GSA Employee Performance Plan and Appraisal System

HRM 9430.2C

Office of Human Resources Management
ohrm-hrs-workforce-relations-policyandprograms@gsa.gov

Purpose:

This Order issues and transmits the General Services Administration (GSA) Employee Performance Plan and Appraisal System (EPPAS). EPPAS is a critical component of GSA's overall performance management process and its purpose is to improve GSA's performance results in achieving its mission while enhancing opportunities for career success of GSA employees.

Background:

This Order provides a systematic approach to developing, documenting and communicating employee performance goals, measures, and expectations.

Applicability:

EPPAS is a critical component of GSA's overall performance management process for applicable employees.

1. Executives, managers and supervisors are required to have performance plans for all of their employees. These performance plans must contain performance goals, measures and expectations that cascade down from and link directly or indirectly to the performance goals and measures in GSA's Strategic Plan and in the Service and Staff Office organizational goals. Additionally, executives, managers and supervisors must communicate the performance plans and provide feedback to employees regarding their performance achievements. Employee performance ratings will be linked to awards and other forms of recognition. All employees are encouraged to participate actively and collaboratively in this process to ensure that the capabilities of GSA's employees are fully utilized and recognized; that there is a common understanding of performance goals, measures and expectations; and that there is a strong commitment to providing best value services to customer agencies and taxpayers while, at the same time, enhancing the opportunities for career success of GSA employees.

This Order applies to all GSA employees as they perform their duties. The following are exceptions:

1. The Office of Inspector General (OIG), given its independence under the Inspector General Reform Act of 2008 (5 U.S.C. §§ 401-424).
2. Executive Schedule appointees.
3. Senior Executive Service (SES) members.
4. Senior Leader (SL) and Scientific or Professional (ST) members.
5. Presidential Appointees requiring Senate confirmation.
6. Experts and consultants, covered by 5 CFR 304.
7. Excepted service employees for whom employment is not reasonably expected to exceed 90 days in a consecutive 12-month period.

Cancellation:

HRM 9430.2B, Employee Performance Plan and Appraisal System, is canceled.

Summary of Changes:

1. Updates performance levels and summary ratings to reflect three levels of performance.
2. Removes references to Levels 2 and Level 4.
3. Requires written performance standards for Levels 3 and Level 5.
4. Establishes new performance level definitions for critical elements.
5. Revises appraisal forms in Appendices A and B.
6. Adds new definitions and terms in Appendix D.

Roles and Responsibilities:

EPPAS is to be implemented with the following roles and responsibilities:

1. The Administrator is responsible for the overall direction of GSA's EPPAS.
2. The Heads of Services and Staff Offices (HSSOs) will:
    a. Communicate performance goals and measures to all employees within their respective organizations;
    b. Set expectations for managers and supervisors to effectively use the performance plan and appraisal system;

c. Ensure that performance plans are properly developed and that performance reviews, performance appraisals, and other performance-plan and appraisal actions are completed as prescribed;

d. Ensure the opportunity exists for employees to receive feedback regarding their performance;

e. Ensure that performance appraisal results are used by managers and supervisors in making personnel decisions regarding training, awards, recognition, reassignments, details, promotions, reduction-in-grade, incentive programs, and removal of employees;

f. Maintain appropriate records, submit required data and reports on the operation and effectiveness of the program, and take corrective action as warranted;

g. Ensure a consistent application of the performance plan and appraisal system within their area of responsibility; and

h. Create a work culture and environment that promotes a high-performance organization.

3. The Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) is responsible for overall administration, development, implementation and evaluation of GSA's EPPAS. OHRM will:

a. Provide training to employees including communicating to executives, managers, supervisors and employees the purpose and procedures of EPPAS and its relationship to the overall performance management process;

b. Provide training to executives, managers and supervisors on how to identify critical elements and establish performance expectations;

c. Provide training to executives, managers and supervisors relative to their duties and responsibilities for administering GSA’s EPPAS;

d. Provide advice and guidance to employees, executives, managers and supervisors, in conjunction with the GSA Office of the General Counsel, on laws, regulations, and this Order related to employee performance plans and appraisals;

e. Participate in the development and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation program to ensure the effectiveness of the system;

f. File and transfer ratings of record in accordance with OPM's guidance;

g. Execute an accountability review of this Order to ensure organizations meet the requirements of this Order. The accountability review should be conducted on a periodic basis according to the standards as directed by OPM; and

h. Create a work culture and environment that promotes a high-performance organization.

4. Supervisors will:

a. Communicate to all employees how their work is linked to the accomplishment of the business goals and objectives, and the agency's strategic goals;

b. Encourage employee participation in developing critical elements and performance expectations;

c. Provide employees with a written performance plan, which identifies the critical elements and performance expectations that are based on organizational performance goals; and that reflect to the types of duties and responsibilities in their job descriptions;

d. Conduct, discuss and document at least one progress review for eligible employees during the rating period (in addition to the annual performance appraisal);

e. Ensure that performance appraisals, to the maximum extent possible, are tied to HSSO objectives, position description, and that the rating is supported by actual accomplishments;

f. Conduct the performance review and document the annual performance appraisal after discussing with the employee;

g. Provide feedback on specific accomplishments and suggestions for improvement;

h. Assist employees in developing to their full potential;

i. Discuss with and obtain concurrence from the reviewing official on ratings as required by this Order;

j. Create a work culture and environment that promotes a high-performance organization;

k. Sign the performance plan and appraisal documents;

l. Attempt to obtain the subject employee's signature on the performance plan and appraisal documents;

m. Enter performance plans and appraisals into GSA's Human Resources Information Technology (HRIT) system accurately and timely; and

n. Recommend and/or take appropriate personnel action(s) based on the employee's level of performance, including promotions, awards, recognition, reassignments, details, training, developmental assignments, reductions in grade, and/or removal.

5. Employees should:

a. Participate with supervisors in developing performance plans, critical elements, and clearly defined performance expectations;

b. Advise supervisors of any facts or circumstances that should be considered in establishing performance expectations or evaluating performance;

c. Request clarification from supervisors of any performance expectations that are not understood;

d. Participate in performance review(s);

e. Seek developmental opportunities to enhance performance;

f. Sign the performance plan and appraisal documents. An employee's signature does not constitute agreement or disagreement with the rating, but verifies the rating was received;

g. Prepare written comments when disputing a rating; and

h. Participate actively with supervisors in any discussions relating to their performance to support a work culture and environment that promotes a high-performance organization.

Signature

/S/_____ 3/6/2026_____

Arron E. Helm
Chief Human Capital Officer
Office of Human Resources Management

Date

Table of Contents

1. Introduction **7**
1.1 The Employee Performance Plan and Appraisal System (EPPAS) 8
2. References **8**
2.1 Order compliance with federal regulations 8
3. Program Overview **8**
3.1 Purpose 8
3.2 Rating timeframes 9
4. Performance Plan **11**
4.1 Employee performance planning process 11
4.2 Critical elements and performance standards 13
4.3 Application to teams 14
5. Performance Appraisal **15**
5.1 Employee performance appraisal process 15
5.2 Types of summary ratings 18
5.3 Performance levels 18
5.4 Deriving summary ratings 19
5.5 Performance needing improvement 20
6. Probationary & Trial Periods **22**
7. Training and Individual Development Plans **23**
8. Awards **24**
9. Relationship to Within-grade Increases **24**
10. Denying Within-Grade Increases **24**
11. Promotions **26**
12. Reduction-in-Force (RIF) **26**
13. Grievances and Appeals **27**
14. Record Keeping **28**
Appendix A. Performance Plan and Appraisal Record for Management and Supervisory Employees Who Are Not in the Senior Executive Service **29**
Appendix B. Performance Plan and Appraisal Record for Non-Supervisory Employees **39**
Appendix C. Performance Appraisal – Employee Self-Assessment Summary **46**
Appendix D. Definitions **48**

1. Introduction

1.1 The Employee Performance Plan and Appraisal System (EPPAS)

EPPAS is a critical component of GSA's overall performance management process and its purpose is to improve GSA's performance results in achieving its mission while enhancing opportunities for career success of GSA employees. EPPAS is consistent with the governing provisions of the law and the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) rules and regulations.

