

## 5.2 Performance Management Policy

### Policy Statement

The Province of Nova Scotia is committed to supporting employees to perform and grow in their current and future roles through effective performance management. A key element of performance management is the alignment of individual and team goals with department business planning to support government priorities. The performance management process, through performance planning and development reviews, empowers employees to succeed and achieve their potential within government and to be enablers of responsive and effective government.

### Definitions

#### **COACHING**

An ongoing process whereby an employee who supervises others, guides or facilitates the continuous improvement of an employee's performance. It includes the timely provision of feedback for improvement, meaningful recognition, support for learning and development and assisting the employee with self-awareness and self-evaluation.

#### **GOALS**

The results an employee must achieve in the upcoming performance cycle. Goals should be aligned with their department and government priorities.

#### **MANAGER/SUPERVISOR**

The person who plans and reviews the performance of an employee. This person directs the work of the employee on a daily and ongoing basis. This definition also includes senior management.

#### **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

A process that links government priorities and department business plans to individual employee goals and ensures they are consistently being met in an effective and efficient manner.

#### **PERFORMANCE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FORM**

A document which details employee work and goals established between an employee and manager/supervisor for the upcoming performance cycle.

### **PERFORMANCE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW**

The informal and formal meetings between an employee and manager/supervisor to discuss the achievement and status of performance goals.

### **REVIEWING MANAGER/SUPERVISOR**

The person who verifies the performance planning and development reviews done by other managers/supervisors for accuracy and consistency. This person is usually at a higher level in the organization's structure.

## **Policy Objectives**

- Support government priorities by aligning individual and team goals with departmental business plans;
- Provide a balanced approach to measure employee performance results;
- Encourage the development of employees through regular coaching, reviews, and dialogue; and
- Promote engagement in a motivating environment and recognize good performance.

## **Application**

This policy applies to all civil servants whose terms and conditions are set out in accordance with either the *Civil Service Act* and its regulations or the Civil Service Master Agreement between the Province of Nova Scotia and Nova Scotia Government and General Employees' Union.

If there is a conflict between this policy and the provisions of the collective agreement, the collective agreement will take precedence.

## **Policy Directives**

### **PERFORMANCE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW**

- Employee performance must be formally reviewed in relation to the employee's goals and expected results.
- Each employee will have a performance planning and development review conducted annually, or on a change of position or appointment, or more frequently as required.
- Managers/supervisors are encouraged to have regular check-ins with employees throughout the performance cycle on their documented goals.

- A performance planning and development review must be documented using the Performance Planning and Development Form developed by the Public Service Commission (PSC). This form establishes goals jointly by the manager/supervisor and employee to provide a clear understanding of goals and expected results. Individual employee goals must be linked to department business plans and must include measurable goals. Employees must be given the opportunity in the formal review to discuss, comment, and sign the form according to this policy and applicable collective agreements.
- A Performance Planning and Development Form should also identify employee development activities that support achievement of an employee's goals and identify opportunities for current or future professional development and career growth.
- Once the Performance Planning and Development Form is finalized, employees will be provided with a signed copy of the form. Managers/supervisors must file the original signed Performance Planning and Development Forms in the employee personnel record at the end of the performance cycle.

#### **PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEES**

- Probationary employees will have interim performance planning and development reviews conducted.
- Managers/supervisors should check the applicable regulations or collective agreement to confirm the length of the probationary period. In circumstances where the probationary period may be extended, the employee must be notified at least one month in advance of the expiry of the initial probationary period.
- Where unsatisfactory performance is identified concerning a probationary employee and reasonable steps are taken to give the probationary employee an opportunity to make the required improvements and this fails to address the performance issues, the employment of the probationary employee shall be terminated.
- Employees who satisfactorily complete the probationary period and are appointed on a permanent basis must be provided with ongoing performance planning and development reviews.

