

SANTA CLARA POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 35.1

PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2015

35.1.1 Purpose of the Performance Appraisal System

The Santa Clara Police Department's most valuable asset is its employees. The purpose of the performance appraisal system is to provide an objective means for evaluating the performance of employees. The goal of the written appraisal is to provide each employee with a clear understanding of the effectiveness of the work he/she has been doing over a particular rating period. The appraisal process is the foundation for many personnel actions, including salary increases, training, development, selection for specialized assignments and promotion, as well as discipline.

The guidelines provided will assist the appraising supervisor to assess the performance level of an employee by establishing standards for acceptable performance. The guidelines are not meant to restrict or limit the supervisor's objective observations of an employee's performance. The standards were arrived at through a job task analysis that studied and determined the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's) needed to perform fundamental duties.

Additionally, this performance appraisal process incorporates the tenets of the Department's mission statement and values statement as well as our community policing philosophy. These standards should be applied throughout the appraisal process.

35.1.2 Process

Ratings are to be based on actual performance. Each performance area (Core categories and Supplemental categories) is to be rated individually:

- Exceptional
- Above Standard
- Meets Standard
- Needs Improvement
- Unsatisfactory
- Not Observed

Different versions of the form exist for:

- Non-sworn employee
- Non-sworn Supervisor
- Police Officers
- Police Sergeant
- Police Manager
- Dispatcher

- Dispatcher Supervisor

The narrative comments should expand on the ratings so the employees fully understand how their performance relates to these ratings.

The supervisor may include a description of the following areas in the narrative comments:

- The employee's assignment and collateral duties.
- Significant achievements, accomplishments and strengths
- Special skills, talents, interests and qualifications
- Performance problems, areas of weakness or concern, or areas where improvement is needed
- Recommendations that would assist the employee in correcting problem performance, developing career goals or enhancing present performance

35.1.3 Rating Categories

The categories listed and defined below appear as “core categories” on all performance appraisal forms. Under each category, the definitions of behavior that meets the standard are intended to assist the evaluating supervisor in evaluating performance. They are not intended to be all inclusive or limiting. Each category shall be rated as Unsatisfactory, Needs Improvement, Meets Standard, Above Standard, Exceptional, or Not Observed. Comments should be provided for ratings of Exceptional and any rating of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory.

CORE CATEGORIES:

Job Expertise: Demonstrates the knowledge and use of Citywide and departmental procedures/policies. Employee is able to apply the technical and procedural know-how to get the job done. Serves as a “resource person” on whom others rely on for advice. Able to answer difficult questions and keeps informed of the latest developments in their area of specialty. Effectively gathers and uses information, procedures, materials, equipment and techniques, etc., required for their job.

Reliability: Completes quality work assignments in a timely and efficient manner. Employee arrives to work on time (punctuality) and maintains attendance (for example, no lost time, no patterned or excessive absences). Meets established schedules and deadlines, including assigned work hours. Attends to duties of job, follows-up on progress of work and follows instructions and appropriate procedures. Fulfills responsibilities and maintains confidentiality as appropriate. Follows instructions or directions of a supervisor with little explanation, completes most assignments without additional follow-up direction, and accomplishes assigned tasks. Appropriately manages time.

Productivity: Completes tasks asked of employee. Initiates activity consistently. Attends to duties of job and follows-up on progress of work. Takes initiative to identify problems and solutions to workplace challenges. Completes reports as required. Performs tasks in a reasonable and competent manner. Offers assistance to co-workers.

Accountability/Professionalism/Ethics: Employee does not abuse or neglect equipment that is assigned to or used by him/her. Employee maintains control of vehicle while being alert to surrounding activity and practices defensive driving techniques. Demonstrates acceptable proficiency with firearm(s) and qualifies during assigned time (if applicable). Is honest and trustworthy. Displays courtesy, fairness, respect and a willingness to serve the public in a way which shows a devotion to department principles and values. Willingly performs tasks assigned and accepts responsibility. Neat, clean, and presents a professional image. Uniform/clothing and equipment is well maintained, meets department standards and is in accordance with department policy.

Judgment and Problem Solving: Ability to demonstrate problem solving, evaluating alternatives, and selecting the best course of action by using logic and common sense in decision making. Problems are identified rapidly, accurately, and appropriately under both emergency and non-emergency conditions. Decisions and resolutions are logical, rapid, appropriate, reliable and effective when made under routine and non-routine conditions. Regularly demonstrates ability to correctly prioritize tasks which require more attention and detail from those that are less important.

Verbal and Written Communication Skills: Communicates and listens effectively and responds in an effective, positive and respectful manner. Demonstrates comprehension of oral and written questions, instructions, and information rapidly, thoroughly, and accurately. Response to oral and written questions, instructions, and information is timely and appropriate. Information presented is accurate, complete, and current. Written reports and correspondence are well-organized, legible, concise, neat, and in proper grammatical form. Speech and verbal instructions are clear, concise, and understandable. Effectively testifies in court, presenting thoughts clearly and correctly for the record. Is respectful and polite, using the same tone on direct examination as on cross examination.

Teamwork and Interpersonal Skills: Is polite, tactful, and considerate. Actively listens to others. Interactions with others are characterized by fairness, courtesy, diplomacy, honesty, firmness, empathy, and confidence. Effective in offering support and assistance to others in obtaining information from others, and in supplying information to others. Is approachable and open to suggestions as well as demonstrates a positive attitude and flexibility along with the ability to develop effective relationships with co-workers and supervisors by helping others accomplish tasks and using collaboration and conflict resolution skills.

