



CITY OF PROVIDENCE

3.11 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION POLICY

Purpose

The City of Providence is committed to maintaining a robust and transparent performance management system that fosters open communication, supports employee development, and ensures alignment with the City's strategic goals. This policy ensures that the City maintains a robust, transparent, and equitable performance management system that supports the City vision of being the *best-run city in America*.

Scope

This policy applies to all full-time and part-time non-union employees who fall under the purview of the City Administration in the City of Providence, and non-union employees under the purview of the City Council, as determined by the City Council Chief of Staff. Where performance evaluation measurements and budget processes may conflict, the respective authority's process will govern.

Policy

1. Intention

- A. The performance evaluation policy and process are intended not only to measure employee performance and clarify job duties but also:
 - 1. Recognize contributions and achievements
 - 2. Identify growth opportunities
 - 3. Provide constructive feedback
 - 4. Support career development and retention
 - 5. Align individual and departmental objectives with the City's broader vision
- B. The performance evaluation process promotes transparency, open communication, and continuous improvement, ensuring employees have the tools and support necessary to succeed in their roles.

2. Performance Review Frequency

- A. The performance review process includes both **formal** and **informal** feedback:
 - 1. **Annual Evaluation:** Each employee will receive a formal, documented evaluation once per year.
 - 2. **Ongoing Feedback:** Supervisors and employees are encouraged to maintain open communication year-round to address successes, challenges, and development needs in real time.
- B. This approach ensures employees understand expectations, successes, and opportunities for improvement in real-time, rather than waiting for annual reviews.

3. Performance Review Process

A. **Formal Annual Performance Review**

Each employee will participate in a documented, in-person performance review annually. The review will include:

- 1. **Assessment of Prior Year Performance**
Review accomplishments, progress toward goals, and areas for development.
- 2. **Goal Setting for the Upcoming Year**
Establish clear, measurable, and aligned objectives that support department and City-wide strategies.
- 3. **Two-Way Feedback**



CITY OF PROVIDENCE

Employees may share their perspective on challenges, opportunities, and future expectations.

B. **Ongoing Feedback & Coaching**

Supervisors are encouraged to provide continuous, real-time feedback rather than relying solely on annual reviews. This includes:

1. Recognizing exceptional performance
2. Addressing concerns promptly
3. Adjusting goals and expectations when priorities change

4. **Measurement of Employee Performance**

- A. The City rating scale for performance is a numerical rating used whereby employees are assigned a score in each performance review category. When averaged, the accumulated score will provide an overall numerical score. These scores will then be utilized in the determination of next steps for the employee, following the formal review.
- B. Possible outcomes tied to the performance review process include:
 1. In the case of exemplary employees, who are consistently performing at or above expectations, compensation increases may be recommended as a result of exemplary performance.
 2. A increases will be tied directly to the employee's numerical performance score, with a mid-range score of three (3) eligible for a single step increase, and a higher than mid-range score of four (4) or five (5) eligible for a two-step increase, after review and concurrence of senior leadership.
 3. Allowable increases to non-graded positions will be based upon a percentage.
 4. In the case of employees who are performing at consistently satisfactory levels, but not exemplary, additional development opportunities may be offered, to broaden skills and increase the professional value of the employee's role.
 5. In the case of employees performing below expectations, various employee improvement strategies may be implemented, including remedial retraining, formal performance improvement plans, or disciplinary action up to or including termination.
- C. Due to the range of possible outcomes within the performance review process, management must be deliberate and thoughtful in arriving at performance metrics, and in the ratings assigned to each employee in their various categories of evaluation.
- D. Fair and unbiased rating is critical to the success of the City's performance appraisal process, and any appearance of bias will not be tolerated. To ensure this, complete performance reviews will be subject to review and approval by departmental senior leadership before codification into the employee's personnel record. A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) designed to support and offer clarity to the City's Performance Review Policy, including the authorization and approval process for completed reviews, has been developed, and should be closely adhered to by all supervisory staff tasked with conducting reviews.
- E. Rating Scale Criterion (numbered in order of score)
 5. Outstanding (O - 5)- Performance far exceeds expectations of this position.
 1. Employee clearly and consistently exceeded the job standards
 2. Exceptional performance and effort was the employee's norm
 3. Employee achieved results well beyond expectations
 4. Employee contributed unique, innovative and workable solutions to projects and/or problems
 4. Above Satisfactory (AS - 4)- Performance exceeds expectations of this position.
 1. Employee periodically exceeded the job standards



