

Implementation Plan: OPM Performance Management Guidance

Why this matters:

This plan lays out simple, practical ways to put the new performance guidance into action. It's meant to help our agencies move forward with clear expectations and a focus on real results.

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Revise Employee Performance Plans

- Review and update all current performance plans.
- Ensure expectations are specific and aligned with agency priorities.
- Include at least one goal that supports agency mission or administration priorities.

2. Update Supervisor Performance Requirements

- Add a mandatory performance element for supervisors focused on holding staff accountable.
 - This includes rewarding high performance and addressing poor performance.
 - Language should align with Appendix 2 of the memo.

3. Performance Distribution Justification for SES

- Require SES members who supervise 10 or more employees to:
 - Justify the performance distribution of their subordinate staff in writing.
 - Include this justification in their annual performance narrative.

4. Deliver Supervisor Training

- Provide mandatory training to all new supervisors within one year of appointment.
- Training must cover:
 - Writing clear goals
 - Recognizing performance
 - Taking corrective and disciplinary action when needed.
- Offer refresher training every three years.

5. Prepare for the New Rating Cycle

- The new appraisal cycle begins October 1, 2026
- Begin planning now to revise performance systems, update forms, and align timelines with the new rating cycle.

6. Build a Culture of Frequent Check-Ins

- Require at least four formal performance check-ins per year (quarterly).
- Encourage informal monthly conversations.
- Provide templates and guidance to support these conversations.

7. Monitor Performance Rating Trends

- Regularly track rating distributions.
- Ensure ratings reflect actual results.
- Leaders should be able to explain how ratings align with team performance.

8. Align Awards with Outcomes

- Ensure awards are based on actual results and high performance.
- Develop easy-to-use spot award templates and nomination tools that link directly to accomplishments.

9. Review and Update Policies

- Revisit policies related to performance and discipline (including PIPs and adverse actions).
- Ensure they align with the new guidance:
 - 30-day PIP limits
 - Use of Chapter 43 and 75 procedures
 - Elimination of mandatory progressive discipline

10. Build a Tracking System

- Set up a simple internal system to track:
 - Poor performance cases
 - Improvement plans
 - Settlements
- Ensure you can meet OPM's quarterly reporting requirements.

Warm regards,

Dr. Michelle Sutter

Chair, HR Community of Practice
Senior Executives Association

Refer to the attached memo



6-17-2025 OPM
Memo Performance M