

Colorado State University Extension 2007 PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Colorado State University Extension supports a performance appraisal process to enhance faculty capabilities to deliver effective educational programs to Coloradans.

Almost universally, when a performance appraisal is conducted properly, both supervisor and staff member report the experience as beneficial and positive. Appraisals offer both participants a valuable opportunity to focus on work activities and goals, to identify and correct any existing problems, and to encourage positive future performance; thus, performance of the whole organization is enhanced.

The primary purposes of performance appraisal are to:

- ✓ Foster meaningful and open communication between the staff member and the supervisor about performance roles in delivering educational program results and impacts.
- ✓ Improve job performance and develop staff members.
- ✓ Support continuous quality improvement throughout the organization and promote the accomplishment of the educational mission of Extension.

These Performance Appraisal Guidelines do not cover conduct issues that may give rise to immediate action and termination. Refer to the CSUE Employee Handbook, Section 5 pages 11 – 13, for the policy on disciplinary action.

The Appraisal Process

Extension's performance appraisal process is intended to provide fair and consistent review and appraisal of each employee's performance. Because appraisals are intended to focus on what is being done well and what areas are in need of improvement, performance efforts of all Extension employees will be formally reviewed and evaluated once a year.

Planning for the annual performance appraisal process actually begins with the prior year's appraisal. It is at this time that the supervisor and the employee review past performance and develop plans for improvement and/or goals for the upcoming performance appraisal period. At this time, individual benchmarks should be reviewed for continued appropriateness and Core Areas of Performance to be emphasized in the subsequent performance appraisal identified. Changes, if any, will be documented in a letter from the supervisor to the employee.

Approximately 6 months after the formal performance appraisal is conducted, the supervisor and employee should visit informally regarding the employee's progress toward goals and/or plans for improvement and discuss changes in core areas of performance emphasis, benchmark applicability, work environment and other issues affecting performance. Changes, if any, will be documented in a letter from the supervisor to the employee. Listed below are the basic steps in the performance appraisal process.

1. Supervisor will initiate the performance review process by scheduling a mutually agreeable time to meet formally with supervisee. These meetings should occur in January – April.
2. Employee will prepare a written narrative and provide this to supervisor at least two weeks before the formal meeting. The written narrative should include a maximum of 5 pages, which supports their self-assessment in the 3 Core Areas of Performance (CAPs). There should be a direct, identifiable relationship between how one is rating oneself and the written narrative.
3. Supervisor reviews materials submitted by employee, additional information as required or appropriate, and requests additional documentation as necessary.

4. Employee and supervisor hold performance appraisal meeting.
5. Following completion of appraisal, supervisor summarizes and provides employee with an **initial** performance rating recommendation.
6. The employee is invited to provide comments that will be incorporated into the performance appraisal document.
7. Supervisor and employee sign and date the Performance Summary Form (PS-1).
8. Completed appraisals are distributed with one copy to employee, one copy to supervisor, and original to Regional Director for employee's personnel file.
9. Supervisor provides Regional Director with the initial rating arrived at in the appraisal process.
10. Regional Director and supervisor review ratings and discuss changes to be made, if any.
11. Regional Director reviews all ratings within region for accuracy and consistency; reviews initial ratings with County Director(s) as necessary.
12. Regional Director provides ratings on all staff under his/her supervision to Director of Extension.
13. Director of Extension and Regional Director review ratings and discuss changes to be made, if any.
14. Regional Director notifies supervisor and employee in writing if there is a change in rating and the reason(s) for the change.
15. Director of Extension determines salary adjustment for each rating category.
16. Director of Extension submits salary adjustments to Regional Director for review.
17. Regional Director submits final salary adjustments to Director of Extension.
18. Director of Extension sends out notification of salary adjustment letters.

HOW THE APPRAISAL SYSTEM WORKS

Core Areas of Performance

The CSUE performance appraisal system is based around three Core Areas of Performance that are central to the ability of Extension professionals to work effectively within their counties and also within their regions, the state, the organization and as faculty of Colorado State University. Listed alphabetically, the three "Core Areas of Performance" and a brief explanation of each are:

- Leadership and Resource Management: ability to identify, develop, and utilize resources, including human resources.
- Program Planning, Delivery, and Reporting: ability to accurately identify priority needs, plan and deliver effective programming, and then evaluate and report the extent to which educational objectives were met.
- Relationships and Professionalism: ability to develop and maintain productive relationships, and continue one's professional growth and behavior.

Benchmarks

Benchmarks are components of the Core Areas of Performance and serve as points of reference from which measurements can be made. Benchmarks in the Extension performance appraisal system will **serve as guides** for employees, supervisors and administrators to:

- recognize performance expectations for Extension employees,
- encourage employees to set personal performance goals with prior knowledge of the benchmarks within each of the core performance areas,
- allow employees to monitor their own progress toward reaching goals,
- provide a base for employees and supervisors to begin discussions of individual performance, and
- provide a means for consistency among individual performance appraisals.

