

Administrative Policy No. 18.37

Subject: Performance Management

Information Contact: DSHS Human Resources Division

Authorizing Source: Chapter [41.06](#) RCW State Civil Service Law
Chapter [357-37](#) WAC Performance Management

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Purpose

This policy provides direction for an employee performance management process that is part of a positive and performance-based culture. Successful performance management encourages employee competence and productivity. Performance management documents an employee's work strengths, highlights areas for improvement, all while supporting the Department of Social and Health Services' (DSHS) goals and objectives.

Scope

This policy applies to all DSHS employees who are not represented under a [collective bargaining agreement](#) (CBA).

Additional Guidance

Administrative policy [18.40](#) discipline
Administrative policy [18.46](#) layoffs and separation
Administrative policy [18.58](#) Washington management services (WMS) DSHS
Administrative policy [18.61](#) grievances
Administrative Policy [18.75](#) drug and alcohol-free workplace
DSHS [03-407](#) position description form (PDF)
DSHS FARM Evaluation Module [03-485](#) performance evaluation (PE)
DSHS [03-516](#) performance improvement plan (PIP)
[DSHS performance evaluation forms and training resources](#)

Definitions

Job expectations: Job expectations include key results, competencies, duties, knowledge, skills, functions, and abilities, critical to satisfactorily be performed by the employee regarding the tasks and responsibilities for the position, outlined in the job description, as defined by the supervisor, or supported by the [DSHS 03-407](#) position description form (PDF).

Metrics: Measurable or observable outcomes, workload, or production metrics, expected of an employee's position to satisfy performance.

Performance expectations plan (PEP): Using sections 1, 2, 5a, 7, and 8 of the DSHS FARM Evaluation Module [03-485](#) performance evaluation (PE), a performance expectation plan (PEP) is the written set of job performance expectations provided to an employee within 30 days of being hired or assigned a new function.

Performance evaluation (PE): Using the DSHS FARM Evaluation Module [03-485](#), is the formal evaluation process, initiated by a supervisor, used to provide ongoing feedback at least on an annual basis, to an employee regarding their performance. The PE refers to deliverables in the performance expectation plan. The PE may note items such as achievements, awards, and/or performance issues, the performance improvement plan, and a description of what an employee needs to focus on to improve skills, build knowledge, and satisfy job performance.

Performance improvement plan (PIP): Using the [DSHS 03-516](#), the performance improvement plan is a tool used by supervisors when performance starts to become an issue, so that employees can clearly understand the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors required to meet performance expectations. The PIP outlines the actions an employee must take to improve their performance.

Job standards: Identifies how tasks, responsibilities, or functions must be completed to be satisfactory. Job standards will depend on the employee's position and the type of work. Standards should include information about what meeting or exceeding job expectations will look like, including how long it should take, how much work (metrics) is expected to be accomplished in that time, and the quality of the work. Other considerations may be related to safety and attitude towards clients, other employees, superiors, etc.

Policy

A. Performance management

The DSHS performance management process must ([WAC 357-37-020](#)):

1. Explain the employee's responsibility to successfully perform assigned job duties and responsibilities;
2. Assess how well the employee has contributed to the efficiency and effectiveness in fulfilling the goals and objectives and goals of DSHS and their position; and

3. Recognize the employee's successful job performance and identify appropriate modifications in job performance, if necessary.

B. Employee responsibilities

The employee has the responsibility to ([WAC 357-37-025](#)):

1. Request clarification of any job duty, standard, or expectation that is unclear;
2. Perform assigned work, meeting job standards and expectations;
3. Participate in the performance evaluation process; and
4. Communicate successes and problems with their supervisor, so progress and ongoing performance can be measured, and training or assistance provided.

