



TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDERS

Subject: Performance Appraisal Program		General Order Number: 530.20
Section: 500- Human Resources		Subsection: 30-Personnel
Amends/Supersedes: 1-5, 530.20 (05/18/2020)		
Effective Date: 05/18/2020	Revised Date: 01/19/2023	Review Date: As Needed
Per Order Of: Patrick W. Jones, Chief of Police		
RIPAC: 3.10, 3.11, 3.12		
Distribution: All Department Members		

NOTE: This written directive is for the internal governance of the Tiverton Police Department, and is not intended and should not be interpreted to establish a higher standard of care in any civil or criminal action than would otherwise be applicable under existing law.

I. POLICY

A formalized performance appraisal program serves both management and Department employees by standardizing the nature of the personnel decision-making process, ensuring the public that the Department's employees are qualified to carry out their assigned duties, and providing job incumbents with the necessary behavior modification information to allow them to maintain appropriate behavior.

Performance appraisal is a measurement of employees' on-the-job performance of assigned duties by the most immediate supervisor to employees being measured. It is a continuous process and should be a daily link between supervisors and employees. The Tiverton Police Department's Performance appraisal program is designed to allow fair and impartial personnel decisions by management. It provides for the periodic rating of Department employees by designated supervisors, so that a permanent record of performance may be maintained. Such a system is necessary and invaluable in identifying those employees who have progressed to the point where they are ready to assume greater responsibilities. It will also result in employees having knowledge of those areas in which improvement can be made; thus, both supervisory personnel and employees can direct their efforts toward that objective.

The performance of all sworn and non-sworn Department employees shall be assessed and documented in a written, standardized, equitable fashion. Such records protect employees' rights and prevent misunderstandings. Performance appraisals shall be conducted at a minimum annually.

II. PURPOSE

To establish the Tiverton Police Department's performance appraisal program for all sworn and non-sworn employees.

III. RATING SCALE

- A. The following is the standard rating scale for the Tiverton Police Department.
 - 1. Performance, knowledge, skill level or abilities are unacceptable compared to position requirements.
 - 2. Performance, knowledge, skill level or abilities are sometimes below position requirements.
 - 3. Performance, knowledge, skill level or abilities meets position requirements.
 - 4. Performance, knowledge, skill level or abilities sometimes exceed position requirements.
 - 5. Performance, knowledge, skill level or abilities are superior compared to position requirements

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM

- A. The purpose of any performance appraisal program is employee development. The value of performance appraisal is in the process of communication between supervisor and employee and not merely in the completion of the form. Specific objectives of the performance appraisal program are:
 - 1. To increase professional development, skill level, and performance of each employee;
 - 2. To strengthen working relationships between the supervisor and employee;
 - 3. To clarify job duties and responsibilities;
 - 4. To establish mutually-understood standards for measuring performance; and
 - 5. To aid in promotion and retention.

V. TRAINING AND RATING THE RATERS

- A. All supervisors shall receive training in performance appraisal and performance management prior to completing performance appraisals. The Planning and Training Lieutenant shall be responsible for supervisor training, with input from the Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police, and the Captain.
- B. It is important that everyone realize that no matter what appraisal system is used, total objectivity is unobtainable. The human element is ever present and must be addressed. As a result, the success and acceptance of any performance appraisal program depends on the quality of the raters. If used properly, the evaluation procedure becomes an effective managerial tool as well as an employee motivator. If used improperly, the performance appraisal program breeds contempt, lowers morale, and decreases the total effectiveness of the entire agency.
- C. Whenever performance appraisals are conducted on supervisors whose responsibilities include rating subordinate employees, those supervisors shall be

rated on the fairness and impartiality of their ratings, quality of their performance appraisal reports, ability to provide counseling or guidance, and the overall care and thoroughness of their evaluations.

VI. RATERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Supervisors serving as raters are primarily responsible for translating the performance appraisal program into reality. They must bring the principles of performance appraisal into play on a daily basis. They are directly responsible for training employees and developing their potential. They must define the job and document all pertinent information related to the employees' work performance.
- B. In addition, raters must let employees know how well they are doing by discussing their work performance, not only when performance appraisals are due, but on a regular ongoing basis.

VII. COUNSELING

- A. Sworn and non-sworn employees shall be counseled by their raters at the conclusion of each rating period. This counseling shall include:
 - 1. A review of the results of the performance appraisal just completed.
 - 2. A review of the tasks involved in the position occupied.
 - 3. The level of performance expected from employees.
 - 4. The criteria by which employees will be rated.
 - 5. A review of the employees' immediate and long-range goals.
 - 6. Guidance, direction, or suggestions as to how employees can meet these goals.
 - 7. Discussion relative to career advancement, specialization, or training appropriate for the employees' position.
- B. Raters shall also provide employees being counseled with blank copies of the Performance Evaluation Report Form that will be used to evaluate their performance at the end of the rating period.
- C. The intent of counseling is to ensure that employees fully understand the specific duties and responsibilities of the position and what is expected to carry them out.
- D. It is also understood that counseling by raters may occur at any time during a rating period.
- E. At the conclusion of this review, raters shall document the specific areas discussed with employees and retain a copy of such reports for future reference, if necessary.