2. References

2.1 Order compliance with federal regulations

1. Title 5, USC, Chapters 31, 35, 43, 45, 51, 53, 75, and 77, authorizes agencies to establish performance plans and appraisal systems, which provide the basis for Federal pay and awards for employees.

2. 5 CFR, Parts 293, 335, 351, 430, 432, 451, 531, 532, 534, 752 and 771, govern personnel records and files, promotion and internal placement, reduction-in-force, performance appraisals, awards, general schedule pay, prevailing rate system, performance based actions, adverse actions, and grievance procedures.

3. 5 CFR part 430 requires each Federal agency to develop a performance appraisal system and to submit that system to OPM for approval.

3. Program Overview

3.1 Purpose

1. Performance management process. Its purpose is to improve GSA's performance results in achieving its mission while enhancing opportunities for career success of GSA employees. It is designed to achieve desired performance improvement and enhance employee career success by:

a. Communicating effectively to all employees the purpose and procedures of employee performance planning and appraisal;

b. Developing employee performance plans with linkage to organizational plans attained by cascading the performance goals and measures from GSA's Strategic Plan, the relevant organizational performance plan(s), and other sources into the plans;

c. Assessing individual employee performance with a systematic approach of regular reviews in order to provide feedback to employees regarding their performance achievements and to make timely determinations that expected performance results are being achieved or assistance/corrective action is needed;

d. Assigning performance appraisal ratings to individual employee performance with meaningful distinctions between ratings for employees with significantly different levels of performance. Ratings will be based upon the comparison of actual results to performance expectations after taking into account factors and circumstances that may affect results; and

e. Linking performance appraisal ratings with awards and other forms of recognition for employee performance.

3.2 Rating timeframes

1. **Rating Period.** The rating period is normally 12 months. The established period of time for which performance will be reviewed and an annual performance appraisal (rating of record) will be prepared is October 1 through September 30 of the following year. Performance plans should be established as soon as practicable, normally within 30 days after the start of the rating period, the start of a detail or temporary promotion, or when an employee encumbers a position for at least 90 days. Annual performance appraisals must be completed within 45-days after the end of the rating period. The Administrator and HSSOs may extend this period for organizations in the midst of reorganizations or other extenuating circumstances.

2. **Minimum Rating Period**. The minimum period of time on which a performance summary rating or rating of record will be based is 90-days. The 90-day period begins when the employee signs the performance plan. If the employee and supervisor do not agree on the performance plan or the employee is not available to sign, the supervisor makes the final decision and signs the performance plan, overriding the employee signature. Service for the minimum rating period need not be continuous in the position or under the same supervisor as long as the employee has served the

required 90 days on the performance plan. In applying the 90-day requirement, part-time service is considered full-time.

3. **Extending the Rating Period**. The annual rating period may be extended beyond September 30th only in the following circumstance:

a. Employees who on the last day of the annual rating period are performing under a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).

4. **Unrateable/Detailed/Reassigned/Transferred Employees and/or New Hires.**

a. **Unrateable Employees**. If by the end of the annual rating period, an employee has not served the 90 day minimum period required for the rating of record (annual), the employee will be marked unrateable.

b. **Details and Temporary Promotions of 90 Days or More**. When employees are detailed or temporarily promoted to another position within GSA, a performance plan should be communicated to the employee as soon as feasible (normally within 30 days) after the beginning of the detail or temporary promotion for 90 days. Ratings on critical elements should be prepared for these details and temporary promotions within 30 calendar days following termination of the detail or temporary promotion and should be considered in determining the employee's next annual rating of record. When employees are detailed outside of GSA, a reasonable effort will be made to obtain performance appraisal information from the outside organization to be considered in determining the employee's next annual rating of record.

c. **Reassignments**. If an employee is reassigned to a position within GSA that requires a new performance plan, and has served in the former position for the minimum rating period of 90 days, an interim appraisal should be prepared. This interim appraisal should be considered when completing the annual performance appraisal. If an employee changes position after June 1st, the employee shall receive a rating of record (annual) for the former position. Time served in the new position should be added to the next performance cycle (end on September 30th of the following FY).

d. **Transferred Employees**. When a GSA employee transfers to a different agency and an employee has served 90 days on a performance plan, the supervisor should complete a final rating of record.

(1) When an employee transfers from another agency to GSA, a current rating of record, and any subsequent summary ratings should be obtained from the losing agency to support future personnel actions.

(2) If by the end of the normal annual rating period, the employee cannot serve the minimum rating period under the GSA system, the transferred rating of record is used to support future personnel actions.

(3) If a rating of record or current summary rating cannot be obtained from the losing agency the employee will be required to be issued a rating of record under the GSA system to support applicable personnel actions.

e. **New Hires**. Employees who on-board after June 1st, will be placed on a performance plan through the end of the next annual rating period. If the employee is transferred from a different agency the most recent rating of record should be obtained or an off-cycle rating of record may be required to support future personnel actions. Time served in the current rating period should be added to the next performance cycle (end on September 30th of the following FY).

5. **Effective Date of Rating**. A performance appraisal is effective on the day when it is issued to an employee with all appropriate reviews and signatures. Supervisors must complete these appraisals within 45 days of the end of the rating period except in situations where the rating period is extended.

4. Performance Plan

4.1 Employee performance planning process

1. Expectations communicated through written performance plans. All managerial and supervisory performance plans must also include leadership and organizational critical elements. All employees will be assessed using a three level performance appraisal system. In addition to the performance expectations, a supervisor can provide copies of work plans that reference job specific standard operating procedures, processes, goals, and/or business objectives to the employee that further define the performance expectations. Work plans can be used for defining major tasks and goals for the year. The work plans must be designed in tandem with the critical elements and expectations given to the employees if being referenced in the performance plan. The work plans can detail specific tasks that support the critical element and performance expectations. Work plans can serve as a tool to explain the specific assignments and

time frames that are expected of employees but cannot substitute the performance expectations. Work plans cannot exceed the requirements of the performance expectations.

2. All individual performance plans shall link to their organization's business goals directly or indirectly through the agency's strategic goals through a cascading process. This cascading process means that as goals are adopted at each organizational level, those goals are translated into individual performance expectations that show what each employee is required to accomplish to ensure the unit can succeed and support the next organizational level above. Performance plans must identify the critical elements and performance expectations of a position. Performance plans must be communicated to the employee on an annual basis or whenever a performance plan is required, as directed by this order.

a. Employees will have a written performance plan, which documents expectations that are based on organizational mission and business goals and that reflect the types of duties and responsibilities in their job descriptions. Performance plans should:

(1) Align with GSA, business, office, work unit, team goals and objectives;

(2) Be attainable, but challenging;

(3) Be clearly worded and measurable; and

(4) Contain critical elements and performance expectations, which focus on expected results.

b. Performance plans for all employees should be established at the beginning of the rating period. When an employee enters a position or changes positions after the start of the annual rating period, a performance plan shall be developed and communicated to the employee as soon as feasible (normally within 30 days) after the appointment to the new position.

c. Performance plans may be changed at any time. It is important that a performance plan be changed as soon as practicable if the current plan is determined to be no longer appropriate. If circumstances beyond the control of the rating official or the employee prevent meeting the performance expectations, the performance plan must be

updated. Changes to the performance plan should be documented at least 90 calendar days before the end of the rating period.

d. Performance appraisals will be documented as indicated in Part IV on the appropriate Performance Plan and Appraisal Record.

e. Employees and their supervisors should work together to develop performance plans. When supervisors and employees are unable to resolve differences on performance plans, the supervisor makes the final decisions.

f. Performance plans must have critical elements, and be updated and communicated at the start of each rating period to account for current organizational business goals. Plans must be recertified (signed) annually.

