
Juvenile
Probation
Staff

October 2017

Table of Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	2
<u>The Performance Management Process</u>	3
<u>Planning for Performance</u>	4
<u>Establishing Expectations and Goals</u>	5
<u>Managing and Coaching Performance</u>	7
<u>Structure of the Performance Appraisal Meeting</u>	14

This Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) Performance Management Handbook was developed to provide guidance to juvenile probation supervisory and management personnel in the development and use of the Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) Performance Appraisal process for juvenile probation developed by EBP Performance Appraisal Workgroup as part of Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy. The content was acquired from contemporary employee development and appraisal processes and the format was adapted from a performance appraisal publication employed by the University of California-Riverside.

The performance management process is an important opportunity for an organization to professionally develop its employees. Throughout this handbook is an emphasis to continually identify responsibilities and set expectations, manage and coach employees, appraise their performance, recognize desired performance or remediate undesired performance, and provide opportunities for professional growth and development.

The EBP Performance Appraisal Workgroup trusts that juvenile probation supervisors and managers will find this handbook helpful to develop, support, and maintain the EBP skills of their staff.

The topics covered in this handbook include:

- A review of the performance management process.
- Development of performance expectations and goals.
- Conversion of subjective assessments into objective terms.
- Preparation of performance appraisals using objective, behavioral descriptions.
- Administration of a structured performance appraisal meeting.

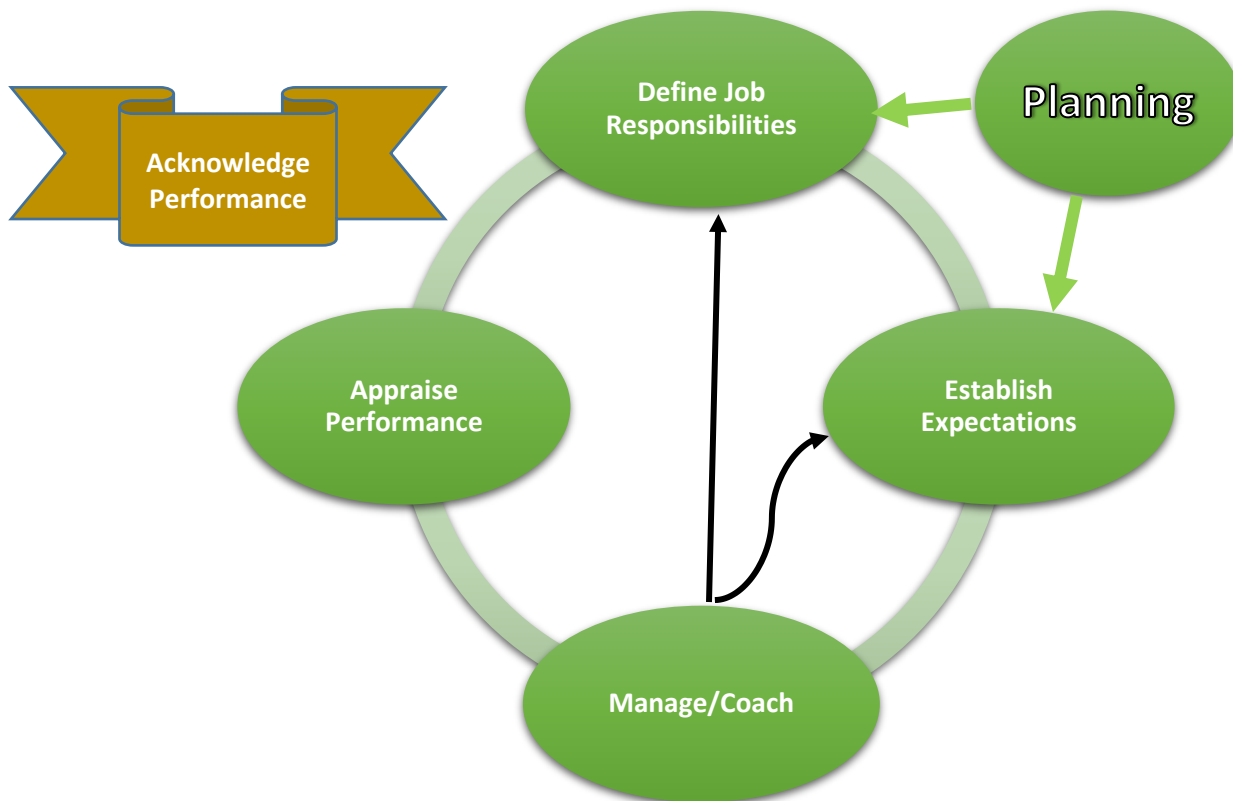
The goal of the performance management process is two-fold: development and collaboration. While we all associate performance management with evaluation, an often overlooked aspect is the developmental aspect. This is an opportunity for you and your employees to focus on their development. In addition, it should be a collaborative process. It should not be you, as the supervisor, giving a report card to your employee, but an interactive exchange about the employee's performance.