VIII. PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTATION:

- A. Raters cannot make fair, impartial, and objective ratings unless the work performance of employees is documented throughout the entire rating period. Through careful observation and documentation, raters can increase their awareness of employees' work methods and results.
- B. Accurate, fair, and consistent documentation will provide meaningful feedback in promoting employee's better judgment, increased insight into behavior, heightened awareness of organizational goals, and performance comparisons over time, all of which combine to increase employee motivation. This documentation should reflect both positive and negative behavior.

- D. LEFTA SYSTEMS Public Safety Software Application will assist the performance appraisal program performance evaluation process in a variety of ways, including but not limited to:
 - 1. Citizen/Employee Compliments;
 - 2. Citizen/Employee Complaints;
 - 3. Response to Resistance Incidents;
 - 4. Vehicle Pursuit Incidents;
 - 5. Vehicle Damage/Accident Incidents;
 - 6. Training Records; and
 - 7. Internal Investigations.

IX. BEFORE BEGINNING THE EVALUATIONS

- A. Raters shall review all on the employee in the LEFTA SYSTEMS Public Safety Software Application.
- B. Raters shall run a statistical report through the computerized Records Management System (RMS) reflecting employees' activity during the rating period (Sworn officers only).
- C. Raters shall review their own notes and documentation on the employee during the rating period.
- C. Raters shall complete the following tasks before beginning evaluations:
 - 1. Familiarize themselves with all documentation
 - 2. Understand thoroughly the duties and requirements of the particular position held by employees to be rated
 - 3. Concentrate on employees' immediate and long-range career goals and objectives
 - 4. Do not assume that excellence in one function implies excellence in all functions. Objectively evaluate each activity or task

X. TYPES OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REPORT FORMS

- A. All performance evaluations shall be completed on department approved forms.
- B. Performance Evaluation Report Forms
 - 1. Police Officer Evaluation
 - 2. Detective Evaluation
 - 3. Supervisor Evaluation
 - 4. Dispatcher Evaluation
- C. Monthly Evaluation Report Forms
 - 1. Monthly Performance Evaluation Report Forms shall be completed on all probationary employees. At the discretion of the Chief of Police or designee, Monthly Evaluation Report Forms may be completed for employees who are showing deficiencies in one or more job duty or responsibility.
- D. Weekly Evaluation Report Forms
 - 1. At the discretion of the Chief of Police or designee, Weekly Evaluation Report Forms may be completed for employees who are showing deficiencies in one or more job duty or responsibility.
- E. Corrective Action Plans
 - 1. Employees who receive an "Unacceptable" (rating of one (1)) in any performance category shall have a Corrective Action Plan.

XI. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REPORTS

- A. With the exception of probationary employees, all sworn and non-sworn employees shall receive performance evaluations at least annually. Completed Performance Evaluation Reports shall be signed and dated by the employees and the rater.
- B. Completed Performance Evaluation Reports shall be approved by the Chief of Police and/or Deputy Chief of Police.
- C. Rating periods shall be determined by the Chief of Police.
- D. Raters shall be assigned to prepare their Performance Evaluation Report Forms thirty (30) days after the end of the evaluation period as determined by the Chief of Police.

XII. OTHER PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REPORTS

- A. Sworn employees:
 - 1. Upon successful completion of the Field Training Program, Patrol Supervisors shall submit Monthly Performance Evaluation Reports for all officers under their command during the remainder of the eighteen (18) month probationary period.
 - a. The purpose of these evaluation reports is to determine, at the earliest point, employees' suitability for continued employment.
 - b. Performance should be closely monitored, and written evaluations should be a part of this process.
- B. Non-sworn employees:
 - 1. All newly-appointed, non-sworn employees shall remain on probationary status for the first one (1) year of initial appointment to the Department. The Planning and Training Lieutenant shall complete monthly Performance Evaluation Reports for all newly-appointed, non-sworn employees during this one (1) year probationary period.
 - a. The purpose of these evaluation reports is to determine, at the earliest point, employees' suitability for continued employment.
 - b. Performance should be closely monitored, and written evaluations should be part of this process.
- C. Corrective Action Plans:
 - 1. All employees are expected to meet performance standards and behave appropriately in the workplace. Corrective action is a process of communicating with the employee to improve unacceptable behavior or performance after other methods such as coaching and performance appraisal have not been successful.
 - 2. The goal is to guide the employee to correct performance or behavior by identifying the problems, causes and solutions, not to punish the employee. If there is no improvement or if there are repeat occurrences, correction action may be appropriate. In general, corrective action should be progressive, i.e., beginning with the lowest severity action before employing actions of more severity.
- D. Nothing in this General Order shall prevent sworn employees from receiving more frequent evaluations if, in the opinion of the Chief of Police or designee more frequent evaluations are warranted.