4.2 Critical elements and performance standards

1. Critical elements are work assignments or responsibilities of such importance that Level 1 performance on the element would result in a determination that an employee's overall performance is unacceptable. Such elements shall be used to measure performance only at the individual level.

2. GSA performance plans for non-supervisory employees must have at least three, but no more than six critical elements. Supervisory plans must have at least four, but no more than seven critical elements. Both technical and managerial/supervisory responsibilities could lead to a higher number of critical elements.

3. Performance expectations are the level of individual performance that must be met for an employee’s performance to be appraised at a particular level. A performance expectation may include, but is not limited to: quality, quantity, timeliness, and manner of performance. Performance expectations must be developed to describe the expected level of performance on a critical element at Level 3 and Level 5 for all employees.

4. Non-supervisory performance plans must include the Organizational Goal(s) element to align to the applicable position priorities and goals. Performance expectations should be focused on results that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. The absence of a written performance expectation at level 1 does not preclude the assignment of a rating at that level. Level 3 is the retention standard.

5. The performance plan for supervisors and managers is divided into two parts: Managing Organizational Objectives and Leadership. The number of critical elements under Managing Organizational Objectives will vary depending on the position. The performance plan for managerial and supervisory positions will include the following:

a. Must have between four and seven total critical elements.

b. There are six Leadership critical elements for managerial and supervisory positions: Commitment to the Rule of Law and the Principles of the American Founding, Leading People, Achieving Results, Driving Efficiency, Holding Employees Accountable, and Merit and Competence. Not all of these critical elements may be appropriate for every manager or supervisor. The Holding Employees Accountable critical element is required for all supervisors and managers.

c. The total of the percentages assigned to the critical elements selected under Leadership must equal at a minimum 40%.

d. The total of the percentages assigned to the critical elements will not exceed 60% for managing organizational objectives.

e. Performance expectations for managerial and supervisory positions should address such factors as the following:

(1) Organizational leadership and performance that cascade from and are directly or indirectly linked to business goals and the agency's strategic goals;

(2) Improvements in effectiveness, productivity, and performance quality;

(3) Cost efficiency;

(4) Timeliness of performance;

(5) Supervision of subordinates;

(6) Employee and customer perspective; and

(7) Efforts to meet Human Capital goals.

4.3 Application to teams

1. Teams are a way of organizing people to support interdependence and cooperation. Team members often represent all levels of an organization. Individual performance on a team involves measuring skills, behaviors, and the quality of products and services contributed to helping the team to achieve its goals. It is not required that teams have formal performance plans, but supervisors should clearly outline goals and expectations of the team and establish a process to measure team success.

a. Critical elements may be used to appraise individual performance of a non-supervisory employee on a team as long as the performance is within the employee's span of control. The individual critical element must describe performance that is reasonably measured and controlled at the individual employee's position grade level and goals. Such performance includes individual contributions to the team, but does not include team performance. Critical elements assessing group performance may be appropriate to include in the performance plan of a supervisor, manager or team leader who can reasonably be expected to command the resources and authority necessary to achieve the results.

b. Since supervisors are often not present when team members are participating in the work of the team, in order to evaluate the employee's individual contributions, the supervisor should consider the employee's self-assessment, the team member's performance through the reports of others, evidence of the team's products, and customer reports.

c. The same principles may apply to developing team performance plans used to develop a performance plan for the team. The plan may be a combination of activities, measures, goals, objectives, and milestones. The team expectations should be realistic, clear, specific, consistent, measurable and/or verifiable, and set at the appropriate position grade levels, goals for the applicable employees on the team. Effective team performance expectations generally include goal or results-oriented elements that identify objectives and milestones.

d. The performance plan for the team (if utilized) should be developed collaboratively involving all of those to whom the plan will apply or a representative group. As a whole, the team is evaluated based on its effectiveness, whether it achieved its goals and objectives, and the degree to which the goals and objectives were met or exceeded.

e. Additionally, a team performance plan does not eliminate the requirement for an individual performance plan and appraisal.

5. Performance Appraisal

5.1 Employee performance appraisal process

1. Monitoring performance. The purpose of monitoring performance is to consistently measure individual and team performance, and to provide ongoing constructive feedback on progress toward reaching established expectations, goals and objectives. The supervisor and employee use the employee's current performance plan to measure work accomplishments and activities. Similarly, the team supervisor and the team measure the team's success and needs against the team goals.

a. Supervisors should provide continuing informal and/or formal feedback to employees throughout the rating period regarding their performance. Supervisors should review the employee’s performance compared to the performance expectations for each critical element.

b. Supervisors may use feedback from other sources to appraise employee performance (e.g., customers, peers, subordinates, the employee themselves, etc.).

(1) Feedback that is formally and systematically gathered from persons other than the first-line supervisor to appraise critical elements (e.g., through formal 360-degree programs) should be communicated to employees at the beginning of the rating period or when a performance plan is issued. (This requirement does not limit rating officials from obtaining informal feedback regarding employee performance from appropriate sources).

c. If an employee's performance in any critical element is evaluated as Level 1, the rating official should take action to assist the employee in improving his or her performance to Level 3 and should document any discussion. The rating of record must be updated to reflect the appropriate level of performance for the purposes of any upcoming within grade increases.

2. Progress reviews. Periodic written progress reviews are a part of an ongoing appraisal and employee development process. Flexibility may be exercised regarding the timing and frequency of progress reviews. At a minimum, one formal progress

review, (in addition to the annual performance appraisal) shall be conducted during the annual rating period. The Mid-year Review shall be held no later than 120 days before the end of the rating period (May 31). New hires who on-board after the applicable midyear progress review should have their progress review within 30 days of being placed on a signed performance plan. The progress review will document employee performance as of the date of review. The rating official and the employee shall sign and date the appropriate midyear blocks on the employee Performance Plan and Appraisal Record to document that the review was conducted. Employees may also request (or supervisors may schedule) additional informal progress reviews that are not documented.

3. Annual performance appraisal. This is the annual written review of an employee's performance compared to the performance expectations for each critical element. The annual performance appraisal discussion must include a review of the employee's progress toward meeting performance expectations for each critical element. It is also recommended that the discussion include a review of such things as the following:

a. A discussion of any training or other developmental opportunities that the rating official or the employee believes is necessary to improve performance; and

b. An updated performance plan linked to changing organizational goals and priorities, if required.

4. Written performance appraisals with overall performance ratings assigned will be completed and recorded on the appropriate GSA Performance Plan and Appraisal Record.

5. Performance Appraisal Employee Self-Assessment Summary. Employee Self-Assessment Summary is a valuable tool for both the employee and the supervisor. Employees are encouraged to complete the Performance Appraisal - Employee Self-Assessment Summary and provide the written documentation to their supervisor for consideration when completing their annual performance appraisal. The Performance Appraisal - Employee Self-Assessment Summary may also be used at progress reviews to help facilitate discussions and document progress towards required accomplishments. Self-assessments are optional.

6. Rating and reviewing officials. An employee's immediate supervisor is the employee's rating official, and the rating official's immediate supervisor is normally the

reviewing official. HSSOs and RAs may serve as both the rating and reviewing official for employees who report directly to them. Rating officials should acquire relevant information from available sources to complete employee annual performance appraisals.

7. Required review. A summary rating of Level 5 or Level 1 must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate reviewing official prior to any discussion with the employee or the issuance of the annual performance appraisal.

5.2 Types of summary ratings

1. A summary rating is a rating of all the critical elements. The types of summary ratings are as follows:

a. Annual Rating. This is the annual summary rating of record, usually prepared at the end of the annual rating period, for performance on all the critical elements in the performance plan. The rating period runs concurrent with the fiscal year. It starts on October 1st and ends on September 30th.

b. Interim Rating. This summary rating is prepared during the course of the annual rating period when an employee has spent the minimum performance rating period (90 days) in one position and then changes positions requiring a new performance plan.

(1) Interim ratings should be completed within 30 days of the position change. Interim ratings are not ratings of record.