Officer Safety/Control of Volatile Situations: Ability to handle danger or trauma with poise and calmness. Does not allow potentially violent situations to deteriorate. Ability to use appropriate arrest and control techniques. Displays awareness of potential dangers and is mentally and physically able to respond to all situations. Uses tactical skills effectively in seeking resolution to situations. Aware of surroundings and potential dangers. Does not put self or others in tactically compromised positions.

SUPPLEMENTAL CATEGORY FOR SPECIALIZED ASSIGNMENT:

The following category is supplemental and applies to specialized assignments. The appraisal that the category applies to is indicated in parenthesis.

Investigations/Operations (*Police Sergeant and Police Officer*): Uses effective communication techniques to legally collect essential information from victims, witnesses and suspects. Thoroughly investigates cases and accurately evaluates solvability factors. Properly prioritizes workload, and performs appropriate investigative follow-up as needed. Investigator stays current of ever-changing collection procedures and readily accepts responsibilities.

SUPPLEMENTAL CATEGORIES FOR SUPERVISORS:

The following categories are supplemental and apply to supervisor performance appraisals. In each case, the appraisal that the category applies to is indicated in parenthesis. i.e. (Manager, Sergeant, and Non-sworn Supervisor)

Evaluating Performance (*Manager, Sergeant and Non-sworn Supervisor*): Regularly observes and reviews employee performance and work product. Completes performance appraisals based on departmental guidelines in a timely manner.

Supervision and Development of Personnel (*Manager, Sergeant and Non-sworn Supervisor*): Understands and applies current supervisory/managerial principles and techniques. Is able to identify employees in need of counseling and motivation. Effectively provides resources and information for career development for subordinates. Promotes a positive work environment through leadership by example and adheres to all aspects of the departmental values statement. Possesses the ability to identify issues requiring planning. Demonstrates flexibility, resourcefulness and imagination when confronted with unusual situations. Establishes high standards of performance and sets an example for others to follow. Offers regular and constructive feedback, giving clear task instructions. Establishes realistic priorities within available resources. Maintains high morale and provides direction, counsel, and guidance which are helpful, constructive and effective.

Field Operations (*Manager and Sergeant*): Has the ability to remain calm during emergency and critical situations. Instills confidence in subordinates through command presence and decision making skills. Has a clear understanding of a supervisor's/manager's role in emergency situations. Demonstrates proficiency in tactics, strategy, communication and utilization of resources to successfully resolve emergency situations.

Management of Budgetary Resources (*Manager, Sergeant and Non-sworn Supervisor*): Understands budgetary concerns and works within established funding levels. Fiscally responsible.

RATING CRITERIA DEFINITIONS

Exceptional: Demonstrates outstanding performance. Performance is marked by unique and extraordinary accomplishments. Demonstrates a high degree of expertise and mastery in all aspects of the position.

Above Standard: Exceeds normal job performance or standard expectations. Performance is clearly and consistently above what is required of the employee. Fully performs the entire range of duties in a professional manner.

Meets Standard: Performance meets the expectations of an employee in this position and performs essential duties satisfactorily.

Needs Improvement: Performance is less than what is expected for the position; improvement is necessary.

Unsatisfactory: Performance does not meet job requirements and expectations. Does not perform essential duties in a satisfactory manner. Immediate and substantial improvement is necessary.

Not Observed: Performance was not observed by the Supervisor during the rating period or does not apply to the employee.

35.1.4 Annual Performance Appraisals

Performance Appraisals will be conducted on all regular, full-time and part-time employees at least on an annual basis. As-needed employees do not receive formal evaluations. Annual performance appraisals and salary step increases, if appropriate, will occur at the same time as applicable.

35.1.5 Documentation

The City of Santa Clara Human Resources Department develops and/or approves forms for the appraisal of employees. The Human Resources Department maintains evaluation records and notifies the Police Department prior to each employee's anniversary date.

Completed performance appraisals are maintained permanently in the Human Resources Department. Documentation retained in the Police Department's working personnel file that was used in preparing an evaluation will be purged annually after the corresponding evaluation has been completed.

35.1.6 Evaluation Period

Employees will generally be given a written performance evaluation on an annual basis. The Chief of Police may also request special performance evaluations for an individual employee in order to monitor the employee's progress in area(s) where the employee is having difficulty.

Supervisors are subject to discipline for performance appraisals that are not completed in a timely manner. Generally, performance appraisals should be completed and presented to the employee within thirty (30) days of the end of the appraisal period.

35.1.7 Review Process

All employees are entitled to meet with their department head to review a contested evaluation and discuss areas of concern. The employee is also entitled to submit written comments about the contested evaluation to the department head, for transmittal to the Human Resources Department, for attachment to the appraisal. The employee may also request that the contested evaluation and written comments be sent to the City Manager for review.

An employee who is evaluated by the department head may request that the City Manager review the evaluation, along with his/her written comments, but is not entitled to a "formal" review by the City Manager.

Sworn police employees have access to any appeal rights as specified under the [Peace Officers Bill of Rights](#).

35.1.8 Probationary Appraisal Reports

Police Officers

Daily Observation Reports and End of Cycle reports will be completed on probationary police officers during their field-training program. Field Training Officers will complete these reports.

A formal FTO evaluation report will be completed by the officer's Field Training Sergeant biweekly during the FTO period.

While an employee is on probation, the City of Santa Clara Human Resources Department requires City performance appraisals every three months.

A formal evaluation report will be completed regularly by non-sworn supervisors on newly hired non-sworn employees. The probationary period for most employees is typically 12 months.

35.1.9 Employee Counseling

At the end of the rating period, each employee will be counseled by their supervisor concerning:

- Results of the performance evaluation just completed.
- The level of performance attained during the prior rating period.
- Appropriate career counseling relative to such topics as advancement, specialization, or further training appropriate to employee's position.
- Supervisors should counsel their subordinates regarding their performance at any time during the rating period when necessary.