



Jeffrey R. Gahler,
Sheriff

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PERSONNEL POLICY

Performance Appraisal Rating (PAR)

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| Distribution: | All Employees | Index: | PER 0901 |
| Responsible Unit: | Human Resources | Rescinds: | |
| DLI Program: | | MD Code: | |

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1. Purpose

To provide employees of the Harford County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) with guidelines regarding the procedures for completion and use of performance appraisals within the Agency.

2. Policy

To provide guidelines for how supervisors are to document employee performance.

3. Definitions

APPRAISAL PERIOD: the time period for which a performance appraisal rating assesses the employee's performance.

FORMAL COUNSELING: may include a review of applicable standards and policies, actions which may be expected if performance or conduct does not improve, and a reasonable time period established for correction and review.

GENERAL COUNSELING: may be undertaken when, in the discretion of the Agency, it is deemed necessary to improve performance, instruct the employee, and/or attempt to avoid the need for disciplinary measures.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL RATING (PAR): a summary of the employee's performance over the preceding appraisal period.

RATER: that Agency member responsible for completing the initial performance appraisal. This supervisor will utilize Guardian documentation to detail the employee's performance over the previous rating period and will choose "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory" as a description of that performance.

REVIEWER: the supervisor(s) of the rater, in successive ranks, responsible for reading the rater's description of an employee's performance and providing comments on the performance appraisal.

SATISFACTORY: personnel that perform at an acceptable standard.

UNSATISFACTORY: personnel that perform below an acceptable standard.

4. Procedures

A. Completing the PAR

1. Raters will make comments on the performance of employees in the Guardian Tracking System throughout the rating period.
2. To be eligible to receive a PAR for a rating period, the employee must have worked a minimum of 30 on-duty days in a full duty status during the rating period.
3. Should an employee not qualify to receive a PAR, his current supervisor will complete an explanation via memorandum (SO-212), a copy of which will be provided to the employee through the chain of command and attached to a Guardian Entry.
4. For each employee who has an administrative charge sustained against him, the Human Resources Director will, as soon as practical, enter into the Guardian Tracking System an entry noting that a charge was sustained as well as the date of the incident and the date of the sustained finding.
 - a. if a trial board, or the Chief Deputy, sets aside a sustained finding, the employee must, within 60 calendar days, request in writing via memorandum to the Human Resources Director, to have the Guardian entry removed.
 - b. once the written request is received, the Human Resources Director will remove the specific Guardian entry pertaining to the sustained charge.
5. Employees cannot be marked "Unsatisfactory" on two PARs for the same charge or incident.
6. If an employee receives a sustained finding in a category A, B, or C violation, he may receive an unsatisfactory PAR.
7. If an employee receives a sustained finding in a category D or E violation, he will receive an unsatisfactory PAR.
8. One or more motor vehicle crashes during a rating period may be considered in assessing an employee's overall performance but need not result in an automatic unsatisfactory evaluation.
9. Any unsatisfactory PAR on a probationary employee will preclude his participation in the competition for any specialized or secondary assignment, and may result in the removal from any specialized or secondary assignment.

B. Evaluations

1. The Guardian System will be the means by which Agency employees are tracked for evaluation purposes as noted in PER 0902.
2. Items not documented in the Guardian System for that rating period will not be used for evaluation purposes unless exceptional circumstances exist (i.e. statistics of employee performance run merely to place into an evaluation do not need to be entered into Guardian first).
3. To initiate a satisfactory performance appraisal, the supervisor will:

- a. make an entry in the Guardian System under the "Performance Appraisal - Satisfactory" heading;
 - b. make a note in the entry indicating the dates which the evaluation covers;
 - c. mention any specifics the employee may need to concentrate on in the coming rating period.
4. To initiate an unsatisfactory performance appraisal, the supervisor will:
- a. make an entry under the "Performance Appraisal - Unsatisfactory" heading;
 - b. make a note in the entry indicating the dates which the evaluation covers;
 - c. specifically detail the deficiency or deficiencies and document the steps taken by supervisors to rectify the deficiency or deficiencies;
 - d. use previous Guardian entries as appropriate supporting documentation for the unsatisfactory rating; and
 - e. detail an action plan to rectify the performance issues in the upcoming appraisal period.
- C. Use of Performance Appraisal Results
1. Performance Appraisal results may be used in the following instances:
 - a. an employee may be denied a salary increase if the employee has received an "Unsatisfactory" rating in the employee's most recent PAR.
 - b. an employee may be denied transfer or assignment to a specialized unit or may be subject to additional action, up to and including termination, if he does not receive a "Satisfactory" rating in the employee's most recent PAR.
 - c. an employee may be removed from secondary assignment(s) and from specialized units if he does not maintain a "Satisfactory" performance rating.
 2. If an employee receives a rating of "Unsatisfactory" on the PAR and is participating in a secondary assignment, the Division Commander, after consultation with the Bureau Chief, will make a decision regarding continued participation in that assignment.
 - a. after a decision is made by the Bureau Chief, supporting documentation will be entered into the Guardian system.
 3. An employee with an "Unsatisfactory" rating on his most recent performance appraisal (including interim appraisals) may, at the Sheriff's discretion, be denied the opportunity to compete in the promotional process or in the process for specialized units.
 - a. once an employee is qualified for the promotional process, he must maintain a "Satisfactory" performance rating to remain eligible for promotion.

D. Retention and Confidentiality of Appraisals

1. All PARs and related documentation are to be considered confidential information and will be treated as such.
2. PARs will be maintained in the employee's electronic personnel file according to the records retention schedule.