(2) If an employee changes position after June 1st, the employee shall receive a rating of record (annual) for the former position. Time served in the new position should be added to the next performance cycle (end on September 30th of the following FY). Interim ratings that are recorded during the annual rating period should be considered when issuing the rating of record (annual).

c. Off-Cycle Rating of Record. This rating of record is prepared outside the normal appraisal period to document less than fully successful performance or an acceptable level of competence determination to support personnel actions such as within grade increases. Additionally, it should be considered when issuing the annual rating of record.

5.3 Performance levels

1. GSA's system provides a mechanism for making meaningful distinctions between ratings for employees with significantly different levels of performance. Each critical element will be assessed and rated using the performance level definitions below:

a. Level 5. Meets and consistently exceeds performance expectations as described in Level 3. (Outstanding)

(1) Consistently demonstrates extraordinary and exceptional performance, achieves outstanding results, makes unique and impactful contributions, and significantly contributes to organizational goals.

(2) Highest level of performance, indicating sustained excellence and high-value, optimized, meaningful results.

b. Level 3. Meets performance expectations. (Fully Successful).

(1) Objectives, activities and specific tasks are carried out with expected levels of quantity, quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness.

(2) Contributes positively toward the achievement of organizational goals and produces meaningful results.

(3) Performance indicates solid, dependable, and consistent achievement of requirements and expectations.

c. Level 1. Does not meet performance expectations as described in Level 3 (Unacceptable).

(1) Performance does not meet established expectations, timelines and targets.

(2) Fails to deliver acceptable work products, services, or outcomes, does not contribute to organizational goals, and/or does not meet the goals and objectives of the position.

d. Unrateable. Employees are not rated on elements they have not been given an opportunity to perform. The weighted unrated element will be equally distributed to the remaining elements that are rated to generate the summary rating.

5.4 Deriving summary ratings

1. Critical elements will be weighted. After assessing each critical element and assigning the appropriate rating level to each critical element, a summary rating will be derived using the following methods:

a. Weighted Critical Elements:

Summary Rating	Critical Elements
Outstanding (Level 5)	Level 5 for 70% of the critical elements weights and no critical element is rated below Level 3.
Fully Successful (Level 3)	Level 3 is assigned if all critical elements are rated at the Level 3 or above, but does not meet the 70% rule for assigning a Level 5 summary rating; no critical element is rated below Level 3.
Unacceptable (Level 1)	Level 1 is assigned if one or more critical elements are rated at Level 1.
Unrateable	Assigned when an employee has not served 90 days on a signed performance plan for any element during the rating period.

5.5 Performance needing improvement

1. At any time during the rating period that the employee is determined to be performing at Level 1 in one or more critical elements (“needs improvement”), the supervisor will notify the employee and provide assistance. Such assistance may include, but is not limited to, formal training, on-the-job training, counseling, and/or closer supervision. The removal procedures set forth in Chapter 75 of Title 5, United States Code (Chapter 75 procedures) or Chapter 43 of Title 5, United States Code (Chapter 43 procedures),

should be used in appropriate cases to address instances of unacceptable performance. Supervisors should contact their servicing Human Resources Office for assistance with managing performance needing improvement.

a. Assisting Employees in Improving Level 1 Performance.

(1) Under 5 CFR 432, a supervisor must develop a written Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for an employee who has completed a probationary or trial period, if his or her performance in one or more critical elements is Level 1. For the purposes of this Order, Level 1 is unacceptable performance. Before the determination of Level 1 performance is discussed with the employee, the performance appraisal will be discussed and reviewed by the servicing HR office and the appropriate reviewing official.

(2) At any time during the rating period that the performance of an employee who has completed the probationary or trial period is Level 1 in one or more critical elements, the supervisor must provide the employee with a PIP. A PIP should provide written information to the employee on specific deficiencies and necessary improvements to elevate performance to at least the fully successful Level 3. A PIP should not generally afford an employee more than a 30-day period to demonstrate acceptable performance, except when the agency determines in its sole and exclusive discretion that a longer period is necessary to provide sufficient time to evaluate an employee's performance. PIP notices should define assistance to be provided to help the employee to improve performance (e.g. formal training, on-the-job training, coaching and counseling, and/or closer supervision). Employees who do not achieve a rating of Level 3 or achieve the Level 3 but fail to sustain the improvements for at least a year from the beginning of the PIP will be reassigned, reduced in grade, or removed. The PIP will contain:

(a) A specific description of the employee's unacceptable performance under one or more critical elements;

(b) A description of what the employee must do to demonstrate Level 3 performance (retention standard);

(c) Generally a 30-day period to demonstrate Level 3 performance;

(d) What assistance will be provided by management to help the employee improve, such as regularly scheduled meetings with the supervisor to discuss assignments; and

(e) Consequences of employee's failure to improve performance.

(3) If performance continues at the Level 1, reduction in grade, reassignment, or removal actions should be taken in accordance with the procedures under 5 CFR 432 or 5 CFR 752. When dealing with performance problems, supervisors should be aware of the following requirements of the law and regulations pertaining to Part 432 actions:

(a) Demotions or removals under 5 CFR Part 432 may be proposed only after the appropriate official has identified the critical element(s) for which performance is Level 1; notified the employee of the observed pattern of Level 1 performance; informed the employee of the performance expectations that must be attained in order to demonstrate Level 3 performance in the employee's position; given the employee a reasonable opportunity to improve; provided the employee with appropriate assistance; and the employee's performance does not improve.

(b) The proposal to demote or remove must provide a 30-day advance notice period before a decision can be made.

(c) The proposal must identify specific instances of Level 1 performance on which the proposal is based, identify the critical element(s) involved, and must advise the employee of representation and reply rights.

(d) The decision to demote or remove the employee should be made no sooner than 30 days after the advance notice period and must be signed by or concurred by an official at a higher level than the proposing official. If the decision is to demote or remove the employee, the employee must be notified of applicable grievance and/or appeal rights.

(e) If, because of performance improvement during the notice period, the employee is not reduced in grade or removed, and the employee's performance continues to be at least minimally acceptable Level 3 for one year from the date of the advance notice, any entry or other notation of the Level 1 performance for which the action was proposed shall be removed from any agency record relating to the employee.

6. Probationary & Trial Periods

1. The employee's work performance or conduct is to be reviewed during this period and if it is determined the employee fails to demonstrate their fitness or qualifications for continued employment, the supervisor shall terminate the employee by notifying them in writing with the effective date of the action.

a. Decisions to remove during probationary or trial may be made at any time during the probationary or trial period with limited due process rights for employees who do not meet the statutory definition of employee. Supervisors must work closely with their servicing Human Resources Office to terminate the appointment of an employee during their probationary or trial period.

b. Supervisors should begin monitoring new employees immediately to determine if they are willing and able to perform the work and are otherwise suited for retention in their positions. Although formal performance improvement plans are not required for employees who are serving probationary or trial appointments, rating officials should normally provide employees who are not meeting expectations with enough information to help them understand how they are failing and how they might improve. Upon determination that a probationary or trial employee either will not or cannot meet expectations, supervisors must begin action to terminate them from their positions and from the Federal service. (Note: Appraisals of Level 3 or higher rendered early during probationary or trial period do not preclude subsequent decisions that the employee is not performing at expected levels or otherwise suitable to be retained. The decision to convert an employee on a probationary or trial period to a permanent appointment must be certified in advance and must be concurred upon by a Senior Executive in the chain of command. If it is determined that it is not in the public interest to finalize an appointment, the employee will be notified in writing of their termination and the effective date of the action.

c. Employees serving probationary periods for initial appointments to managerial/supervisory positions who do not meet expectations set forth in their performance plans that relate to managerial/supervisory responsibilities will be returned to non-managerial/ non-supervisory positions. That decision can be made at any time during the one-year probationary period. Although formal notice and opportunity to improve are not required, supervisors generally should provide at least enough information so that the employee understands specific deficiencies in time to try to make

corrections. (Note: Appraisals of Level 3 or higher rendered early during managerial/supervisory probationary period do not preclude subsequent decisions that the employee is not performing the managerial/supervisory aspects of their positions. However, supervisors should be able to provide specific examples either of how the supervisory or managerial performance or conduct deteriorated after the appraisal was issued or how the conduct used to support the determination was unrelated to the performance appraisal.)

