I. PURPOSE

A. The purpose of this policy is to establish a standardized employee performance appraisal and evaluation system for State employees and for employees of affiliated county or municipal agencies that is characterized by clearly-defined performance goals and objectives and increased employee engagement. The employee performance appraisal and evaluation system established by this policy is based on the belief that performance appraisal and evaluation are integral components of an ongoing process of performance planning, management, and improvement.

B. Information gained through the employee performance appraisal and evaluation system should be used for a variety of performance-related activities such as: engaging in performance conversations and providing feedback to employees concerning their job performance and work methods and achievement of performance standards; identifying the means to help employees function more effectively; and providing information to be used in making personnel decisions on matters such as salary advancements, promotions, transfers, and opportunities for development.

II. POLICY

A. It is the policy of the State of West Virginia that agencies fairly and consistently apply an employee performance appraisal and evaluation system wherein the agency identifies, measures, and evaluates employee job-related behaviors and accomplishments with previously established performance standards during a defined performance rating period.

At the conclusion of each formal rating period, supervisors and employees shall meet individually to discuss duties, expectations, and whether the employee has exceeded, met or failed to meet established performance standards and expectations.

1. During the first thirty (30) calendar days of each performance rating period which shall not exceed twelve (12) consecutive months in length, supervisors shall meet with their employees to establish performance expectations, job duties, developmental objectives, and agency goals.

2. Halfway through the performance rating period, a Check-in shall be conducted to provide feedback to employees regarding their performance. This is also an opportunity to clarify expectations and discuss developmental opportunities available to the employee.

3. At the end of each performance rating period, supervisors shall conduct a formal evaluation rating their employees’ performance.

B. Employee Performance Appraisal and Evaluation System – The West Virginia Employee Performance Appraisal and Evaluation System is designed to assist supervisors with documenting, evaluating, and reporting employee performance.

1. The Employee Performance Appraisal and Evaluation System consists of a minimum of three (3) formal events (i.e., meetings, conferences, discussions, etc.) and includes two (2), six-month (6)
performance periods. Adequate documentation of regular performance feedback and other evidence that reflect progress towards goals and expectations should be used to support comments and ratings provided during these three (3) formal events.

2. Supervisors are required to use the prescribed West Virginia Division of Personnel (DOP) Employee Performance Appraisal and Evaluation System for conducting, recording, and reporting ratings and comments on employees’ performance evaluations. Appointing authorities may develop agency-specific evaluations for the performance appraisal process provided such evaluations are consistent with and contain all information included in the DOP evaluations. The Performance Appraisal and Evaluation System components and required evaluations are described as follows:

a. Initial Planning Session – During the first thirty (30) days of each performance rating period, supervisors are required to meet individually with their employees to identify, define, and describe the universal competencies for their position, job duties and expectations. (e.g., responsibilities, duties, and standards). The purpose of this meeting is to ensure that the employee understands and is committed to the established performance expectations of the position. The DOP evaluation Employee Performance Appraisal 1 (EPA-1) shall be used for the Initial Planning Session when employees are hired, reassigned, or when expectations must be changed or modified.

b. Primary Performance Period – Following the Initial Planning Session, employees are expected to perform the tasks, duties, and responsibilities communicated to them at the Initial Planning Session. Known as the Primary Performance Period, during the first six (6) months of the primary performance period the supervisor shall regularly monitor, review, and analyze employee performance and provide individualized coaching, reinforcement, and guidance to employees regarding their performance. The supervisor will document these activities to create a record of employee progress from which to make future performance ratings and recommendations.

c. Mid-Year Check-in – At the end of the six-month (6) Primary Performance Period, supervisors shall conduct an EPA-2 Check-in with their employees to provide formal feedback to the employee concerning the employee’s job-related strengths, weaknesses, and performance during the performance period. The DOP evaluation Employee Performance Appraisal 2 (EPA-2) shall be used to document feedback provided during the Check-in. If appropriate, a Performance Improvement Plan may be developed to assist an employee with bringing performance up to the "meets expectations" performance level during the second half of the formal performance rating period.

d. Secondary Performance Period – The second six-month (6) period of the formal twelve (12) month performance rating period is referred to as the Secondary Performance Period. During this period, the employee performs the tasks, duties, and responsibilities which were communicated to him or her at the Initial Planning Session, or as revised during the Mid-Year Check-in, and any specific objectives established by a plan for professional development or performance improvement. During the second six-month (6) period, the supervisor shall continue to regularly monitor, review, and analyze employee performance and provide individualized coaching, reinforcement, and guidance to employees regarding their performance.
The supervisor will also document these activities to create a record of employee progress from which to make performance ratings and recommendations.

e. Final Review Session – Within thirty (30) calendar days following the end of the performance rating period, supervisors shall conduct a Final Review Session with each of their employees. The purpose of the Final Review Session is to provide employees with a formal rating of their overall job performance throughout the entire twelve (12) month rating period and to generate information to be used as the basis for future performance planning.