E. Reviewer

1. The rater and reviewers will use a collaborative process to complete the PARs.
2. The collaborative process should reach a consensus on the employee's performance.
3. All reviews will be completed prior to the rater finalizing the PAR and meeting with the employee.
4. After the collaborative rating process, the rater's Division Commander will be the final decision maker for all PARs on personnel ranked Lieutenant and below.
5. The Division Commander will approve all PARs prior to delivery to employees.

F. Performance Appraisal Schedule for Probationary Employees

1. All law enforcement and corrections sworn probationary employees will receive a PAR on a quarterly basis for the duration of their probationary period.
2. All civilian probationary employees will receive a PAR at 3 months, at 6 months, and then will follow the normal semi-annual PAR.
3. The probationary PARs are due within fifteen calendar days of the close of the appraisal period.
4. Appraisal periods will be as follows:

January - March
April - June
July - September
October - December

G. Performance Appraisal Schedule for Non-Probationary Employees

1. All non-probationary employees will be appraised for the periods of January 1st through June 30th and July 1st through December 31st, respectively.
2. PARs will be based on performance during the specified rating period.

H. Interim Appraisal

1. All employees receiving an inter-divisional transfer (from one division to another) will receive an interim PAR.

2. The interim PAR will be completed by a supervisor in the division which the employee is transferring from.
3. The interim PAR will be completed within fifteen calendar days of the transfer date.
4. The interim PAR will be reviewed and considered by the supervisor completing the employees next scheduled evaluation.

I. Performance Appraisal Meeting

1. A performance appraisal meeting must occur between the rater and the employee to discuss the performance appraisal as documented in the Guardian Tracking System.
2. The rater will document in guardian the fact that an appraisal meeting was held with the employee.
3. During the meeting, the rater will discuss with the employee the employee's performance during the rating period and what is noted in Guardian concerning the rater's conclusion about the employee's performance (satisfactory or unsatisfactory).
4. If the employee believes that documents were not considered by the rater, he will be allowed forty-eight (48) hours to produce documents pertinent to the performance appraisal.
5. If the employee disagrees with an unsatisfactory rating on the PAR, he will request a meeting with the rater within fifteen calendar days of the appraisal.

J. Employee Meeting with Raters/Reviewers

1. If the employee is dissatisfied with the performance appraisal, he can request a meeting with his chain of command.
2. If after meeting with his supervisors and Division Commander the employee still feels that his evaluation is unfair, he may file a grievance following Agency policy outlined in PER 0302.
3. No appraisal is complete until the grievance process is finalized.

K. Performance Review Meeting

1. Performance counseling will be informative in nature and will notify the employee of positive points and/or factors needing improvement which have developed during the current rating period.
2. Counseling sessions will be documented in the Guardian Tracking System.
3. All Guardian Tracking System entries will be used as supportive documentation for the employee's PAR.

L. Counseling for Unsatisfactory Performance

1. A supervisor recognizing inappropriate or unsatisfactory performance by an employee should bring that fact to the employee's attention as soon as practical.

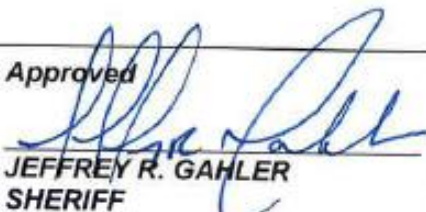
2. In order to give an employee an opportunity to correct inappropriate or unsatisfactory behavior, a supervisor should notify the employee of deficiencies as soon as possible.
3. An employee need not display multiple instances of inappropriate or unsatisfactory behavior. A single instance of serious inappropriate or unsatisfactory performance, or a history of different types of inappropriate or unsatisfactory behavior, can also justify an unsatisfactory rating.
4. A supervisor must detail an action plan in Guardian to rectify the performance issues in the upcoming appraisal period.

M. Time Limits

1. All PAR's must be completed in the Guardian System, to include approval through Captain, within 30 calendar days of the close of the rating period.

N. Expungement Process

1. Upon written request to the agency's Human Resources Director, a Harford County Sheriff's Office employee may have expunged from their personnel file all performance evaluations older than 5 years from the date of the request. This would include all paper forms, as well as all Guardian Tracking System electronic entries. You may not choose certain items to expunge. If the request is made, all performance documentation (positive and negative) older than 5 years will be destroyed. Employees may only make this request once per calendar year.
 - a. Complete a Memorandum (SO-212) addressed to the Human Resources Director requesting that all performance documentation older than 5 years be expunged. Refer to Appendix A for a template of this Memorandum.
 - b. Upon receipt of the Memorandum (SO-212), the Human Resources Director will expunge the requested records. The date of expungement will be noted on the Memorandum and a copy sent back to the employee for confirmation.

Approved

JEFFREY R. GAHLER
SHERIFF
DATE 7-21-2021

APPENDIX A: Performance Evaluation Expungement Memo



HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
COURAGE HONOR INTEGRITY

MEMORANDUM

DATE:

TO: Tracey Martinelli
HR Director, Services & Support Bureau

FROM: Your name and Rank
Title, Bureau and Division Assignment

SUBJECT: Performance Evaluation Expungement

Pursuant to HC/SO policy PER 0901 please accept this memorandum as an official request to expunge all files (paper and electronic) of performance documentation in my personnel file and my Guardian Tracking System electronic file. I understand that all performance documentation (positive and negative) for the 5-year period prior to the date of this memorandum will be destroyed.

Employee Signature

Date

Division Commander Signature

Date

Record Expunged:

HR Director Signature

Date

7/21

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