7. Training and Individual Development Plans

1. Planning for professional development is an integral part of the performance appraisal process. This process involves increasing an employee's capacity to perform through training, providing assignments that introduce new skills or greater responsibility, addressing performance deficiencies or performance counseling, and increasing talents through a variety of learning activities.

2. The performance appraisal process should identify areas where training may be necessary for an employee to meet or exceed specified performance expectations. Along with meaningful performance-related discussions that assist employees in reinforcing strengths and correcting weaknesses, professional development opportunities may include classroom training, on-the-job training, mentoring, special assignments, participation in professional and civic organizations, and publishing professional articles. Supervisors should encourage employees to seek professional development opportunities.

3. Supervisors should counsel employees on these training needs during the development of performance plans and during mid-year reviews rather than only at the time of the annual performance appraisal.

4. Refer to GSA Workforce Learning and Development Policy for further guidance.

8. Awards

1. Refer to GSA Employee Performance Recognition System for further guidance.

9. Relationship to Within-grade Increases

1. An employee under the General Schedule (GS) who is paid at less than step 10 of his or her grade level must be advanced in pay to the next higher step provided that the employee has completed the required waiting period, has not received an equivalent increase during the waiting period, and is performing at an acceptable level of competence (ALOC). An employee who performs at the Level 3 or higher level under the GSA system is considered to be performing at an ALOC.

2. Federal Wage System employees advance automatically to the next pay step by receipt of a within-grade increase when the current rating of record is Level 3 or higher so long as they satisfy the time requirements.

10. Denying Within-Grade Increases

1. The periodic within-grade increase must be denied for an employee who is determined to be working below an ALOC. To be at ALOC, the employee's most recent rating of record must be Level 3 or higher. If the employee's most recent rating of record is less than Level 3, the within-grade increase must be denied.

2. The supervisor must prepare an annual or off-cycle rating of record to support the denial of within-grade increase if the current rating of record is below Level 3. For example, an employee who has a current rating of record of Level 3, but has not performed at an acceptable level of competence for the past 90 days must receive an annual or off cycle rating of record at Level 1 before the within-grade can be denied.

3. An ALOC determination shall be waived and a within-grade increase granted when an employee has not served in any position for the minimum period during the final 52 calendar weeks of the waiting period for one or more of the following reasons:

a. Because of absences that are creditable service in the computation of a waiting period or periods under 5 CFR 531.406;

b. Because of paid leave;

c. Because the employee received service credit under the back pay provisions of subpart H of part 5 CFR 550;

d. Because of details to another agency or employer for which no rating has been prepared or could not be obtained;

e. Because the employee has had insufficient time to demonstrate an acceptable level of competence due to authorized activities of official interest to the agency not subject to appraisal under 5 CFR 430.

f. Because of long-term training.

4. Supervisors should contact their servicing Human Resources Office regarding procedures for denying a within-grade increase 60 to 90 days prior, and no later than two weeks before the effective date.

5. Delay in determination of the within-grade increase. Refer to 5 CFR 531.409 (c). A delay of no more than 90 days may occur when an employee has not demonstrated Level 3 performance because of the following:

a. The employee does not have written performance plan for the current performance appraisal rating period; and

b. The employee has not been given a performance rating in any position within the rating period.

c. An employee is reduced in grade because of unacceptable performance to a position in which he or she is eligible for a within-grade increase or will become eligible within the minimum period as established at 5 CFR 430.207(a).

d. When an ALOC determination is delayed, the supervisor will inform the employee, in writing, observe performance on a performance plan until the 90-day performance period is met providing the opportunity to demonstrate an acceptable level of competence. If performance meets the Level 3, the supervisor will notify the employee, in writing, of the determination.

6. An employee may file a grievance for the denial of a within-grade increase in writing within 15 calendar days after receiving the notice of denial. Refer to GSA Grievance Procedures for further guidance.

11. Promotions

1. To be promoted within GSA, an employee's most recent rating of record must be at the Level 3 or higher. Refer to GSA Merit Promotion Plan for further requirements.

12. Reduction-in-Force (RIF)

1. Employees will receive the appropriate additional years of service credit allowable by law and regulation in the event of a reduction-in-force. Each employee receives additional RIF service credit (0, 12, and 20 years), the service credits are averaged and rounded up to the nearest whole year. The three most recent ratings of record - Unacceptable (Level 1) up to Outstanding (Level 5) - either off-cycle or annual, received during the 4-year period prior to the issuance of the RIF notice are used. Service credit for performance ratings provided under this Order is provided as follows:

a. Level 5 - 20 years

b. Level 3 - 12 years

c. Level 1 - 0 years

2. If an employee received one or two, but not three ratings of record during the applicable 4-year period, credit for performance will be the basis of the actual rating(s) of record divided by the number of actual ratings received. If the employee has received no rating of record during the preceding 4 years, a modal rating is used to grant performance credit.

3. To provide adequate time to determine employee retention standing, no new ratings of record will be put on record once GSA issues the reduction in force notices used for purposes of RIF. However, an employee may still be issued performance ratings and ratings of record if eligible. An employee will receive performance credit for the three most recent ratings of record received during the 4-year period prior to the cutoff date.

4. Performance credit for the three most recent ratings of record received during the 4-year period must include applicable ratings of record issued from different summary patterns either from GSA or another agency system. This may include Level 4 ratings of record with service credit of 16 years.

5. The Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) may approve postponing the normal rating period for up to 90 days for all employees in a competitive area to avoid disruption to retention registers during a RIF.

6. Refer to Establishment of Competitive Areas Policy and other Orders related to RIF for further guidance.

13. Grievances and Appeals

1. Employees who are dissatisfied with their performance appraisal and cannot resolve their concerns informally may file a grievance. Employees may raise issues relating to the performance appraisal process through the agency's administrative grievance process. Appealable issues may be appealed to the US Merit Systems Protection Board MSPB. Guidance on grievable and/or appealable matters is as follows:

a. Critical elements and expectations may not be grieved or appealed;

b. Critical element ratings and summary ratings are grievable;

c. Performance-based demotions and removals may be grieved through the appropriate grievance procedure or appealed to the MSPB; and

d. Refer to GSA Grievance Procedures for further guidance. Supervisors should work with their servicing Human Resources Office to assure that appropriate procedures are followed.

14. Record Keeping

1. Documentation and records will be maintained as follows:

a. Performance appraisal records and related documents will be maintained in accordance with provisions of the National Archives and Records Administration, Privacy Act, Freedom of Information Act, and other legislative and regulatory requirements.

b. The official signed copy of the Performance Plan and Appraisal Record with the rating of record (annual) for each employee shall be filed in the employee's Official Electronic Personnel File in accordance with OPM regulations for four years.

c. Notices of proposed reduction in grade or removal that are issued, but not affected, must be destroyed after the employee has completed one year of satisfactory performance.

d. All ratings of records that are four years old or less with their Performance Plan and Appraisal Record(s) will be transferred to the gaining agency when non-SES employees transfer to another Federal agency.

e. Electronic signatures and documents as appropriate may be used to support the implementation of this Order.

