

**HUMAN RESOURCES
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**



Policy:	Performance Development and Feedback Program Policy	
Date: January 1, 2024	Revision Date:	Approved by: Human Resources

I. POLICY STATEMENT

High performing employees are critical to the success of the Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD). Without their help, EMWD cannot meet the needs and demands of its customers. Therefore, it is extremely important to cultivate this necessary asset and attempt to create an atmosphere that generates the greatest productivity for EMWD and satisfaction of high performing employees to retain and motivate them. EMWD’s way of accomplishing this is through the Performance Development and Feedback Program.

II. OBJECTIVES

The Performance Development and Feedback Program is not a once-a-year event. It is a continuous process, and it requires the equal efforts of employees and supervisors to affect a system that:

- A. Provides accurate feedback on past job performance;
- B. Offers employees specific recommendations on how to improve their performance;
- C. Enhances work relationships through meaningful communication;
- D. Accurately documents employee job performance; and
- E. Gives employees the opportunity to discuss their objectives/standards throughout the year.

III. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL RATINGS

Performance appraisals have a 3-point rating scale, consisting of Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, and Does not Meet Expectations. Each competency will be scored according to these criteria, as well as an overall rating must be provided.

The overall rating for line staff will not be a weighted score, rather the rating will be according to the following criteria:

- Exceeds Expectations – 3 or more Exceeds Expectations ratings and no rating of Does Not Meet Expectations
- Meets Expectations – 2 or less Exceeds Expectations and no rating of Does Not Meet Expectations
- Does Not Meet Expectations – if any rating is Does Not Meet Expectations

IV. **PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL CRITERIA**

A. Criteria for all line staff employees – employees are rated using EMWD’s 3-point rating for the following competencies:

I. Quality of Work – The accuracy and caliber of completed work.

- a. Exceeds Expectations through work products that reflect well on department and district. High quality of work shows commitment to excellence and encourages others to have high standards (comments validating this rating required).
- b. Meets Expectations in terms of regularly producing quality work. Good attention to detail.
- c. Does Not Meet Expectations in that quality of work is inconsistent and reflects limited attention to detail (comments/examples/documentation validating this rating required).

II. Quantity of Work – The completion of assigned duties in a timely manner.

- a. Exceeds Expectations by prioritizing tasks and manages time to ensure deadlines are met. Regularly completes work and has time to complete additional work or support others in workgroup (comments validating this rating required).
- b. Meets Expectations regularly regarding work output. Works effectively with peers and completes own share of the team’s workload.
- c. Does Not Meet Expectations in that employee inconsistently completes average daily workload and requires improvement. Often needs assistance from others to complete daily workload and does not consistently stay on task (comments/examples/documentation validating this rating required).

III. Interpersonal Skills – Good interpersonal skills. Works effectively with others in a respectful manner. Effective at handling difficult issues.

- a. Exceeds Expectations by consistently demonstrating, promoting, and maintaining a harmonious/productive work environment leading to extraordinary outcomes (comments validating this rating required).
- b. Meets Expectations by regularly demonstrating good interpersonal skills.

EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

- c. Does Not Meet Expectations by regularly demonstrating poor interpersonal skills (comments/examples/documentation validating this rating required).
 - IV. Judgement/Guiding Principles – Makes good, well-informed decisions which reflect the Guiding Principles of this organization. Able to consider short-term impact of decisions while taking a long-range view. Usually takes time to consider the risks and benefits of each alternative.
 - a. Exceeds Expectations by consistently demonstrating excellent, well-informed decisions which reflect the Guiding Principles of this organization (comments validating this rating required).
 - b. Meets Expectations by regularly demonstrating good and well-informed decisions.
 - c. Does Not Meet Expectations in that there are specific examples of poor judgment that demonstrate a need for improvement (comments/examples/documentation validating this rating required).
 - V. Safety – Understanding every job-related (JSA) safety practice applicable to the work performed. Does not take shortcuts which increase the risk of injuries or equipment damage. Is vigilant, looking out for potential safety risks and bringing them to the attention of the appropriate individuals.
 - a. Exceeds Expectations by following best safety practices and taking initiative in improving the safety culture of the District (comments validating this rating required).
 - b. Meets Expectations by consisting following best safety practices.
 - c. Does Not Meet Expectations in demonstrating a lack of commitment to District’s safety culture, such as repeat shortcuts or otherwise violates District policy which increases the risk of injuries or equipment damage (comments/examples/documentation validating this rating required).
- B. Criteria for supervisors, managers, and executive management shall be established by the General Manager. Employees are rated using EMWD’s 3-point rating for the following competencies:
 - I. Supervisory/Managerial Employees
 - a. Quality/Quantity – The extent to which work group overall performance is effective and productive in terms of time management, setting objectives and priorities, and following up on commitments across a variety of work challenges. Productive and

EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

efficient in planning and executing work. Accurately scopes out the work, creates efficient workflows and processes, and assigns resources properly. The completion of assigned duties, including those defined under “Past Goals” in this document, in a timely manner. Prioritizes tasks and manages time to ensure deadlines are met.

