

SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT

General Orders Cover Sheet

Topic: EMPLOYEE APPRAISAL PROGRAM

1. Performance Responsibility: Division Commander's
Supervisorial: All Supervisors and Managers
General: All Supervisors
All Department Employees
2. Use Requirements: At all times.
3. Outside Impact: None
4. Training Requirements: Review of General Order
5. Internal Review: Annual
6. Special Distribution Requirements: Personnel Department
7. How Indexed: Evaluations
Employee Appraisal Process
Appraisal Process
8. Effective Date: 1-1-89

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EMPLOYEE APPRAISAL PROGRAM

PURPOSE:

The primary purpose of the appraisal program is to motivate the individual employee to work at their highest capacity and meet job standards. The appraisal delineates work responsibility, defines job standards and objectives, documents performance and allows for jointly defined future development. The following information and instructions will aid in the implementation of employee appraisal forms, as well as the concept of employee appraisal.

POLICY:

Employee appraisals must be confidential to maintain the effectiveness of the program. Appraisal files should be maintained to allow for documentation of performance and work behavior.

A-20. APPRAISAL PROCESS

A. The Concept of the Appraisal Procedure

1. Utilization of the employee appraisal program will promote meaningful and instructive communication and consultation sessions between the employee and the supervisor throughout the appraisal period.
 - a. A written appraisal evaluating the employee's performance, accomplishments and work behavior to be presented following the completed appraisal period.
 - b. Personal discussions between the employee and the supervisor, regarding the past performance and direction for future individual development.
2. The success of the employee appraisal program is dependent on the diligence and interest of those responsible for the appraisals, i.e., the supervisors and the employees who are being appraised.
 - a. Appropriation of the necessary time and support to this activity during the appraisal period, should make the process an effective instrument for the realization of improved employee performance, job satisfaction and morale.

B. Appraisal Files

1. Appraisal files will be maintained in a confidential manner within a locked area.
 - a. File access will be documented. Requesting persons must sign and date the log to gain access to the files.
 - b. Employees may review the contents of their appraisal file Monday through Friday, 0800 to 1700 hours, excluding holidays. Files may not be removed from the locked area where they are stored.
 - c. Any supervisor or manager may review the contents of a subordinate's appraisal file on a need to know basis.
 - 1) Any supervisor or manager may check a file out of the locked area for a period of time not to exceed five (5) days.

- d. Any appraisal information that is being routed outside of the locked area will be routed in a sealed envelope to safeguard confidentiality.
 - 1) While being reviewed or worked on, the file will not be left where other persons have access to the information.
 - e. The contents of an appraisal file may not be discussed with anyone other than the employee and other supervisors on a need to know basis.
2. Appraisal files will not contain any information that the employee is not aware of.
- a. An employee has the right to attach additional information to any item placed in their file, i.e., explaining different perspectives.
 - b. Written documentation of an oral reprimand or counseling session that is not considered formal discipline, will be placed in the appraisal file pending placement into the employee's annual appraisal.
 - c. Documentation of formal discipline will be placed in the employee's permanent personnel file.
 - d. Appraisals files may contain information of a positive or commendable nature, negative nature or content neutral nature. Content neutral merely means information that the supervisor may want retained for later review or evaluation. It does not mean it is good or bad at the point it is placed in the file, but may need to be reviewed for future performance or appraisal purposes.
3. Purge of appraisal files.
- a. The supervisor that completes the yearly appraisal will be responsible to purge the appraisal file.
 - 1) The purge will occur after the employee has reviewed and accepted the appraisal.
 - 2) Information that is used to support statements in the appraisal that may be disagreed with by the employee, may be attached to the appraisal.
 - 3) All items in the appraisal file will be retained for a period of one calendar year from the date the document was placed in the file.
 - a) Items will be retained beyond the year period if the employee is either on probation or the subject of a special evaluation period.

C. Guidelines

- 1. Use of the appraisal form.
 - a. Use specific, documented work performance, achievements and behaviors.

- 1) Review the appraisal and personnel files.
 - a) The supervisor will use the documented information available in the appraisal file to create the annual appraisal, thus creating permanent records of job performance.
 - b) Research and consider prior written evaluations and goals.
 - c) It may not be necessary or appropriate to comment on all items that may be contained in an appraisal file. Good judgment is the key to a successful evaluation. If you are unsure, consult your section/unit manager.
 - 2) Specific information and facts should be used.
 - a. Use information pertinent only to the specific appraisal period.
 - b. Re-evaluate the employee's job requirements and employer performance expectations.
 - c. Interview any other supervisors that may be involved with the same appraisal period.
 - d. Research past evaluations, sick leave use, courtroom skills/testimony, report writing skills and letters of commendation or reprimand.
 - e. Document recommendations for future career/job development and goals. Make suggestions as to what the employee could do as improvements to performance.
 - f. Consider the following general rules:
 - 1) Avoid allowing friendship or personal prejudice to influence ratings.
 - 2) Recognize and avoid tendency towards the "halo effect". (Allowing the overall impression to influence judgement on separate job elements).
 - 3) Avoid tendency to rate all elements with similar grades of the scale. For example, all elements might be rated at the high or middle point on the scale when the performance was actually a combination of "success" and "needs improvement". Rate each element separately.
2. The appraisal session and discussion.
- a. The purpose is to develop a mutual understanding between the supervisor and the employee about the content and expectations of the job, and how well the employee is accomplishing it (performance).