Appendix A. Performance Plan and Appraisal Record for Management and Supervisory Employees Who Are Not in the Senior Executive Service

Performance Plan and Appraisal Record for Non-SES Management and Supervisory Employees
Part I Administrative Data
a. Employee Name (First, Last) b. Employee ID c. Series d. Department e. Department ID
e. Organization. Rating Period Covered (MM/DD/YYYY – MM/DD/YYYY)
Part II Position Description Review Certification
I certify that I have reviewed the employee's position description. If I do not believe it is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of the position, I have initiated appropriate action. Position Description has been reviewed Initial and Date:_____
Part III Performance Plan and Appraisal Instructions

INSTRUCTIONS:
A performance plan must be issued to the employee at the beginning of each rating period. These plans may be modified during the performance cycle, but employees must perform under a documented performance plan for a minimum of 90 days before they can be rated. Development of the performance plan should be a collaborative endeavor between the supervisor and the employee. The performance plan for supervisors and managers is divided into two parts: Managing Organizational Objectives and Leadership critical elements. The number of critical elements under Managing Organizational Objectives will vary depending on the job, but on average, a manager or supervisor should have between three and five critical elements in this section. The total of the percentages assigned to the critical elements will not exceed 60%. There are six Leadership critical elements for managerial and supervisory positions: Commitment to the Rule of Law and the Principles of the American Founding, Leading People, Achieving Results, Driving Efficiency, Holding Employees Accountable, and Merit and Competence. Not all of these critical elements may be appropriate for every manager or supervisor. The Holding Employees Accountable critical element is required in all managerial and supervisory performance plans. Managerial and Supervisory plans must have at least four, but no more than seven critical elements. The total of the percentages assigned to the critical elements selected must equal at a minimum 40%. Performance Level 3 and Level 5 must be defined for each critical element.

Performance will be measured against 3 levels, as follows:
a. Level 5. Meets and consistently exceeds performance expectations as described in Level 3. (Outstanding)
(1) Consistently demonstrates extraordinary and exceptional performance, achieves outstanding results, makes unique and impactful contributions, and significantly contributes to organizational goals.
(2) Highest level of performance, indicating sustained excellence and high-value, optimized, meaningful results.
b. Level 3. Meets performance expectations. (Fully Successful).
(1) Objectives, activities and specific tasks are carried out with expected levels of quantity, quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness.
(2) Contributes positively toward the achievement of organizational goals and produces meaningful results.
(3) Performance indicates solid, dependable, and consistent achievement of requirements and expectations.

c. Level 1. Does not meet performance expectations as described in Level 3 (Unacceptable).
(1) Performance does not meet established expectations, timelines and targets.
(2) Fails to deliver acceptable work products, services, or outcomes, does not contribute to organizational goals, and/or does not meet the goals and objectives of the position.

Once the performance plan is finalized and a copy provided to the employee, both the supervisor and employee must certify issuance and receipt under Part VII. Mid-year performance reviews are required under GSA's EPPAS. Both the supervisor and employee must certify the mid-year performance review under Part VII.

Within 45 days of the end of the rating period, evaluate the performance plan objectives, underlying activities and tasks, and assign a rating to each critical element based on how well the employee met the performance expectations. Document the rating for each critical element and the derived summary on this form (see Part VIII for instructions on deriving summary ratings). Overall comments on performance and identification of training and/or developmental needs should be documented in Parts V and VI, respectively. If the summary rating is at the Level 5 or Level 1 the employee's appraisal must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate reviewing official.

The supervisor and employee must certify under Part VIII that an annual performance appraisal was conducted, and a summary rating was issued to the employee. Once both parties sign it, a copy of this form, including the performance plan, must be provided to the employee.

Part IV Performance Plan and Critical Element Appraisal

I. Managing Organizational Objectives (%)
Accountable for organizational objectives/initiatives that contribute to the overall success of GSA and effectively achieving results in alignment with GSA's goals. Successfully accomplishes interim milestones for long-term activities.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS (Attach additional page if necessary) Critical Element Rating

Critical Element: ____% Level 1 Level 3 Level 5 Unrateable
Critical Element: ____% Level 1 Level 3 Level 5 Unrateable
Critical Element: ____% Level 1 Level 3 Level 5 Unrateable
Critical Element: ____% Level 1 Level 3 Level 5 Unrateable

Critical Element: ____%

Level 1
Level 3
Level 5
Unrateable

II. Leadership (%)

I. Commitment to the Rule of Law and the Principles of the American Founding ____%

Level 1
Level 3
Level 5
Unrateable

Drive Improvement – Actively drives improvement initiatives in support of administration and agency priorities.

II. LEADING PEOPLE: ____ %

Level 1
Level 3
Level 5
Unrateable

Developing Others - Ensures that employees are appropriately recruited, selected, appraised, trained, and retained. Takes swift action to address performance or conduct-based deficiencies in employees supervised. Cultivates a dynamic environment in which employees are not afraid to make mistakes.

III. Achieving Results: ____ %

Level 1
Level 3
Level 5
Unrateable

Implements Goals and Measures - Implements goals and outcomes set forth in the President's Management Agenda, Agency Strategic Plan, Congressional Budget Justification/Annual Performance Plan, and other organizational planning.

IV. Driving Efficiency: ____%

Level 1
Level 3
Level 5
Unrateable

Managing Resources - Makes effective use of staff resources to support leadership and customer needs, and meet critical agency deadlines and deliverables. Assesses resource allocations and collaborates with other leaders to ensure optimization of all office resources.

V. Merit and Competence: ____%

Level 1
Level 3
Level 5
Unrateable

Drives Compliance - Ensures organizational compliance with service delivery standards, commitments, and expectations. Regularly communicates in a clear and professional manner with staff, coworkers, supervisors, business partners and external stakeholders.

VI. HOLDING EMPLOYEES ACCOUNTABLE: ____%

Holding Employees Accountable - Ensures subordinate's commitment to efficient work execution. Models self-accountability and holds subordinates accountable for high-quality results. Recognizes, supports, and rewards excellent work from employees supervised. Timely and efficiently addresses poor and mediocre performance of employees supervised—including seeking appropriate action up to removal from the Federal service. Takes appropriate action when employees report concerns of illegal conduct or waste, fraud, or abuse.

Level 1
Level 3
Level 5
Unrateable

Part V Comments

Comments on Overall Performance (attach additional pages as necessary)

Part VI Development and Training

Indicate professional growth needs and avenues to meet those needs (attach additional pages as necessary)

Part VII Certification of Performance Plan, and Mid-Year Review

Performance Plan Developed:
Signatures below certify that the supervisor and employee have discussed performance expectations, and the employee has been given a copy of their performance plan.

_____ _____
Supervisor/Rating Official Date

_____ _____
Employee Date
I understand my signature does not constitute agreement or disagreement with the plan, but merely verifies I have received the information.

Mid-Year Progress Review:
Signatures below certify that the supervisor and employee have discussed performance against the expectations and changes have been made to the performance plan as necessary.

_____ _____
Supervisor/Rating Official Date

_____ _____
Employee Date

Part VIII Summary Rating

Guidance for deriving summary rating:

Summary Rating:

Rating of Record (Annual)

Interim Rating

Off Cycle Rating of Record

Unacceptable (Level 1) — Level 1 is assigned if one or more critical elements are rated at Level 1.

Fully Successful (Level 3) — Level 3 is assigned if all critical elements are rated at the Level 3 or above, but does not meet the **70%** rule for assigning a Level 5 summary rating; no critical element is rated below Level 3.

Outstanding (Level 5) — Level 5 for **70%** of the critical elements weights and no critical element is rated below Level 3.

Unrateable — Assigned when an employee has not served 90 days on a signed performance plan for any element during the rating period.

_____ _____

Supervisor/Rating Official Date

_____ _____

Reviewing Official Date

For summary ratings at Level 5 or Level 1

_____ _____

Employee Date

I understand my signature does not constitute agreement or disagreement with the rating, but verifies I have received the rating.

Privacy Act Statement*: This form is subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act. Records will be processed and maintained by the employee's supervisor and the Consolidated Processing Center. Information will be made available to the appropriate review authorities. Disclosure of the employee ID number is mandatory to determine or*

verify eligibility for benefits accruing to employees such as additional tenure credit for reduction-in-force purposes, pay increases, within-grade increases and quality increases, which are directly linked to overall performance rating Levels. The information gathered through the use of the number will be used only as necessary in personnel administration processes carried out in accordance with established regulations and published notices of systems of records.