The Performance Management Process

The major components of the performance management process are:

- ✓ **Planning**, which includes establishing expectations and goals, and defining job responsibilities;
- ✓ **Managing and Coaching** performance throughout the year;
- ✓ **Appraising Performance**; and
- ✓ **Recognizing and Acknowledging Performance**.

It is a continuous cycle, not just a once a year event, with feedback linking each part of the process.



Key Elements in the Planning Process

- Understand the mission of Pennsylvania's (PA) Juvenile Justice System and your juvenile probation department
- Understand your department's values and goals
- Understand the basic concepts and principles of evidence-based practice as they apply to juvenile probation
- Link individual expectations to your juvenile probation department's mission, values and goals

Key Steps in the Planning Process

- 1) ***Ensure that the job description is current*** - A review of the job description should be done every year. If duties in the position have changed that do not warrant a reclassification, revisions should be made and approved, consistent with your county's requirements and forwarded to the human resources department as an updated position description. The employee should also review their job description and be prepared to provide you with feedback regarding changes.
- 2) ***Identify the essential job functions*** - This refers to the duties that must be carried out by the position – basically the reason the position exists. Have the essential functions changed? Do some need to be added? These essential functions can be used as a guide to setting performance expectations.
- 3) ***Develop performance expectations***
- 4) ***Develop goals and objectives***
- 5) ***Identify applicable performance factors***

Setting Expectations and Goals

Understanding the mission and goals of Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System and your juvenile probation department provides a context in which to develop performance standards and goals. It gives you a framework and a direction. Of primary importance, is the employee's ability to see how their performance expectations and goals are linked to the mission of the broader juvenile justice system and your juvenile probation department.

Setting Expectations

What is a Performance Expectation?

- A description of the results expected for the fully satisfied performance of a job function/task
- Defines "how well" each function or task must be performed
- Provides a benchmark against which to evaluate work performance

When should Performance Expectations be set?

- When an employee is hired
- When responsibilities are changed or added
- When clarification of responsibilities is needed

A Performance Expectation should be:

- Derived from mission, goals and values
- Mutually understood
- Developed collaboratively, if appropriate
- Descriptive of how a job is to be performed
- Descriptive of fully satisfactory performance
- Expressed in measurable/observable terms

Setting Goals

In setting goals, use the **S.M.A.R.T.** formula:

- ❖ **Specific**
 - ✓ Precise terms
 - ✓ Targeted

- ❖ **Measurable**
 - ✓ Means for tracking
 - ✓ How much of what & by when

- ❖ **Achievable**
 - ✓ Assess the stretch
 - ✓ Evaluate the growth for the employee

- ❖ **Realistic**
 - ✓ Links to results
 - ✓ Links to higher-level goals (department and Juvenile Justice System)

- ❖ **Timebound**
 - ✓ Timeframe for actions
 - ✓ Completion dates

In performance planning, there are typically three types of goals that may be incorporated into the review:

Development Goals — goals established for personal/professional growth

Innovation Goals — goals established for creating a new process, function or program; higher level of service

Improvement Goals — goals established to correct performance that is below standards and requirements

Goals should be defined when:

- preparing the annual performance appraisal
- performance needs improvement

Managing and Coaching Performance

Performance management is a year-round process which means meetings should be held with employees throughout the year to discuss and re-assess the employees' progress toward achieving goals and performance objectives.