- b. Judgment, Guiding Principles, Interpersonal Skills – Makes well-informed decisions which reflect the Guiding Principles of this organization. Takes a long-range view, while considering the short-term impact of decisions. Fully considers the risks and benefits of each alternative, leading to exceptional outcomes noted in the comments below. Demonstrates solid employee relations skills, knowledge of workplace diversity and compliance with the organization’s Guiding Principles and ethics policy. Deals with others in a pleasant and respectful manner. Handles conflict constructively and communicates easily, appropriately, and clearly. Promotes and maintains a harmonious/productive work environment leading to the extraordinary outcomes.
- c. Continuous Improvement/Budget/Strategic Development – Improves effectiveness by implementing new ideas and more efficient approaches. Keeps an eye out for new and more efficient processes and solutions. Has implemented new approaches that have greatly improved efficiency. Excellent sense about managing the creative process of others. Very adept at facilitating effective brainstorming. Creates realistic budgets in line with concern for the strategic objectives of the organization and those assigned to the workgroup, and tracks progress against the budget.
- d. Workgroup Management Skills/Performance – Possesses the ability to guide, direct, or influence people in accordance with the District vision and mission. Establishes a sense of direction and motivates staff to work toward common goals. Provides effective feedback; fosters learning and development; provides proper recognition of staff accomplishments. Deals with performance problems promptly, leading to the extraordinary outcomes noted in the comments below. Ensures that employees understand the performance standards expected of them. Works with the employee to resolve performance problems. Holds employees accountable for their work. Ensures they take ownership of projects or issues. Demonstrates a sense of responsibility and commitment to the public perception of the organization. Follows through on commitments and admits to mistakes.

EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

- e. Safety – Exemplary sense of responsibility and commitment to the District’s Safety program. Can always be relied upon to ensure that each person under their supervision receives the appropriate training and complies with proper compliance. Fosters and maintains an atmosphere that encourages safe behavior. Provides leadership by visiting worksites and observing safe work habits. Fosters a work environment where employees feel free to speak up about safety ideas, improvements, and concerns.
- II. Executive Employees are rated using EMWD’s 3-point rating for the following competencies:
- a. Performance/Execution – Achieves results within established timelines. Meets or exceeds productivity standards that have been established for their organizational level or position. Has successfully combined skills, ability, and effort level to ensure that expectations related to results/output are achieved. Has established a track record of organization. Is personally committed to high quality work and encourages others to have similar standards. Identifies and obtains or assigns the appropriate resources (people, technology, processes) to achieve desired results. Achieves excellence.
 - b. Mission Aligned-Strategic Thinking – Understands and personally connects to EMWD’s mission. Supports the organization’s strategic plan and ensures business practices are consistent with the mission. Sees beyond today; talks about possibilities; is optimistic. Can analyze organizational strengths and weaknesses and then combine these with knowledge of the industry, market, and organization to develop long-term strategy. Is not only open to change but drives it. Focuses not only on the tactical areas under that department’s (division/branch) responsibility but drives the implementation of the strategic plan and specific initiatives.
 - c. Accountability/Performance Management – Holds employees accountable for their work. Ensures they take ownership of projects or issues and understand the performance standards expected of them. Works with employees to resolve performance issues. Demonstrates responsibility and commitment to the organization. Follows through on commitments.
 - d. Decision Quality/Business Conduct/Integrity – Gathers enough information to allow a trustworthy assessment of risks and benefits of alternative approaches in any decision. Stays focused on objectives and considers both the short-term and long-term impact

EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

of decision and keeps objectives in mind throughout the process. Moves involvement and decision-making to the lowest level of empowerment possible, consistent with effectiveness, while still maintaining responsibility. Fosters positive interaction that enables exchange of ideas, information, and process improvements. Seeks consensus where appropriate, but not to the detriment of effectiveness. Demonstrates solid employee-relations skills and incorporates the District's Guiding Principles into all aspects of District business. Acts in ways that demonstrate integrity and serves as a positive example of why others should trust in the motives of the organization. Views themselves as a reflection of the organization by following through on commitments and accepting ownership of any mistakes they might make. Leaves others with the clear impression that integrity is a core guiding principle of EMWD.