Appendix B. Performance Plan and Appraisal Record for Non-Supervisory Employees

Performance Plan and Appraisal Record for Non-supervisory Employees
Part I Administrative Data
a. Employee Name (Last, First, MI) b. Employee ID c. Series Grade d. Department e. Department ID
e. Organization f. Rating Period Covered (MM/DD/YYYY – MM/DD/YYYY)

Part II Position Description Review Certification
I certify that I have reviewed the employee's position description. If I do not believe it is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of the position, I have initiated appropriate action. Position Description has been reviewed Initial and Date:_____
Part III Performance Plan and Appraisal Instructions
INSTRUCTIONS: A performance plan must be issued to the employee at the beginning of each rating period. These plans may be modified during the performance cycle, but employees must perform under a documented performance plan for a minimum of 90 days before they can be rated. Development of the performance plan should be a collaborative endeavor between the supervisor and the employee. The performance plan for each employee must contain critical elements. Critical elements are work assignments or responsibilities of such importance that unacceptable performance on the element would result in a determination that an employee's overall performance is unacceptable. Objectives, activities, and tasks should be identified under each critical element. Non-Supervisory plans must have at least three, but no more than six critical elements. Non-Supervisory plans must include the Organizational Goal(s) element. The total of the percentages assigned to the critical elements selected must equal 100%. Performance Level 3 and Level 5 must be addressed for each critical element.

Performance will be measured against 3 levels, as follows:
a. Level 5. Meets and consistently exceeds performance expectations as described in Level 3. (Outstanding)
(1) Consistently demonstrates extraordinary and exceptional performance, achieves outstanding results, makes unique and impactful contributions, and significantly contributes to organizational goals.
(2) Highest level of performance, indicating sustained excellence and high-value, optimized, meaningful results.
b. Level 3. Meets performance expectations. (Fully Successful).
(1) Objectives, activities and specific tasks are carried out with expected levels of quantity, quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness.
(2) Contributes positively toward the achievement of organizational goals and produces meaningful results.
(3) Performance indicates solid, dependable, and consistent achievement of requirements and expectations.
c. Level 1. Does not meet performance expectations as described in Level 3 (Unacceptable).
(1) Performance does not meet established expectations, timelines and targets.
(2) Fails to deliver acceptable work products, services, or outcomes, does not contribute to organizational goals, and/or does not meet the goals and objectives of the position..

Once the performance plan is finalized and a copy provided to the employee, both the supervisor and employee must certify issuance and receipt under Part VII. Mid-year performance reviews are required under GSA's EPPAS. Both the supervisor and employee must certify the mid-year performance review under Part VII.

Within 45 days of the end of the rating period, evaluate the performance plan objectives, underlying activities and tasks, and assign a rating to each critical element based on how well the employee met the performance expectations. Document the rating for each critical element and the derived summary rating on this form (see Part VIII for instructions on deriving summary ratings). Overall comments on performance and identification of training and/or developmental needs should be documented in Parts V and VI, respectively. If the summary rating is at the Level 5 or the Level 1 the employee's appraisal must be reviewed and approved by the second level supervisor.

The supervisor and employee must certify under Part VIII that an annual performance appraisal was conducted, and a summary rating was issued to the employee. Once both

parties sign it, a copy of this form, including the performance plan, must be provided to the employee.
Part IV Performance Plan and Critical Element Appraisal
CRITICAL ELEMENTS Critical Element Rating

Critical Element ____%: Level 1 Level 3 Level 5 Unrateable
Critical Element ____%: Level 1 Level 3 Level 5 Unrateable
Critical Element ____%: Level 1 Level 3 Level 5 Unrateable
Critical Element ____%: Level 1 Level 3 Level 5 Unrateable

Critical Element ____%:

Level 1
Level 3
Level 5
Unrateable

Critical Element ____%:

Level 1
Level 3
Level 5
Unrateable

Part V Comments

Comments on Overall Performance (attach additional pages as necessary).

Part VI Development and Training

Indicate professional growth needs and avenues to meet those needs (attach additional pages as necessary.)

Part VII Certification of Performance Plan, and Mid-Year Review

Performance Plan Developed:
Signatures below certify that the supervisor and employee have discussed performance expectations, and the employee has been given a copy of their performance plan.

_____ _____
Supervisor/Rating Official Date

_____ _____
Employee Date
I understand my signature does not constitute agreement or disagreement with the plan, but merely verifies I have received the information.

Mid-Year Progress Review:
Signatures below certify that the supervisor and employee have discussed performance against the expectations and changes have been made to the performance plan as necessary.

_____ _____
Supervisor/Rating Official Date

_____ _____
Employee Date

Part VIII Summary Rating

Guidance for deriving summary rating:

Unacceptable (Level 1) — Level 1 is assigned if one or more critical elements are rated at Level 1.

Fully Successful (Level 3) — Level 3 is assigned if all critical elements are rated at the Level 3 or above, but does not meet the **70%** rule for assigning a Level 5 summary rating; no critical element is rated below Level 3.

Outstanding (Level 5) — Level 5 for **70%** of the critical elements weights and no critical element is rated below Level 3.

Unrateable — Assigned when an employee has not served 90 days on a signed performance plan for any element during the rating period.

Summary Rating:

Rating of Record (Annual)

Interim Rating

Off Cycle Rating of Record

_____ _____ Supervisor/Rating Official Date _____ _____ Reviewing Official Date ***For summary ratings at Level 5 or Level 1*** _____ _____ Employee Date *I understand my signature does not constitute agreement or disagreement with the rating, but verifies I have received the rating.*
Privacy Act Statement*: This form is subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act. Records will be processed and maintained by the employee's supervisor and the Consolidated Processing Center. Information will be made available to the appropriate review authorities. Disclosure of the employee ID is mandatory to determine or verify eligibility for benefits accruing to employees such as additional tenure credit for reduction-in-force purposes, pay increases, within-grade increases and quality increases, which are directly linked to overall performance rating Levels. The information gathered through the use of the number will be used only as necessary in personnel administration processes carried out in accordance with established regulations and published notices of systems of records.*

Appendix C. Performance Appraisal – Employee Self-Assessment Summary

GSA Performance Appraisal - Employee Self-Assessment Summary	
Part I Administrative Data	
a. Employee Name b. Office Symbol c. Date	
d. Performance Period (MM/DD/YYYY) From:	To:
Part II Instructions	
***General Guidelines**:* Employees should complete and submit this form to their rating official for consideration in completing the annual performance appraisal. The summary should represent accomplishments as related to the outcomes and expectations from the date the performance plan was communicated/signed to the end of the performance rating period. Base the summary on accomplishments during the performance period.	

Summarize each outcome and expectation separately and write the summary as a past tense of the outcomes and expectations.

Specific Guidelines: List major accomplishments in bullet form as they relate to each critical element and the expectations detailed in your performance plan. You may also list training and developmental accomplishments, including seminars and/or conferences; any recognition you received; recommended areas for future development; and specific training requests, if desired.