#### **COACHING**

- Managers/supervisors should provide employees with regular and ongoing feedback and coaching regarding job performance throughout the performance cycle.
- Managers/supervisors and employees must jointly keep track of the Performance Planning and Development Form and identify performance gaps and solutions in a timely fashion if necessary.

### **ACCESS TO PERFORMANCE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS**

- Performance Planning and Development Forms are to be reviewed by the reviewing manager/supervisor who is responsible for preparing the review to ensure that reviews are comprehensive and consistently reflect goals established.
- Performance Planning and Development Forms are treated confidentially as per the Employee Personnel Record Policy.
- Managers/supervisors who wish to access their employee's Performance Planning and Development Form, which has been filed in the employee personnel record, must request access from their assigned human resources (HR) representative as per the Employee Personnel Record Guidelines.
- The Public Service Commissioner has the right to access Performance Planning and Development Forms from employee personnel records for the purposes of carrying out the responsibilities established pursuant to the *Civil Service Act*.

### **UNSATISFACTORY JOB PERFORMANCE**

- A manager/supervisor is responsible for identifying and reviewing facts that are relevant to an employee's unsatisfactory job performance. All information collected must be properly documented. Unsatisfactory performance by employees must be addressed with the employee by the manager/supervisor in a timely fashion. Specific information concerning the areas of performance gaps and the improvements expected must be provided to the employee, which should include, where appropriate, a specific date by which improvement is expected to be achieved. The manager/supervisor should inform the employee of the availability of the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP).
- If a manager/supervisor has a reasonable basis for believing that an employee is intentionally not meeting the performance requirements of the position, this may result in disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination. Manager/supervisors should consult with appropriate advisers, including their HR representative and Employee Relations Consultant, prior to considering disciplinary action.

## **Policy Guidelines**

To assist employees in the planning and development process, the PSC has developed Guidelines for Completing the Performance Planning and Development Form. These are available on MyHR under My Performance.

## Accountability

### DEPUTY HEADS

Deputy Heads are responsible for:

- ensuring that managers/supervisors participate fully in the performance planning and development process;
- ensuring that every manager/supervisor has an performance planning and development review conducted;
- ensuring that the Performance Management Policy and performance management process are followed; and
- explaining corporate/department goals and priorities to senior management;

### MANAGERS/SUPERVISORS

Managers/supervisors (including senior management) are responsible for:

- participating fully in the performance management process;
- reviewing the department's business plan with employees;
- fulfilling their individual goals;
- establishing individual goals with employees;
- focusing on coaching, supporting, and developing their employees;
- recognizing and supporting good employee performance;
- at a minimum, reviewing employees' performance annually or as required;
- sending signed Performance Planning and Development Forms for filing in the employee personnel record at the end of the performance cycle;
- dealing with performance issues constructively and in a timely fashion;
- ensuring that poor performance is clearly and consistently handled; and
- promoting communication, understanding, and dialogue between individuals and teams in the organization.

### PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

The PSC is responsible for:

- providing advice and supporting Deputy Heads, managers/supervisors, and employees with performance management; and
- developing, reviewing, and updating performance planning and development resources.

## EMPLOYEES

Employees are responsible for:

- participating in the establishment of individual goals;
- meeting their individual performance goals;
- participating fully in the performance planning and development process; and
- encouraging regular constructive dialogue and feedback on their own performance.

## Monitoring

The PSC is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness and consistent application of this policy. The PSC may periodically conduct reviews and evaluations of practices and require access to data maintained with respect to this policy.

## References

- Employee Personnel Record Policy
- Employee Personnel Record Guidelines
- *Nova Scotia Civil Service Act* and Regulations
- Civil Service Master Agreement between Province of Nova Scotia and Nova Scotia Government and General Employees' Union

## Performance Planning and Development Form

Performance Planning and Development Form for bargaining unit (BU) and excluded (EC) employees can be found on MyHR at My Performance.

## Enquiries

For further information or questions about this policy, please contact:

Public Service Commission  
Organizational Development  
(902) 424-8384

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