C. Supervisor responsibilities

The supervisor has the responsibility to:

1. Provide ongoing feedback to the employee regarding the employee's job performance, which includes but is not limited to naturally occurring or scheduled discussions with the employee by telephone, email, video platform (Teams, Zoom, etc.), or face-to-face.
2. Recognize the employee's awards, kudos they receive, or activities.
3. Coach the employee to improve or enhance the employee's skills, knowledge, or ability to perform a task or.
4. Ensure the employee receives the training and resources necessary to successfully meet the written expectations and standards of the current position.
5. Assist the employee with identifying potential future career paths and support their professional learning and development.
6. Hold employees accountable for job related requirements, such as meeting performance expectations and standards.
7. Provide written job performance expectations using the PEP, to set expectations for the employee within 30 days of hiring the employee or assigning a new task or responsibility to be included in the primary job duties.

Note: The PEP consists of sections 1, 2, 5a, 7, and 8 of the PE.

8. Use the [DSHS 03-516](#) PIP to address performance issues early with the employee, so that the employee can clearly understand the knowledge skills, abilities, and behaviors required to meet performance expectations.
9. Provide performance feedback through the formal evaluation process ([WAC 357-37-030](#)):
 - a. To a permanent employee on an annual basis; and
 - b. To a probationary employee or a permanent employee serving a trial service period or transitional review period before the employee attains permanent status in the position.

D. Supervisor's responsibility to employee whose work performance is unsatisfactory.

1. A supervisor must notify a probationary or permanent employee in writing of any deficiencies whose work performance is determined to be unsatisfactory ([WAC 357-37-035](#)).
 - a. Use the [DSHS 03-516](#) PIP to outline the actions the employee must take to improve their performance. Make sure the employee clearly understands the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors required to meet performance expectations. Measure and track the employee's performance relative to expectation Meet frequently with the employee if necessary to monitor and document any progress or continuing performance issues.
 - b. Unless the deficiency is extreme, the employee must be given an opportunity to demonstrate improvement. ([WAC 357-37-035](#))
 - c. The goal is to help employees be successful, when possible. (See administrative policy [18.40](#) discipline and [18.46](#) layoffs and separation for when an employee is not successful.)
2. Consult with the human resources division ([HRD](#)) if you suspect the employee's job performance is impacted by a substance use disorder, mental health issue, or other issue, where it may be appropriate to refer the employee to another resource (*such as the employee assistance program, or administrative policy [18.75](#) drug and alcohol-free workplace*).

E. The DSHS performance evaluation process

1. The performance evaluation process is a formal process that includes, but is not limited to, meeting with the employee to review performance expectations and achievements, discussing and developing their performance development plan for the next evaluation period, and completing the DSHS FARM Evaluation module PE.
2. The supervisor completes questions 1 through 8.

3. The employee completes questions 9 and 10.
4. The supervisor must meet with the employee and have a conversation regarding the evaluation.
5. The supervisor may edit the PE at any time prior to completion.
 - a. For example, if the employee's comments warrant a follow up from the supervisor, the supervisor may edit the PE based on the employee's feedback.
 - b. The supervisor may add performance expectations to the PE throughout the performance period and must inform the employee of any changes.
6. The reviewer, who is the employee's second line supervisor, ensures the performance evaluation process was followed.
 - a. The reviewer reviews the PE for content, including comments.
 - b. The reviewer may include additional comments below their signature.
7. The supervisor completes and signs the PE electronically.
 - a. The employee receives an electronic copy of the PE for signature. The employee's signature is an acknowledgment of participation in the performance evaluation process, not an indication of agreement with the content of the PE.
 - b. The employee may include additional comments at this time.
 - c. The reviewer receives the signed PE, reviews, and signs, unless there are irregularities.
 - d. All parties receive a completed, signed, PDF copy of the PE in their email.
8. If an employee refuses to sign a PE, the supervisor should follow up to ask the employee why and see if there are any changes the employee would like to suggest to the PE. They may not understand the process. The supervisor can still finalize the PE without an employee's signature.
 - a. If an employee is out on a protected leave of absence, the supervisor must wait for their return to finalize the evaluation.

F. Review Requests

1. A DSHS employee may request a review of the PE process following the process described in DSHS [administrative policy 18.61 - grievances](#).
2. Washington general service employees may request a review by the director of the office of state human resources for alleged irregularities in the PE form or procedures.
3. The content of an evaluation is not subject to review.