
**DOUGLAS COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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AUTHORITY: BOC
COUNTY MANAGER: _____
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SUBJECT: EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS AND MERIT INCREASES

- I. PURPOSE:** To establish a policy regarding the evaluation of an employee's on-the-job performance and to financially recognize an employee's level of performance through a merit increase system.
- II. POLICY:**
- A. Each employee's performance will be reviewed and appraised six months from date of hire, upon completion of the probationary period at 12 months, and annually thereafter. The annual anniversary date of hire or promotion will serve as the basis for the appraisal period. The employee's immediate supervisor is responsible for conducting the review, which will consist of a written evaluation, according to standard County format, and a discussion of the evaluation with the employee. If the immediate supervisor has supervised an employee for less than 6 months, the supervisor may obtain input regarding the employee's performance from the former supervisor, if available. The purpose of the appraisal is to help the supervisor evaluate each employee's performance in an objective, consistent, and standard manner.
 - B. The appraisal is intended to be used as a tool to encourage open communication between the employee and the supervisor. Supervisors are responsible for being objective in judging and rating performance according to established standards. Additionally, the evaluation discussion should be used to discuss career development potential and advancement goals with the employee. In turn, the evaluation should provide the employee with an understanding of the employee's position in terms of County performance standards.
 - C. There will be a direct link between salary and wage increases and annual performance evaluations through a merit increase. A regular employee that has not reached the maximum pay rate within the salary range will be eligible for a merit pay increase of 0-3%. Merit pay increases will not exceed the top of the pay range of the employee.

Employees who are at the top of their pay range or would exceed the top of their pay range with the implementation of the merit increase, will be eligible for a lump sum payment equal to the remainder of the merit increase they would have received if they were not at the top of their pay range.

III. PROCEDURE:

- A. **INITIAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:** An evaluation will be completed for each new employee 6 months after date of hire, and again at approximately 12 months from date of hire to assist in determining if the employee will be retained and placed on regular employment status. Failure to pass probation decisions must be determined prior to the end of the 12-month period. An employee who has completed 12 consecutive months of employment, unless there are extenuating circumstances, will be assumed to have performed satisfactorily and to have passed probation.
- B. **ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:** The annual appraisal period is an employee's annual anniversary date of hire or promotion date. All employees (excluding those within a probationary period, on-call and temporary employees) will receive an evaluation and, if warranted, a merit salary increase of 0-3% not to exceed the top of the pay range of the employee, depending upon their evaluation under the pay for performance system. Merit salary increases will be effective on the first day of the pay period that the employee's anniversary date falls within. A merit increase for an employee who is on a leave of absence of six months or more during an annual performance period will be prorated to reflect time actually worked during the leave of absence.
- C. **PROCESS:**
 - 1. The evaluation must be completed in accordance with the standard county format, be reviewed and signed by the department head, be discussed with and signed by the employee, and be forwarded to the Human Resources office with, if applicable, a signed Personnel Action Form (PAF) indicating the amount of the merit increase. The PAF and evaluation should be submitted to Human Resources no later than the pay period preceding the effective date, which is the first day of the pay period in which the anniversary date falls.
 - 2. Any late evaluations with a PAF recommending a merit increase must be submitted directly to the County Manager with a memo of explanation as to why the documents are late. If the documents are delayed solely because of a supervisory, administrative or clerical error or oversight, the increase must be retroactive and made effective as of the date it was due. If the documents are delayed, due to a lack of cooperation by the employee during the process, the increase may not be retroactive.
- D. **EVALUATION MEETINGS:**
 - 1. Immediate supervisors should meet with each employee being evaluated at the beginning and conclusion of the appraisal period, and periodically throughout

the evaluation period as appropriate.

2. The meeting held at the beginning of the period should include a review of the performance standards expected, and goals upon which the employee's work will be evaluated for the current appraisal period. The employee should be encouraged to participate in the establishment and/or revision of goals and action plans as appropriate.
3. The meeting held at the conclusion of the appraisal period should be used to review performance accomplishments and deficiencies for the past appraisal period, as well as any areas needing improvement, discuss the annual evaluation document, and establish goals and action plans for the next period as appropriate.
4. Both 2 and 3 may be conducted during the same meeting. The discussion should include two distinct topics: past performance and future requirements, goals and/or expectations.
5. The performance appraisal process may also be utilized for performance coaching sessions and for monitoring development plan progress.

E. COMPLETION OF EVALUATION:

1. The employee will receive a copy of the completed evaluation and a copy of the document will be included in the employee's personnel file. Each employee must acknowledge that the performance appraisal was reviewed, made available, and discussed by signing in the appropriate space on the appraisal document. This does not indicate that the employee agrees or disagrees with the content of the appraisal, but merely that the document has been reviewed and discussed.
2. Each employee has the opportunity to respond orally or in writing, or both, to the employee's appraisal. Any written comments will become part of the employee's personnel record. Any further action must be in accordance with applicable bargaining unit agreements.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW: The Human Resources Director will review this policy as needed or at least once every 3 years.