Part III Accomplishments

Major Accomplishments*: In bullet format, identify the most important accomplishments linked to critical elements achieved during this performance period that apply directly to your position. (Attach additional page if necessary).*

Other Accomplishments: *Identify other accomplishments achieved during this performance period. (Attach an additional page if necessary.)*

Training and Developmental Needs: Identify any training or developmental needs or opportunities for the coming year. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

Employee Signature and Date:_____

Appendix D. Definitions

a. **Absolute Standard**. An “absolute” retention standard Level 3 one that allows for no errors—is acceptable only in very limited circumstances. When a single failure to perform under a critical element would result in loss of life, injury, breach of national security, or great monetary loss.

b. **Acceptable Level of Competence (ALOC)**. ALOC is performance by an employee that warrants advancement of the employee's rate of basic pay to the next higher step of the grade or the next higher rate within the grade (as defined in this section) of his or her position. ALOC is a Level 3 or higher summary annual rating of record or off cycle rating of record.

c. **Appraisal**. This is the process under which performance is reviewed and evaluated.

d. **Competencies**. These are measurable patterns of knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors that an individual needs to perform in their work roles or occupational functions successfully. Competencies specify the "how" of performing job tasks, or what the person needs to do to perform the job successfully.

e. **Critical Element**. This is an assignment or responsibility of such importance that unacceptable performance in that element would result in a determination that the employee’s overall performance is unacceptable. Regulations require that each employee have at least one critical element in his or her performance plan. Critical elements are the cornerstone of individual accountability in employee performance management. Level 1 performance is failure to perform on one or more critical elements. A performance based action can be taken for Level 1 performance and such elements shall be used to measure performance only at the individual level and what is within the employee’s span of control.

f. **Day**. This is a calendar day.

g. **Deciding Official**. This is the chain of command above the rating official and reviewing official or the highest level within the chain of command.

h. **Detail**. This is a temporary assignment to a different position for a specified period in which the employee is expected to return to his or her regular duties at the end of the assignment.

i. **Employee**. Refers to all covered employees as defined in this Order.

j. **General Measures**. Measure used to determine how well work units and/or employees produce or provide products or services. Examples include quality, quantity, timeliness and cost effectiveness.

k. **Incentive Program**. An agency may pay an incentive to a current employee if the agency determines that the unusually high or unique qualifications of the employee or a special need of the agency for the employee's services makes it essential to retain the employee and that the employee would be likely to leave the Federal service in the absence of a retention incentive. Programs include, but are not limited to student loan repayment and the retention incentive.

l. **Interim Rating**. This summary rating is prepared during the course of the annual rating period when an employee has spent at least the minimum performance rating period (90 days) in one position and then changes positions requiring a new performance plan. Interim ratings should be completed within 30 days of the position change. Interim ratings are not ratings of record. If an employee changes position after June 1st, the employee shall receive a rating of record (annual) for the former position. Time served in the new position should be added to the next performance cycle (end on September 30th of the following FY). Interim ratings that are recorded during the annual rating period should be considered when issuing the rating of record (annual).

m. **Manager**. The employee's position meets the Civil Service Reform Act definition and occupies a position which meets the labor management definition of supervisor as defined in 5 U.S.C. 7103(a) (10), but does not meet the minimum requirements for application of the General Schedule Supervisory Guide or the position meets the definition of Management Official in 5 U.S.C. 7103(a)(11).

n. **Off-Cycle Rating of Record**. This is a rating of record that is prepared to document less than fully successful performance or an acceptable level of competence determination. This type of summary rating is required to support personnel actions such as within grade increases. Additionally, it should be considered when issuing the annual rating of record.

o. **Performance**. This is the level of accomplishment of work assignments or responsibilities.

p. **Performance-Based Action**. As used in this Order, are personnel actions

authorized under Chapter 43 of Title 5 to reassign, demote, or remove employees for Level 1 "unacceptable performance."

q. **Performance Expectation**. The management approved performance threshold(s), requirement(s), or standard(s) that must be met to be appraised at a particular level of performance in an element under 5 CFR 430.203.

r. **Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)**. This is a formal opportunity period when an employee is placed on a written plan of action to improve Level 1 performance in a critical element(s). A PIP should not generally afford an employee more than a 30-day period to demonstrate acceptable performance, except when the agency determines in its sole and exclusive discretion that a longer period is necessary to provide sufficient time to evaluate an employee's performance.

s. **Performance Levels**. Performance levels are used for evaluating performance of elements and/or specific measures.

t. **Performance Period**. This is the established period of time for which performance will be evaluated and a performance rating will be prepared.

u. **Performance Plan**. This is the written or otherwise recorded electronically, performance elements that set forth expected performance. A plan must include all of the critical performance elements with at least one critical element and the performance expectations.

v. **Performance Plan and Appraisal Record**. Documents performance ratings, performance appraisals and ratings of record. Refer to Appendix A and B.

w. **Performance Rating**. The appraisal of performance compared to the performance standard(s) for each critical element which there has been an opportunity to perform for the minimum period. A performance rating may include the assignment of a summary rating of all the elements when an employee has served a minimum of 90 days on a plan. A performance summary rating is used for interim appraisals (issued during the performance cycle) and should be considered when issuing an annual rating of record.

x. **Permanent Appointment**. This position is filled by an employee whose appointment is not designated as temporary or term and does not have a definite time limitation.

y. **Position Description (PD)**. A PD is a statement of the major duties,

responsibilities, and supervisory relationships of a position. In its simplest form, a PD indicates the work to be performed by the position. The purpose of a PD is to document the major duties and responsibilities of a position, not to spell out in detail every possible activity during the work day.

z. **Probationary Period**. The first year of service of an employee in the competitive service who is given a career or career conditional appointment during which an agency may determine an individual's fitness and qualifications for continued employment, and may terminate the individual with limited appeal rights. In addition, upon initial appointment to a supervisory or managerial position, an employee must satisfactorily complete a one-year probationary period for a supervisory position or a one year probationary period for a managerial position (an exception may be authorized in limited circumstances).

aa. **Progress Review**. The act of communicating with the employee about performance compared to the performance expectations of critical elements and issuing an interim rating. There is one mandatory progress review.

bb. **Project Leader**. An employee whose position does not meet the minimum requirements for coverage under OPM's General Schedule Leader Grade Evaluation Guide (GSLGEG), however, works with team members to achieve specific tasks, produce work products and services and meet program and production goals.

cc. **Rating Official**. This is the supervisor or manager of the employee. The rating official is designated to establish performance plans for a position and to evaluate the performance of subordinate employees.The immediate supervisor of each employee will normally be assigned this responsibility.

dd. **Annual Rating**. This is the annual summary rating of record, usually prepared at the end of the annual rating period, for performance on all the elements in the performance plan. The rating period runs concurrent with the fiscal year. It starts on October 1st and ends on September 30th.

ee. **Rating Period**. The established period of time for which performance will be evaluated and a rating of record or a performance summary rating will be prepared.

ff. **Realignment**. The movement of an employee and employee's position when an organization change (such as reorganization or transfer of function) occurs. The employee stays in the same agency, and there is no change in the employee's position, grade or pay.

gg. **Reassignment**. This is the change of an employee from one position to another without promotion or change to lower grade, level or band.

hh. **Retention Standard**. Level 3 minimally successful is considered fully successful performance that meets an employee's performance requirement(s) or standard(s) at a level of performance above unacceptable Level 1 in the critical element(s) at issue.

ii. **Reviewing Official**. This is a manager or supervisor at a higher level than the rating official, designated to review the performance plans and ratings of record for one or more subordinate employees. Heads of Services and Staff Offices (HSSOs) may serve as both the rating and reviewing official for employees who report directly to them.

jj. **Signatures**. These may either be in hard copy, scanned or electronic per OPM guidelines.

kk. **Specific measures**. The yardsticks used to determine how well a work unit or employees provide products or services that apply to the critical element.

ll. **Summary Rating**. This is the written record of the rating of each element and the assignment of a summary rating level.

mm. **Supervisor**. An employee's position meets the minimum requirements for coverage under the OPM's General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG) and has the authority to direct the work of an organizational unit; be held accountable for the success of specific line or staff functions; monitor and evaluate the progress of the organization toward meeting goals; and make adjustments in objectives, work plans, schedules, and commitment of resources.

nn. **Team Leader**. Is an employee whose position meets the minimum requirements for coverage under the OPM's GSLGEG and works with team members to achieve specific tasks, produce work products and services and meet program and production goals.

oo. **Transfer**. Is an employee who moves to/from a different agency without a break in service. Transferred ratings of record from another agency can be matched to GSA's planning and appraisal program to support appropriate personnel actions until an employee can be rated under GSA's system.

pp. **Trial Period**. It has the same purpose of a probationary period; however, it

applies to positions in the excepted service and can last from one to two years. Prior Federal civilian service is credited toward completion of the required trial period in the same manner as prescribed for the competitive service in 5 CFR 315.802.