The DOP evaluation Employee Performance Appraisal 3 (EPA-3) shall be used to record the overall rating of the formal rating period. The EPA-3 includes a set of universal competencies assigned to all employees and provides guidelines for how work is conducted. These competencies are based on research pertaining to workforce trends and needs and reflect the fact that all state employees are stewards of the public trust. Those in supervisory and managerial positions receive a second set of competencies related to best practices in management and leadership. These performance elements are rated on a five-point Likert-type scale to reflect the various levels of performance from “Unsatisfactory Performance” to “Exceptional Performance.” Instructions describing the level of performance for each item on the scale is provided in the evaluation to support accurate assessment of performance.

Prior to conducting the Final Review Sessions with their employees, supervisors must receive approval from their reviewing manager. Upon the reviewing manager's approval, the EPA-3 will be released to the supervisor to schedule a meeting to conduct the Final Review Session. Following the review meeting, the employee and supervisor are required to sign the EPA-3 acknowledging the Final Review Session has been completed. The evaluation provides a section for the employee to respond to the evaluation. The employee's signature indicates the Final Review Session has been completed and an opportunity to respond has been provided; not that the employee agrees with the comments or rating. The employee evaluation shall be submitted to the reviewing manager for final signature.

f. Record Retention – The system of record will maintain the signed evaluation as part of the employee's official personnel record. The record is available for review by future supervisors regardless of the employee’s position or employing agency.

C. Performance Improvement Plan – It is strongly recommended that the supervisor develop a written Performance Improvement Plan for an employee whose evaluation overall rating is less than 3.00 (Meets Expectations) or in any situation in which the employee’s performance is not meeting expectations throughout the performance year. The Performance Improvement Plan should contain specific expectations and time frames in which to accomplish the established outcomes. The plan may be simultaneously implemented as a component of corrective counseling and provide adequate opportunity for employee development and improvement.

D. Probationary Employees – Four (4) weeks prior to the end of the probationary period supervisors are required to complete a formal evaluation of performance for each probationary employee. This performance rating shall be used when recommending if the services of the employee should be retained.
E. Non-standard Performance Reviews – For non-standard performance review cycles, such as new hires, reallocations, promotions, demotions, and transfers that occur after the normal performance cycle begins, the process modifies as follows:

1. If an employee is hired, reallocated, promoted, demoted, or transferred before the July 1 creation of the EPA-2, mid-year discussion process is modified as follows:
   a. EPA-1 Initial Planning Session – Upon occupying the new position, an initial planning session between the employee and supervisor should be completed within thirty (30) calendar days from the first day of work in the new position.
   b. EPA-2 Mid-Year Check-in – The Mid-Year Check-in should be completed as scheduled by the Employee Appraisal System. Supervisors should meet with employees to discuss their progress and/or areas where improvement is necessary. Upon creation of the EPA-2, supervisors should conduct the meeting noting in the narrative that the EPA-2 does not reflect a full six-month (6) performance rating period.
   c. EPA-3 Final Review Session – The final review session should be completed as scheduled by the Employee Appraisal System. Ratings in the final performance review are based on the expectations provided in the EPA-1 during the initial planning session. Ratings and comments should reflect the actual time the employee occupied the position, and a note should be added that the evaluation does not cover a full performance year.

2. If the employee is hired, reallocated, promoted, demoted, or transferred after July 1, the process is modified as follows:
   a. EPA-1 Initial Planning Session – Upon occupying the new position, an initial planning session between the employee and supervisor should be completed within thirty (30) calendar days from the first day of work in the new position.
   b. EPA-2 Mid-Year Check-in – Because an EPA-2 is required to complete an EPA-3 in the electronic appraisal system, an EPA-2 is created automatically upon an employee occupying a position after July 1 of each calendar year. Supervisors must complete an EPA-2 for the first six (6) months of the formal performance rating period to ensure an EPA-3 is created at the conclusion of the formal performance rating period. “N/A” (Not Applicable) should be entered in response prompt sections of the EPA-2.
   c. EPA-3 Final Review Session – The final review session should be completed as scheduled by the Employee Appraisal System. Supervisors should complete the final evaluation based on the expectations provided in the EPA-1. These ratings should reflect the actual time the employee occupied the position, and a note should be added that the evaluation does not cover a full performance year.

III. REFERENCE: West Virginia Division of Personnel Administrative Rule (143CSR1). Sections 10.2(a) and 15, as amended July 1, 2016.

IV. EFFECTIVE DATE: November 1, 1996.
V. REVISIONS:
   A. Previous Revision: November 1, 1998.
   B. Previous Revision: April 15, 2004.
   C. Previous Revision: August 1, 2006.
   D. Latest Revision: January 1, 2022.

VI. POLICY NUMBER: DOP-17.

Approved and Issued By:

[Signature]
Sheryl R. Webb, Director of Personnel

Date Signed: September 23, 2021