CITY OF PROVIDENCE

2. Employee achieved results above expectations
3. Employee showed exceptional performance and effort from time to time
4. Performance is sustained and uniformly high with thorough and on time results.
3. Satisfactory (S - 3)- Performance meets expectations of this position.
 1. Employee consistently met the job standards
 2. Results were timely and accurate and were produced with minimum supervision
 3. Employee recognized and adjusted well to changes in work situations and assignments
 4. Solid, good performance was the employee's norm
2. Requires Improvement (RI - 2)- Performance requires improvement.

Performance needs improvement in areas of consistent weakness
1. Unsatisfactory (U - 1)- Performance is not acceptable.
 1. Employee did not consistently meet the job standards,
 2. Employee requires close supervision to meet expectations,
 3. If employee fails to improve, corrective action may be recommended

(N/A) Not Applicable- Does not pertain to employee's job description.

5. **Performance-Based Compensation Strategy**

The City has determined that a critical method of recognizing and rewarding successful employee performance is to link employees' compensation level directly to their performance as documented through the periodic review process. The City will implement a process by which employees' access to step increases or other increases in compensation will be connected directly to the numerical score received on their annual performance review.

6. **Goal-Setting Guidelines**

A. **Employee goals should be SMART:**

1. Specific – Clearly defined and actionable.
2. Measurable – Progress can be tracked using defined metrics.
3. Achievable – Realistic but challenging enough to promote growth.
4. Relevant – Aligned with departmental and City-wide objectives.
5. Time-Bound – Include clear timelines and milestones.

B. **Types of goals may include:**

1. Job Description / Role-Based Goals – Ongoing expectations tied to core responsibilities.
2. Project-Based Goals – Temporary objectives tied to key initiatives.
3. Behavioral Goals – Expectations regarding workplace conduct and collaboration.
4. Stretch Goals – Ambitious objectives designed to challenge high-performing employees.

C. **Alignment with City Strategy:** Goals should support the department's objectives and the City's broader strategic mission.

D. **Participative Development:** Goals are jointly developed by the supervisor and employee to ensure mutual understanding and buy-in.

E. **Flexibility:** Goals may be updated mid-year as priorities and working conditions evolve.

7. **Budgetary Responsibilities and Considerations**

- A. Department directors are responsible for the budgetary management of their positions and human capital.
- B. The Finance Department will designate a budget allocation to departments in consideration of expenses such as attrition and compensation increases in the fiscal year, annually. It is expected that performance



CITY OF PROVIDENCE

evaluations, as well as any compensation adjustment requests, will be conducted subsequent to the approval of the budget.

- C. Additionally, when budgets are limited, directors are expected to consider impact and value to operations, in addition to budgetary limitations to provide compensation increase opportunity equitably among staff.

8. **Compliance**

- A. Supervisors are required to complete all performance reviews accurately, fairly, and on time. Failure to comply with this policy, including neglecting to conduct reviews or demonstrating bias, may result in:
 - 1. Coaching and retraining performance management practices.
 - 2. Formal corrective action, up to and including disciplinary measures.

- B. The Department of People and Culture will oversee enforcement of this policy, including:
 - 1. Monitoring completion rates and quality of performance reviews.
 - 2. Reviewing complaints regarding bias, retaliation, or procedural violations.
 - 3. Taking appropriate action against supervisors or employees who fail to comply.

Related Policies:

Ethics Guide

Discipline Policy

Other Related Information:

Annual Performance Evaluation Form

Performance Improvement Plan