Listed below are some of the tools that can be used to capture performance.

Observation

It is recommended that managers observe their employees with the intent of documenting behaviors related to performance. Look for:

- **Trends in performance**
 - Is it steadily improving or declining?
 - Does the individual have “peaks and valleys” – spurts of excellent performance followed by extended periods of mediocre performance?
- **Critical incidents**
 - Outstanding successes or failures
 - Performance events that stand out from typical behavior

Documentation

Structured Diary

Experts in performance management recommend that managers spend 30 minutes a week documenting employee performance. Document performance in behavioral terms, rather than inferential or judgmental.

List the performance expectations and goals for the appraisal cycle and space to document date, skills exhibited results of behavior and other comments.

As an example:

Performance Expectation/Goal	Date	Comment
Demonstrate team work	10/05/07	Accepted additional assignment due to a co-worker being out ill.
Produce quality work	2/04/08	Monthly report contained 5 typos and was missing two pages.

Remember provide feedback on performance events that you document.

Unstructured Diary

Informal documentation of performance events. For example, jot down notes about employee behavior in your calendar or other organizer.

Work Samples

Maintain copies of work that illustrate the performance dimensions being measured.

Employee Fact File

A file where notes about performance events and work samples can be maintained. Remember, this file could be viewed by others, if necessary.

Appraising Performance

The Performance Appraisal Process

1. The employee will complete the self-appraisal
2. Gather the documentation you have regarding performance
3. Write the appraisal

To prepare for writing the performance appraisal, gather the following information:

- Self-appraisal information
- The employee's job description
- The goals and objectives from the previous performance appraisal (if available)
- Agreed upon expectations for performance
- Your structured or unstructured diaries of employee performance events

Solicit information from others that know the employee's work such as a co-supervisor or department head. The primary rater should be the employee's primary supervisor.

Appraising Poor Performance

While most of us think of the performance management as an annual event, there are other times when it is appropriate to conduct a performance management session. Primarily, this is when an employee is exhibiting poor performance or training/coaching is needed.

When completing the annual performance appraisal, if an employee is receiving a rating of “needs improvement” or “unacceptable” on a specific performance factor, it is important to ensure that it is truly the performance of the employee that is causing the less than satisfactory results. Be sure to examine the job itself and the context in which the job is being performed.

Writing the Appraisal

Write supporting comments for performance factors using third person statements.

Example:

Instead of: You have increased your knowledge of Risk/Need/Responsivity principles.

Write: Evan has increased his knowledge of Risk/Need/Responsivity principles.

Use behavioral feedback to support your ratings for performance factors.

- ✓ Focus on behaviors rather than judgments to support performance factor ratings
- ✓ Use specific examples
- ✓ Use specific facts

Verifiable (Specific)	Evaluative (Fuzzy)
Observable	Judgments
Measurable	Assumptions
Commonly Accepted by Most Individuals	Interpretations
Actionable	Non-actionable

Examples	
Fuzzy:	This was not your best work.
Specific:	Evan completed YLS assessments two weeks later than required by policy and Evan did not identify apparent strengths of the youth or family.

Examples	
Fuzzy:	You do a good job running staffings.
Specific:	When facilitating staffings, Sally identifies the areas in which staff are confused, she summarizes to help everyone stay on track, and she maintains her objectivity.

When preparing the performance appraisal, supervisors/managers should refer to the performance rating definitions listed below, as well as, on the EBP staff performance rating form developed by the EBP Performance Appraisal Workgroup. The objective is to accurately reflect staff's performance during the rating period. Most employees will normally have the majority of their performance ratings fall within "Expectation Achieved (EA)". This rating indicates that the staff has fulfilled all of the requirements of a specific area of their job responsibilities and is considered competent in this area. If a staff is rated either above or below "Expectations Achieved", there should be clear and objective documentation of specific actions, activities, or events that justify the rating. Supervisors/managers should guard against over-rating and under-rating staff.

