

# Performance Matters

Combining a standardized performance evaluation tool and clear employee expectations to drive a culture of accountability in state government



May 2014

## Key Dates:

### May

Submit any agencywide expectations to People First team for July 2014 - June 2015 evaluation period

### June

Notifications sent to alert managers to begin completing evaluations ending June 30 and notifications sent to alert managers to set expectations for the July 2014 - June 2015 evaluation period

### June 30

Closing date for the Jan. 1 – June 30, 2014 evaluation period

### July 1

Evaluations opened in the People First system for the July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015 evaluation period

### Aug. 29

Final day to complete performance evaluations for the Jan. 1 – June 30, 2014 evaluation period

## Resources:

We encourage employees, managers and human resource professionals to frequently visit the [Performance Matters Initiative Web page](#).

It offers valuable resources and updates - including the [Performance Matters Initiative Toolkit](#) and [samples of performance expectations](#) - to aid managers in the development of SMART expectations and the use of the online performance evaluation module.

## Performance Matters Update - May

As we look toward the end of the evaluation period in June, this is an excellent time for managers to communicate with employees about performance standings and analyze the effectiveness of their current expectations and measurements. The Performance Matters methodology involves a four-step process: implementing SMART expectations, monitoring performance, reviewing measurements and expectations, and readjusting them as necessary.

### Setting and Managing Expectations

Agencies should have ensured that managers have set all employee expectations for the January - June evaluation period. If all expectations have not been set, managers must enter these into the system and employees must acknowledge them. Employees whose expectations were never entered into the system will have their evaluations administratively closed on Aug. 30 and will receive default ratings of Satisfactory. Please remind managers to double check that all their employees have expectations in the system.

It is a great practice to share SMART expectation examples within your agency, share timelines to keep managers on track, and continue offering expectation writing assistance so managers can prepare for the setting of expectations for the July 2014 - June 2015 evaluation period.

### Monitor

Managers are currently monitoring and coaching employee performance and should have measurement procedures based on specific criteria. The Performance & Talent Management module in the People First system provides a "Manager's Notepad" to track employee progress throughout the evaluation period. If a manager sees an employee struggling with an expectation, that manager should put his or her concerns in writing and arrange to meet with the employee. An email of the concerns provides a documented record of the manager's attempt to advise the employee of a potential rating of Below Expectation and help coach him or her on how to improve performance and avoid a low score.

### Review

Throughout this evaluation period, managers should use their notes from monitoring employee performance to gauge which expectations and measures worked effectively and which ones should be adjusted for the new evaluation period. Prior to setting the new expectations in July, managers should determine what the appropriate level of performance should be and prepare their adjustments to the expectation or measurement method. It is a good idea to consider the following questions:

- Are the expectations accurately reflecting the employee's essential duties and responsibilities?
- Are the expectations encouraging the outcomes you had hoped?
- Based on feedback, do your employees understand how their performance is being monitored? Are they still finding the expectations reasonable and achievable?
- Do the measures that you are applying accurately capture the employee's level of contribution to the achievement of the work unit's goals?

### Adjust

The evaluation process will reveal aspects of the original SMART expectations that may need reassessing and adjusting. If altering an expectation or measurement procedure could make it more effective, then the manager should consider adjusting it for the upcoming full-year evaluation period beginning July 1. Some helpful questions when considering how to recalibrate a performance expectation include:

- Did you set expectations that are achievable and that drive meaningful performance? (Remember: a rating of 3 is successful and a 5, although difficult to sustain, is achievable.)
- Are your methods or observations for measuring expectations resulting in an overly burdensome workload? Is there another viable approach for collecting the information?