

Standards for Annual Performance Evaluations¹

Standards to ensure legal and ethical reviews.

1. Evaluations should promote personal development, fulfill institutional missions, and promote effective performance of job responsibilities so that the growth potential of the employees is met.
2. Guidelines for personnel evaluations—including goals and objectives—should be recorded and provided to the employee in evaluation documents so that they are consistent, equitable and fair.
3. Access to evaluation information should be limited to persons with established legitimate permission to review and use the information so that confidentiality is maintained and privacy is protected.
4. The supervisor should respect human dignity and act in a professional, considerate and courteous manner so that the employee's motivation, reputation, performance and work attitudes are enhanced and not needlessly damaged as a result of the review process.
5. Personnel evaluations should provide information that identifies both strengths and weaknesses so that strengths may be built upon and weaknesses addressed successfully.
6. Evaluations should meet the requirements of all federal, state and local laws as well as case law, contracts, collective bargaining agreements, affirmative action policies and agency policy so that supervisors can successfully conduct fair, efficient and responsible reviews that will withstand external scrutiny.

Standards to ensure review are informative, timely and useful.

7. Personnel evaluations should be constructive so they help agency HR units develop resources to manage personnel issues better but also encourage and assist the employee to provide excellent service in keeping with the agency's mission statements and goals.
8. Uses of personnel evaluations should be identified at the beginning of the evaluation period so that it can address appropriate questions and issues up front and can make timely interventions.
9. OPRS or approved alternatives should be managed locally by persons with the necessary training, qualifications and authority to insure that evaluations are properly conducted, respected and used correctly to enhance performance management.
10. Supervisors should identify and justify criteria used to interpret and judge direct reports' performance so that the basis for interpretation and judgment provide clear and defensible rationales for results or recommendations

¹ These have been gleaned from texts and studies about personnel reviews and current, standards enforced in top rated institutions within the private, public and non-profits sectors as of 2008.

11. Reviews should be clear, timely, accurate, germane and well documented so that they are of practical value to supervisors and managers and other appropriate users.
12. Annual reviews should inform management users and the employee of areas in need of professional development so that trainers and development officials can better address training needs in the context of the agency's mission and goals, and expend training dollars consistent with the agency's business plan and identified needs.

Standards to guide HR local officials so that that they respect scarce resources and are viable from a political standpoint.

13. Reviews should be practical so that they produce the needed information in efficient non-disruptive ways.
14. Personnel evaluations should be planned and conducted with the anticipation of questions from the employee and others with legitimate rights to know so that their concerns can be addressed factually and their cooperation established.
15. Adequate time and resources should be provided for personnel reviews so that they can be effectively implemented, the results communicated, and appropriate follow-up activities identified and acted upon.

Standards to ensure accuracy.

16. The selection, development and uses of annual reviews should ensure that the interpretations made from the process are valid and not open to serious misinterpretation.
17. The qualifications, roles, and expectations of the employee should be clearly defined so that the evaluator can determine what evaluation data and information is needed to ensure validity.
18. Context, back ground and relevant history that could influence performance should be identified, described and documented so they are given appropriate consideration when interpreting an employee's performance.
19. The evaluation purposes and procedures both planned and intervening should be documented up front so they can be clearly explained and justified.
20. Information collected for documentation purposes—positive, neutral and negative—should be defensible and factual so it is capable of standing on its own before an outside reviewer.
21. Review procedures should be designed to assure reliability, i.e., when deployed the same way over and over, the end result too should be predictable, even if the facts are different.
22. The information collected, processed and reported on formal evaluations should be systematically reviewed, corrected as appropriate and kept secure so that accurate conclusions about performance can be made and appropriate interventions linked to documented needs.
23. Supervisors need to be careful about bias in all its subtle forms so that conclusions about employee performance is not colored by partiality or forgone conclusions.

24. Information collected, whether anecdotal or quantitative, should be explicitly justified so that employees and managers have confidence in it.
25. Local HR officials should periodically review standards, forms and practices so that mistakes are prevented or detected and promptly corrected and sound practices are insured over time.