- e. Feedback/Leadership – Guides, directs, and influences people in accordance with the company vision. Ensures the organization's strategic plan and business practices are clearly understood by all employees and external contacts. Establishes a sense of direction and motivates staff to work toward common goals. Constructively reviews current practices and encourages development of innovative changes.
- f. Team/Relationship Building – Established and encourages a District-wide cross functional environment that creates challenging goals aligned with employee capabilities, organizational needs, and goals. Articulates common goals, communicates how individual roles contribute to team success, provides clear direction and sufficient resources while removing or reducing obstacles to team success. Supports the initiation of change where appropriate. Builds rapport and develops alliances with a broad range of people. Adjusts communication style to meet the needs of individuals at various organizational levels. Forms alliances by demonstrating concern and respect for others, highlights common interest. Acts in ways that reinforce trust.

V. **PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FREQUENCY**

Performance appraisals for all employees who have completed their initial probationary period will be done annually during the period of January to March of each respective year.

EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

A. Probationary Employees

Newly hired employees serving an initial probationary period will have their job performance evaluated at three (3), six (6), and twelve (12) months following their hire date as scheduled by the Human Resources Department (some classifications have a fifteen (15) month probation). The annual new employee appraisal will be held prior to completion of 2080 hours of regular employment and prior to the employee being released from probation. Upon successful completion of an initial probation period, an employee will become eligible for merit step(s).

B. Regular Employees

Upon completion of the initial twelve (12) months, the employees' performance evaluation will be transitioned to the focal point appraisal period if completed by December 31st of the review period. Regular employees will normally be evaluated at least once during their annual appraisal period.

Supervisors are required to hold mid-year meetings with regular employees to review progress on SMART goals, individual development plans, performance standards, and expectations. Such meetings are intended to be ongoing discussions between employees and supervisors about key job elements needed for successful job-related performance.

C. Employees at Control Point

Employees at control point, who met or exceeded expectations in their most recently completed performance appraisal, may defer their annual performance appraisal for a period of one (1) year if the following conditions are met:

- Employee initiates request to defer evaluation; and
- Supervisor approves employee's request.

D. No Action

If an employee has completed less than four (4) consecutive months of on-the-job employment in any annual review period, a performance appraisal indicating "no action" will be filed and no performance ratings will be required. A note that there has not been sufficient opportunity to observe the work performance during the review period may be listed in the comment sections of the appraisal.

VI. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

The formal performance appraisal is the annual culmination of an ongoing performance management process. The Performance Development and Feedback forms have been adopted by EMWD to aid supervisors in conducting this important responsibility.

Before completing the form(s), there are several steps that first need to be completed, including the following:

A. Preliminary Steps

- I. Review and update the employee's job description for accuracy and thoroughness, and if there are any changes, these must be submitted to the Human Resources Department for review. Any proposed major changes will be reviewed by senior management as approved by the Classification and Compensation Policy.
- II. Review any notes you and/or the employee have made since the last performance appraisal was completed.
- III. Review the employee's personnel file for any documentation you may not have.
- IV. Review the performance standards/goals established for the employees' position. Note any changes to established performance standards/goals in preparation for the next appraisal period.

B. Self-Appraisals and Peer Reviews

- I. A notification will be sent to all employees regarding the availability of online performance management tutorials and procedure manuals six (6) weeks before the self-appraisal is due.
- II. A self-appraisal form is to be completed by the employee within fourteen (14) days of receipt of notification of availability. Peer reviews of the employee's coworkers and internal customers may be required prior to the employee's review date and should be received in a timely manner.
- III. Self-appraisals and peer reviews are to be completed strictly on a voluntary basis and should not be allowed to delay submittal of the employees' review by the scheduled review date.
- IV. Peer review forms may be obtained through EMWD's Pipeline or by requesting from the Human Resources Department.
- V. If an employee submits a self-appraisal and requests a meeting with their supervisor, one will be scheduled to discuss and clarify any information provided. This is not the formal appraisal, but an opportunity to gather valuable information from the employee about the job and issues important to the employee.

EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

- VI. Should an employee decline to submit a self-appraisal or peer reviews, it is the responsibility of the employee to respond and acknowledge they are opting out by notifying their supervisor and Human Resources in a timely manner. The supervisor is still required to complete the employee's performance appraisal as scheduled.

C. Preparing the Draft Appraisal

After completion of the preliminary steps, the supervisor will prepare a rough draft of the performance appraisal. The following should be kept in mind as the draft is prepared:

- I. The positive points regarding the employee's performance;
- II. Areas of deficiency in the employee's performance;
- III. The stated performance standards/goals in the last appraisal and comparisons with their attainment;
- IV. Specific examples of performance (both positive and negative);
- V. Specific ways assistance can be given to the employee to achieve any required improvement and/or desired growth;
- VI. Follow up action that will be taken to assist the employee with achieving their goals and EMWD's goals; and
- VII. Summary of the employee's strengths and training needs.