PERFORMANCE RATING DEFINITIONS		
RATING CODES		
SEE	SUBSTANTIALLY EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS:	A rare performance level. Overall performance far exceeded expectations and had significant impact on the department's overall performance. Employees receiving this rating are clear role models.
EE	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS:	Consistently meets and frequently exceeds job requirements or expectations; highly effective and results oriented.
EA	EXPECTATIONS ACHIEVED:	Meets job requirements in a competent manner and may exceed this level on occasion; it is the expected level of performance.
NI	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT:	Meets some job requirements, but needs development in certain areas to fully meet expectations.
FME	FAILS TO MEET EXPECTATIONS:	Clearly did not meet job requirements or expectations; immediate and significant improvement is required.
NA	NOT APPLICABLE:	Performance factor does not apply to position being evaluated; or performance factor does not pertain to this current rating period (explain in comments section).

Additional Appraisal Methods

- ***Self-Appraisal:*** The performance appraisal form can be provided to the employee to self-appraise their performance and serve as a basis of discussion between the employee and the supervisor.
- ***Supplemental Performance Appraisal:*** Supervisors may solicit performance information from other sources so long as the source is knowledgeable of the employee's work performance. Employees should be made aware during the planning stages of the performance appraisal process, of the other sources that will be contacted concerning their performance. The sources contacted should also be made aware that their feedback may be used in the performance appraisal, and if so, they will be identified as the source.
- ***Individual Professional Development Plan:*** A written plan used to facilitate an organized approach to improve professional skills and the productivity of the department.

Creating Individual Professional Development Plans

Using the information from the employee's self-appraisal and your own observations, determine the developmental opportunities that will assist the employee not only in achieving short-term goals, but long-term career goals as well.

The greatest employee development comes from managers taking time to develop employees through mentoring, assigning interesting projects and identifying improvement areas. Managers' interest in their employees' development is also a strong motivator. The key to the successful professional development plan is the follow-up that occurs after the plan has been agreed upon.

Purpose of the Individual Professional Development Plan

The Individual Professional Development Plan is an organized approach to professional development activities and programs that are designed to improve the employee's professional skills and the department's productivity. This is a joint process, both in design and execution, in that supervisors are more familiar with the department's future directions and the employee is more aware of specific, individual needs and aspirations.

Developing the Individual Professional Development Plan

The following process is a model you may consider. The process involves the following steps:

1. Prepare the Individual Professional Development Plan at the conclusion of the employee's evaluation period.
2. Involve the employee in the design of the Individual Professional Development Plan. You may want to do this early in the process, when you have only identified major areas where development should take place and let the employee propose the more specific ways to accomplish this. Or, you may prefer to have the employee design the plan and then jointly review and refine the content.
3. Consider each area of the employee's performance from the following perspectives and determine which should be developed in the upcoming evaluation period:
 - Strengths that, if enhanced, will contribute to the overall mission of the organization and increase productivity.
 - New skills that will be needed in the upcoming evaluation period.
 - Areas of performance/skills that need to be improved.
 - Mission need
 - Change in technology
 - New assignment
 - Future staffing need
 - Leadership development
 - Relationship building

Though you want the Individual Professional Development Plan to be thorough and cover the individual's major development needs, try to keep it brief and to the point so that it does not give the impression of being unwieldy or overwhelming. Focus on key areas to be developed.

4. Determine the appropriate learning methods and resources that will be needed.
5. Once the learning methods and resources have been selected, define the measures or criteria that will be used to determine if the targeted learning has been accomplished.
6. The supervisor and the employee sign the Individual Professional Development Plan to document mutual agreement with it and commitment to completing it. Clarify responsibilities with the employee.
7. Set up a reporting system so that the employee's progress can be gauged at any time and adjustments can be made to the plan as needed.