XIII. RATINGS

- A. Raters shall substantiate any performance rating rated at a one (1) and any area rated five (5) in the comments section.
- B. If raters have conscientiously pointed out employees' areas of weakness and indicated paths of corrective or remedial action, there should be a complete and justified record leading up to an "Unacceptable" (rating one (1)) rating. Prior to the beginning of the rating period concerned or before issuing these types of ratings, raters should be able to answer the following questions in the affirmative:
 - 1. Is the work that employees are required to perform in accordance with job specifications?
 - 2. Have the necessary rules and regulations, performance standards, and policies been made known to employees?
 - 3. Have employees been given adequate training and sufficient opportunity to improve?
 - 4. Are the ratings objective evaluations based on careful observations and measured against understood requirements?
 - 5. Do the ratings cover a reasonable length of time?
- C. Giving employees "Unacceptable" (rating one (1)) ratings on evaluation reports means their performance is noticeably deficient with respect to particular job requirements or during certain periods of time.
- D. Employees who receive an "Unacceptable" (rating of one (1)) in any performance category shall have a Corrective Action Plan included in the performance evaluation. Giving employees "Unacceptable" ratings on evaluation reports means they have not met job-related requirements satisfactorily and shall be required to make immediate improvement.
- E. Raters shall be responsible for completing a comprehensive Corrective Action Plan for all employees that receive an "Unacceptable".
- F. Employees who receive a Corrective Action Plan shall meet with the rater within ninety (90) days of the performance evaluation. At that time the employee will be re-evaluated on the area (s) that are covered in the Corrective Action Plan. The rater shall document the progress, and shall forward the documentation, through the chain of command, to the Chief of Police. After consulting with the employee's rater, the Chief of Police shall determine a course of action for employees who are still performing at an "Unacceptable" level. Courses of action may include, but are not limited to, re training in the specific area, a modified field training program and/or disciplinary action.

XIV. PROVISIONS

- A. Performance evaluations shall be based solely on performance during a specified rating period. Performance that occurred prior to or following the rating period shall be excluded in the rating for that period.
- B. All performance evaluation criteria shall be specific to the position occupied by employees during the rating period.

XV. DETERMINATION OF RATERS

- A. Department employees shall be rated by their supervisors.

1. Raters must have observed employees being rated in a supervisory capacity for at least ninety (90) days during the rating period.
2. If this is not the case and employees have been under the command of more than one rater during the rating period, evaluations shall be assigned to rater deemed to be most appropriate by the Police Chief. The selected rater shall consult with all supervisors with whom employees have worked to gain input regarding the evaluations.
3. If employees feel that improper raters were selected they shall notify, through the chain of command, the Police Chief in writing. Employees shall state their reasons for finding the selections to be improper and identify who they feel would serve as appropriate raters. However, the final determination of raters rests with the Police Chief.

XVI. REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

- A. Raters shall conduct meetings with employees to review and explain the evaluations, and shall record the meeting dates on the evaluation reports.
- B. Employees shall have the opportunity to comment, in writing, on their evaluations.
- C. Employees may sign evaluations; however, such signatures shall certify only that evaluations have been read and discussed, and that employees' comments, if any, are accurate statements of their responses to the evaluations.
 1. If employees refuse to sign evaluations after being given the opportunity to do so, raters shall so certify in writing.
 2. Evaluation shall be valid with or without employees' signatures.
 3. Digital signatures through the LEFTA SYSTEMS Public Safety Software Application shall certify that evaluations have been read and discussed and that employees' comments, if any, are accurate statements of their responses to the evaluations.

XXI. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION APPEALS

- A. If employees' dissatisfactions are not resolved after discussing their evaluations with their raters, employees shall have the opportunity to appeal evaluations, through the chain of command, to the Chief of Police.
 1. Employees' appeals must be requested within seven (7) days of the meeting with their raters.
 2. Employees have the option to enter written documentation to support any contention that their evaluations are incorrect or inappropriate. This written documentation shall be attached to the evaluations and become part of the employees' file.
 3. On a mutually agreeable date, employees and the Chief of Police shall review the contested portions of the evaluations. The Chief of Police shall advise employees of their decision within thirty (30) days.
 4. The decision of the Chief of Police shall be final.

XXII. DISTRIBUTION AND RETENTION OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

- A. Performance Evaluation Reports shall be completed through the LEFTA SYSTEMS Public Safety Software Application.

- B. Once the Performance Evaluation Report has been completed and reviewed with the employee, it shall be forwarded to the Deputy Chief of Police for review and approval
- C. The Performance Evaluation report shall then be forwarded to the Chief of Police for final review and approval.