

Fredericksburg Police Department

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM OPERATIONAL GUIDE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this guide is to establish policy and procedure for the proper utilization of the performance appraisal system.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Fredericksburg Police Department that all personnel will be held accountable for, and shall follow, the procedures listed in this operational guide.

ADMINISTRATION

The Fredericksburg Police Department utilizes a hybrid performance appraisal system that incorporates the City Values based evaluation format used for all City employees, supplemented by evaluating essential job factors specifically applicable to Police Department employees. The Police Department embraces the principle that performance appraisals serve a twofold purpose: to help employees develop their highest level of competency, and to ensure employees are providing the level of service necessary for the Department to achieve its vision and mission.

Performance Appraisal Required for All Personnel – The City of Fredericksburg requires that a performance appraisal be performed on an annual basis and uses the supplemented City Values format as the only approved method of appraisal. In compliance with this policy, the Fredericksburg Police Department will conduct an annual performance appraisal for all Police Department personnel. This includes sworn, non-sworn, and auxiliary officer personnel. [35.1.2]

Specific Time Period – The City of Fredericksburg employee appraisal period is 12 months starting on the individual employee's month of hire. Annual performance appraisals are due to the Chief of Police on the 15th of the employee's anniversary month of hire. For example, an employee hired in March 2020 will have a 12-month appraisal period running from March 2020 through February 2021 and the appraisal will be due to the Chief of Police on March 15, 2021. [35.1.5, a]

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Entry Level Probationary Employees – Supervisors are responsible to conduct evaluations for all entry-level probationary employees assigned to them. This evaluation will be conducted at least quarterly in the following manner:

- While in the Police Academy, employees will be evaluated by Academy instructors using the Academy evaluation.
- During the Field Training Officer (FTO) period, employees will be evaluated daily using the Daily Field Observation reports.
- Upon completion of the FTO period, employees shall be evaluated quarterly using the City Performance Appraisal form. If the quarterly evaluation occurs within the time frame that City employees receive their annual Performance Appraisal, the annual Performance Appraisal may be used to satisfy the requirement for one of the quarterly evaluations. The Patrol Division Commander shall be responsible to ensure this task is performed.

Note: The quarterly evaluation requirement is complete when the employee is no longer on probation.

Rater Responsibilities – Raters must document at least 2 observations per month per employee, as described in the Evaluation Process section, during the employee's 12-month rating period in order to properly evaluate the employee. Additionally, raters (including first line supervisors) have the following requirements: [35.1.1, c]

- Raters shall submit Performance Appraisals they have completed for employees assigned to their command to their respective supervisor. The rater's supervisor will review the appraisal. [35.1.5, c]
- If the Performance Appraisal requires correction or additional information, the rater's supervisor shall meet with the rater to discuss and correct the Performance Appraisal.
- The rater shall review the Performance Appraisal with the employee. The review shall include:
 - The results of the Performance Appraisal just completed with feedback or counseling as appropriate. [35.1.7, a]
 - The level of performance expected, rating criteria and goals for the new evaluation period. [35.1.7, b]
 - Any career counseling that is relative to the employee's position. (ex. topics such as advancement, specialization, or training) [35.1.7, c]
 - A written explanation for any performance ratings that are unsatisfactory or outstanding. [35.1.5, b]
 - That the employee may sign the Performance Appraisal and provide written comments within five (5) days from the date of the review. [35.1.5, d]
 - The rater's supervisor shall sign the Performance Appraisal after the rater and the employee have signed it.

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Information on the appeal process shall also be included in the review and will include:

- Signing the form is simply an acknowledgement that the performance appraisal has been reviewed and does not indicate agreement with the appraisal.
- If there is a significant disagreement between the employee and the supervisor's ratings or comments and the employee wish to contest the appraisal, the employee must check the box on the form (just above the signature space) indicating the employee will submit a written statement, through the chain of command, to the Chief of Police describing the discrepancy.
- Following receipt of the employee's written statement, the Chief of Police will make the final determination on the contested item(s). [35.1.5, f]

Rater Evaluation – Supervisors shall be rated by their supervisor on the quality of ratings given employees as part of their Performance Appraisal. [35.1.8]

EVALUATION PROCESS [35.1.1, b]

Performance Appraisal Specific to Assignment – Employees shall be evaluated on criteria specific to their assignment as described below: [35.1.4]

Each person who is responsible for completing an annual performance evaluation for subordinate employee(s) must document a minimum of two areas of observation (AO) per month per employee which will be used for a mid-year progress discussion and for a memo that supplements the City's standard annual performance appraisal form. The AOs shall be saved during the year on the department's H drive. In the event an employee is transferred to a new squad or division, the previous supervisor will have 2 weeks from the date of transfer to provide the AO documentation to the new supervisor.

The AOs contain all of the major areas of job performance specific to the position being observed. Raters should strive to observe different job factors each time they observe an employee. The objective of the AOs is to assist each rating supervisor in obtaining a complete picture of his/her subordinate employees' job performance. Ideally, there will be sufficient documentation to support each rating on the City's standard annual performance appraisal form.