Developmental Activities

Each employee's professional development plan is unique based on their individual needs and career opportunities. Listed below are a few of the developmental activities that you could consider.

Assignments

- Job rotation
- Stretch (*assignment to a project or task that may exceed current skill set, but an aptitude to learn new skill exists*)
- Temporary (*assignment to time limited responsibilities, with the expectation that staff will be returned to previous responsibilities*)

Committees

- Work groups
- Presentations

Cross-Training

- Changing functions
- Shift changes
- Working with new people

Develop in Place

- Mentoring
- Individual projects
- Perspective building (*involves performing responsibilities that require assumption of an alternative viewpoint*)
- Tough challenge
- Shift in size of job

Formal Training/Development

- Professional
- Technical
- Leadership
- Executive

Off the Job Opportunities

- Joining/leading community groups
- Trying a new skill in a volunteer organization
- Giving presentations to civic groups

On the Job Opportunities

- Taking on new projects or assignments
- Temporary assignments e.g. filling in for someone on vacation
- Assuming lead role responsibilities
- Improving a process or procedure

Self-Development

- Readings/Self-study
- Professional organizations
- College/University Programs
- Seminars

Start-ups

- New team
- New system/service/process

Structure of the Performance Appraisal Meeting

1. Be prepared and explain the purpose for the meeting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Be prepared. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the objectives and goals of the meeting. • Choose a quiet, private spot with limited interruptions. b. Explain the purpose. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge the sessions can cause anxiety, but purpose is to discuss the employee’s performance over the past year, the job expectations and the organizations’ expectations, as well as gather information on how you can help. • Tell the employee the meeting is a two-way discussion, not one way. • Maintain a positive focus.
2. Explain the process of the meeting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review past performance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow employee to share how they view their performance over the past year. • Allow employee to share ideas they have for strengthening their performance. • Supervisor shares their evaluation. • Discuss difference and come to a common understanding. b. Set performance expectations for the next appraisal period. c. Discuss developmental plans and activities that should be conducted during the next appraisal period.
3. Ask if the employee has any questions about how the meeting will proceed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Explain any areas in which there may be questions.
4. Allow the employee to share their assessment of their performance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Listen carefully to the employee’s self-assessment. b. Focus the employee on specific behaviors, actions and results related to his/her performance.
5. Share your appraisal and overall rating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide effective performance feedback. b. Focus on behaviors, actions, and results. c. Reinforce positive performance results. d. Direct critical performance feedback toward performance improvement.
6. Guide the discussion of similarities and differences in the performance appraisal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Show interest in what the employee has to contribute. b. Ask questions to clarify and to gather information. c. Focus the conversation on performance improvement. d. Seek to understand why the employee chose the behaviors he/she did. e. Arrive at a common understanding on how you and the employee view his/her performance. f. When disagreements occur, ask questions to uncover the underlying reasons for this difference of opinion.

7. Receive feedback and suggestions from the employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Focus on the performance issues reported, not the person or personality. b. Carefully listen; take notes. c. Acknowledge the employee's concern. d. Welcome suggestions. e. Remain open to feedback on your own behavior as a manager. f. Clarify any feedback that you receive from the employee on your own leadership.
8. Set performance expectations for the next appraisal period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish performance expectations consistent with Job Description. b. Use SMART Goal format. c. Commit to writing, and periodically review with employee.
9. Discuss development and outline activities for the next appraisal period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consistent with skills to needed for current responsibilities, as well as continued professional development. b. Refer to Developmental Activities (pg. 13) for examples.
10. Close the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Acknowledge your appreciation of the employee's efforts. b. Review the performance expectations and developmental activities. c. Clarify the roles that you and the employee with take in regard to performance expectations and developmental activities and determine the next steps.
11. Allow the employee to make written comments on the appraisal. Ensure they receive a copy of the completed appraisal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. End the meeting in a professional manner.