If performance objectives are critical to the employee's position, the supervisor may add them to the evaluation form under the section "Assigned Goals and Objectives for Next Review Period," provided they are clearly defined to the employee. Specifically assigned goals, as necessary, will follow the SMART format (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely).

D. Finalizing the Performance Appraisal

- I. The supervisor completes the appraisal form(s).
- II. The supervisor submits the draft review electronically for review and approval by up to three (3) levels of management. The department head is responsible for ensuring that the performance standards/goals being set are appropriate for the position and in line with department and EMWD objectives. Standards/goals must be accurate, consistent, and presented in a lawful manner.
- III. The employee will be allowed a minimum of 48 hours to review the draft appraisal before the scheduled appraisal review date. Employees should take the time to thoroughly review the appraisal and develop their response, if any. When the appraisal is presented to the employee, the evaluator should review the process they went through to develop the

EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

appraisal and indicate their willingness to revise the appraisal if the employee can show that performance ratings or comments warrant modification.

- IV. Supervisors should also provide a copy of any proposed performance standards and ask the employee to prepare comments or suggestions to be shared at the formal review meeting. Any formal written performance standards that are developed require a signed acknowledgement from both the employee and supervisor.
- V. The formal review meeting should be scheduled in a conference room or private office, away from disruptions. During the formal review meeting, the draft evaluation and proposed performance standards/goals should be discussed. The supervisor and employee should work to gain agreement on their responsibilities, performance expectations, and direction for the next appraisal period. If any changes are needed after the meeting, the supervisor will contact the Human Resources department for assistance.
- VI. After the review meeting is completed, the supervisor will incorporate any changes to the appraisal as agreed upon and resubmit the appraisal for approval. If no changes are necessary, the employee will electronically sign the appraisal and provide any comments.

VII. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL APPEALS PROCESS

All employees are allowed at least 48 hours to review and comment on their performance appraisal before it is finalized. Should they disagree with the performance appraisal, they may appeal according to the following steps:

- A. The first step in the appeals process is the employee's opportunity to discuss any objections or discrepancies to the draft appraisal with their supervisor. This initial appeal occurs during the formal review meeting. It is the employee's responsibility to provide information to their supervisor justifying any changes to the draft appraisal being sought.
- B. Should the desired outcome not be achieved at the first step, the second step in the appeals process is for the employee to note in the comments section of the appraisal form any objections or discrepancies the employee has with the final appraisal.
- C. The third step in the appeals process is limited to employees below the level of department head. An employee may submit an appeals request (with all backup material attached) to their department head with a copy to the Director of Human Resources or designee. The department head will have ten (10) calendar days to review and investigate an appeal and prepare a written finding. The department head may authorize any changes to the appraisal deemed warranted. NOTE: If

EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

the employee fails to request an appeal within fifteen (15) calendar days of being given an opportunity to electronically sign the appraisal, further appeals will not be granted.

- D. If the department head does not make a finding within ten (10) calendar days of receipt, or if the appeal is not resolved by the department head to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may proceed to the fourth step in the appeals process. An employee may immediately proceed to the fourth step in the appeals process if the department head is the employee's immediate supervisor.

The fourth and final step in the appeals process is for the employee to submit a copy of the appeal and related backup material to their respective Deputy General Manager, or Assistant General Manager. If the employee's department reports directly to the executive branch, the appeal is to be submitted to the General Manager or designee. The Deputy General Manager, Assistant General Manager, General Manager, or designee, depending on the department structure, must render a decision within ten (10) working days. This decision will be jointly reviewed by the Director of Human Resources or designee, and in consultation with the Union President. The Director of Human Resources or designee, and Union President will determine if the decision rendered is consistent with District policy or if it needs to be forwarded to the Deputy General Manager, General Manager, or designee for review. Otherwise, the decision will be considered final.

- E. An employee may have Union representation throughout the appeals process at their discretion.
- F. The Union President reserves the right to bring forward up to five (5) performance appraisal appeals to the Deputy General Manager each fiscal year. The Deputy General Manager will inform or consult with the General Manager of such appeals. If no written decision is received by the Human Resources department within ten (10) working days, the appraisal will be referred to the Deputy General Manager or designee for direction.

VIII. ELIGIBILITY FOR MERIT INCREASES

Probationary employees are eligible for merit increases upon completion of their probationary period.

Performance appraisals for employees who have completed their initial probationary period by December 31st of the calendar year will transition to focal point appraisals in April of the following year and be eligible for merit increases based on the guidelines noted below. Employees receiving a performance rating below meets expectations will not be eligible for any merit increases.

EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

Overall Performance Rating	Merit Increase*
Exceeds Expectations	Two (2) step increase
Meets Expectations	One (1) step increase
Does Not Meet Expectations	Not eligible

*Y-rated employees or those at the Control Point of their salary range are not eligible for merit increases.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES ON FILE