A Note on the Attendance Job Factor

The Attendance job factor is different from the other job factors in that the Department maintains attendance data. However, the rater is encouraged to document Attendance as a reminder of attendance issues (ex: an employee is calling in sick routinely ten minutes before the shift begins). The number of instances of sick leave and the total number of sick leave days shall be recorded in the memo for the attendance section of the Performance Appraisal. An instance can be one day or a group of days together (ex: a person who missed an entire work week of five days due to the flu and only one other day the rest of the year would have two (2) instances of sick leave and a total of six (6) days). Employees shall not be penalized for using approved FMLA leave.

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Completing the Performance Evaluation – After completely and accurately observing and documenting job performance throughout the entire rating period, it will be much simpler to complete the performance evaluation form. Rating supervisors will have a significant number of examples to guide their ratings, and these examples will be in all different areas of the job, collected at different times and on different days, and they will reflect different levels of performance.

Measurement Definitions – The City Performance Appraisal system identifies three levels of performance. Each area of observation has a specific definition for the rating factor that can be found on the performance evaluation scoring sheet. [35.1.1, a]

- Exceeds Expectations
- Meets Expectations
- Below Expectations

There are two (2) different sets of factor weights developed for the Performance Appraisals:

- Non-Supervisor (short form)
- Supervisor (long form)

Appraisal Form Completion – The annual performance appraisal form must be completed on a computer in the approved PDF format.

Supplementary Memo – Raters must complete a supplementary memo utilizing the AO documentation that was compiled through the evaluation period. This should be completed in the approved Word format to rate the employee's performance in job factors specific to the Police Department.

For non-supervisory employees, six (6) of the nine (9) job factors must be explained. For supervisory employees, eleven (11) of the sixteen (16) job factors must be explained.

NOTE: Supervisory appraisals (16 rating areas) must be completed for any employee who is required to complete performance appraisals for others.

An overall rating of "Below Expectations" must be documented in the supplementary memo and, will require a Performance Improvement Plan that must be attached to the performance appraisal.

Planning Session – Supervisors shall conduct planning sessions for employees assigned to the supervisor. The planning session should include a description of the tasks to be performed, the level of performance expected, and the evaluation rating criteria. The tasks assigned should be reasonable, understandable, and attainable. The

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planning session should be conducted within 30 days of the previous evaluation, whenever possible.

Additionally, supervisors should identify employees' training needs in each planning session and ensure these training needs are communicated in writing to the department training officer.

Progress Discussion – Supervisors shall hold at least one progress discussion during the evaluation period for each employee assigned to the supervisor. Optimally, the discussion should occur midway through the year and shall review the goals and objectives established for the evaluation period.

Performance Improvement Plan – When first becoming aware that an employee's performance does not meet requirements in any category, the rater should promptly inform the employee of the deficiency and the action necessary to correct it. If the deficiency is serious and may lead to a rating of below expectations, the employee should be notified in writing with a Performance Improvement Plan. This may be done during a progress discussion.

Whenever possible, the rater shall make the subordinate aware of any serious deficiencies, such as those that could result in a rating of below expectations, **at least 90 days** prior to the end of the rating period. This notice will provide the employee an opportunity to bring performance to a level that meets requirements before the end of the rating period. When the 90-day-notice cannot be provided, the rater should document the reasons in the narrative accompanying the evaluation (such as in the case of a 6-month probationary employee, or an employee who only displays unsatisfactory performance toward the end of the evaluation period). Raters should complete and document as many progress discussions as are needed. [35.1.6]

Completed Performance Appraisals – Copies of signed and completed Performance Appraisals will be distributed to all employees by the issuing supervisor. [35.1.5, e]

A copy of each Police Department employee's Performance Appraisal is retained in:

- The City Human Resources personnel file.
- The Police Department personnel file.

All Department records shall be maintained as prescribed by the Library of Virginia; Virginia Public Records Act (Code of VA §§ 42.1-76 et. Seq.); Records Retention and Disposition Schedule and the City of Fredericksburg Public Records Management Manual (11/08). [82.1.3] [35.1.5, g]

Training – Police Department supervisors/raters shall be trained in the Performance Appraisal System and rating skills prior to being tasked with completing performance evaluations. [35.1.1, d]

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Auxiliary Officers – Each auxiliary officer will be evaluated by a supervisor designated by the Patrol Division Commander. Due to the fact that Auxiliary officers will sometimes work with other supervisors, it is strongly encouraged that all supervisors complete AOs for an Auxiliary Officer that works for them and send the AO to the assigned supervisor and the Auxiliary Coordinator.

Performance Appraisals – Annual performance appraisals will be completed:

- By the supervisors to whom the auxiliary officer is assigned.
- With input from the Auxiliary Coordinator.

Note: The performance appraisal scoring sheet is the only document required for an auxiliary officer evaluation, no supplementary memo is required.