- b. The employee's perceptions may not coincide with the appraisal. The supervisor should be prepared to discuss it in a productive manner in order to arrive at an agreement on future goals for performance and job development.
- c. Preparation for the appraisal discussion.
 - 1) Schedule the discussion with the employee in advance, and provide a copy of the appraisal to the employee. Don't make the discussion a surprise.
 - 2) Provide a site that is private and secure from interruption. Avoid engaging in other activities, i.e., paperwork, telephone conversations.
 - 3) Allow enough time for the discussion to run its course.
- d. Techniques for the appraisal discussion.
 - 1) Be fair and professional. Try to maintain a comfortable and conversational atmosphere.
 - 2) Be positive. Mention the employee's strengths. Every employee has some.
 - 3) Listen to the employee. Do not lecture or show disapproval.
 - 4) Your discussion may provide additional information that should be added to reflect goals, objectives and expectations.
 - 5) Stick to job performance, not personality. Encourage the employee to express feelings, but prevent arguments by returning to the issues of performance.
 - 6) Establish mutual goals for the employee's future performance and development which reflect the expectations of the employer and the employee.
- e. Sample questions that may be used by the rater.
 - 1) What do you consider to be the most important personal goals for the coming appraisal period?
 - 2) What are the most important job related problems that you now have?
 - 3) What are your career objectives? What preparations are you making to achieve them?
 - 4) What can I, as your supervisor, do to assist you with your objectives and how can I be more supportive?

D. Completion and Submission of Appraisals**1. Probationary Employees**

- a. Appraisal is required for probationary employees upon completion of three (3) months and six (6) months of service.
 - 1) Required at completion of probation period of one (1) year for certain job classifications.
- b. Recommendations for extension of probationary period.
 - 2) Employee must be informed in writing, at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the end of the probationary period.

2. Regular Employees

- a. Appraisal is required immediately prior to their annual merit review dates.
- b. Monthly appraisal shall be completed in approved divisional format.

3. Merit Salary Increases

- a. Completed appraisals required to accompany any Personnel Action Form (PAF) requesting merit related salary increases (or decreases due to disciplinary action).
 - 1) Merit increases are awarded for completion of meritorious performance at six (6) months and then annually thereafter until top "step" is reached.

4. Special Appraisals

- a. May be submitted on the normal appraisal forms at the discretion of the Chief of Police or Division Commander.
 - 1) To be used in between periods of time when the normal completion of an appraisal would occur.
 - 2) May be used to commend exceptional overall performance, or as documentation of poor performance that needs improvement.

5. Due Dates

- a. Every attempt to complete annual evaluations by the stated due date will be made.
- b. Monthly evaluations are due no later than the 10th of the next month.

E. Generation and Routing of the Appraisal

- 1. Monthly evaluations will be generated by the Operations and Administration Division supervisors. Monthly evaluations will be stored in the appraisal files and used per section "B" of this order.

2. City Personnel department will generate the request for the annual appraisal, usually thirty (30) days prior to the anniversary date (due date).
 - a. Personnel will route the request to the Administrative Assistant located in the office of the Chief of Police. The appraisal request will be recorded and routed to the appropriate division for distribution to supervisors.
 - b. Division Commanders are ultimately responsible for the TIMELY completion of the appraisals.
3. City Personnel will generate a list of "past due" appraisals on a monthly basis.
 - a. The "past due" list will be routed to the Divisional Commanders.
4. Pre-Review routing process.
 - a. Always forward the appraisal to the preparers manager prior to the meeting with the employee. This allows for management review and input prior to meeting with employee.
5. Post Review process.
 - a. After the appraisal review session with the employee, the appraisal will be forwarded through the chain of command for signatures, up to the office of the Chief of Police.
 - 1) Exception:
 - a) A copy of all Operations Division appraisals will be filed in the officer's appraisal file by the Operations Administrative Assistant prior to forwarding to Administration.
 - b) Monthly appraisals will be filed in the officer's appraisal file.
 - b. Annual or pay-step increases in salary require that the employee determine whether they desire to discuss their performance with the Chief of Police.
 - c. End of probationary period. Once the employee has received his/her end of probation evaluation, he/she is responsible for making an appointment with the Chief of Police to review their evaluation.
 - d. The Chief of Police will sign all annual appraisals.
 - e. The Administration Division Administrative Assistant will make two copies of each annual appraisal. The original appraisal will be routed to Personnel.
 - 1) One copy shall be kept in the employee's permanent personnel file.
 - 2) One copy shall be given to the employee.

F. Employee Disagreement with Appraisal

1. Employee should sign appropriate space provided on the appraisal form which indicates disagreement.

2. Following the discussion with the supervisor, manager or division commander, the employee may request a discussion and further consideration of the appraisal with the department head.
3. Following the discussion with the department head, the employee may request a discussion and further consideration of the appraisal with the Director of Personnel.
4. The employee has the right to attach rebuttal information to an appraisal with which they disagree.
5. Disagreements regarding performance reviews are not subject to the grievance process.