These benchmarks were developed to help employees and supervisors determine when organizational expectations are being met, when performance "exceeds" organizational expectations, and to help identify areas in which an employee's skills and abilities need improvement in order to do the job the organization expects.

Components of a Core Area of Performance

Each Core Area of Performance begins with a definition. The definition provides employees and supervisors consistent information about benchmarks included in the Core Area of Performance and their organizational importance. Below the definition is a matrix that contains levels of performance (top row), benchmarks for the Core Area of Performance (left column) and indicators for each level of performance (showing lower level to higher level performance from left to right by rows) within a benchmark. Each benchmark is identified by a few words or a short phrase that describes its relationship to the Core Area of Performance

The four levels of performance descriptors and their explanations follow:

- Does Not Meet Expectations: This performance level indicates that at times the employee may complete or meet the intent of the benchmark listed, but generally does not meet expectations for the benchmark.
- Meets Expectations: Each indicator listed vertically under the “Meets Expectations” header describes the acceptable level of performance for the benchmark in the left column. An employee whose performance for a benchmark “Meets Expectations” means he/she is meeting the expectation of the organization for that benchmark.
- Exceeds Expectations: This level of performance indicates an employee who consistently exceeds the expectations for that benchmark. This is performance that has moved beyond “Meets Expectations”.
- Exemplary: This level of performance indicates an employee substantially exceeds the expectations for the benchmark that is being evaluated.

Each benchmark is identified by a few words or a short phrase that describes its relationship to the Core Area of Performance.

Example:

Shown below, as an example, is part of the Core Area of Performance for “Program Planning, Delivery, and Reporting”.

Program Planning, Delivery, and Reporting: An effective educator will accurately identify priority needs, plan and deliver effective programming, and then evaluate to determine the extent to which educational objectives were met. Reporting program outcomes, both within the Extension system and to other people and organizations, is equally important. It is essential that Extension professionals be technically competent, and be deliberate in marketing the educational program to target audiences and stakeholders. It is also important to recognize the potential in reaching specific audiences who comprise the diverse nature within our communities. A program planning cycle is 5 years, but regular updates should occur as needed.

	<i>Does Not Meet Expectations</i>	<i>Meets Expectations</i>	<i>Exceeds Expectations</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>
<i>Community Involvement</i>	There is no evidence of an effort to collect community input, and therefore it could appear that programs are based on personal desires rather than community needs. A formal program needs assessment was not completed prior to the start of the 5-year program plan of work cycle	Program priorities are established by gathering community input through an identified process, which includes local, state, national, and global trends and state and national initiatives. A formal program needs assessment is completed prior to the start of the 5-year program plan of work cycle.	Community input is ongoing and involves new community/citizen groups or target audience representatives. Written plans of work are adjusted annually to reflect changing community needs and audiences.	Is actively involved in working with multiple community groups as a knowledge expert/planning resource, to assist them with their educational programs. Community programming partnerships are established as an outcome of the community input gathering process.

	<i>Does Not Meet Expectations</i>	<i>Meets Expectations</i>	<i>Exceeds Expectations</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>
<i>Plans of Work</i>	Plans of Work are not current (either incomplete, inactive, or non-existent).	Plans of Work are current, complete, incorporate the Logic Model, and show evidence of community involvement. Note: This expectation does not apply in a person's first year in a new position.		
<i>Technical Competence/Educational Methods</i>	Knowledge and skills are not adequate to meet the programmatic needs of the community. Educational methods are ineffective given the available technology or learning styles of the clients.	Skills and knowledge are current. Competence in several teaching styles is evident such as group presentation, individual contact, applied demonstrations, and in written documents such as newsletters and articles. Individual is responsive to telephone inquiries, and office walk-ins. Technology is used appropriately.	Competence is recognized by specialists, peers, clients, and other governmental agencies and organizational specialists or collaborators such that this person's skills are often requested, and support given, beyond their assigned area. Educational methods are on the cutting edge as evidenced by this person's use of technology and alternative educational methods. May have produced/co-produced internally reviewed publications, or other educational materials.	Competence is shared with peers, and other professionals and is evidenced by presenting at state, multi-state region, or national levels. May have published (individual and/or team) in a refereed journal (Journal of Extension, etc.), or used innovative educational delivery methods.

Flexibility

While Core Areas of Performance and their benchmarks work to define expectations and levels of performance for employees, flexibility is incorporated into the appraisal system in several ways.

- Individual benchmarks can be marked not applicable (NA), and would not be included in the appraisal process by mutual agreement of the employee, their immediate supervisor and Regional Director. These decisions need to be documented as early in the appraisal process as possible. This status is to be reviewed annually.
- The benchmark and its indicators serve as guides for the employee and supervisor in looking at individual performance. Measurement (in terms of dollars, numbers, educational strategies, or events) is provided to show degree or intent of performance. It will be up to those involved in the appraisal process to decide if an individual's performance met the intent of any performance indicator for a certain benchmark.
- The benchmarks for Meets Expectations, Exceeds Expectations, and Exemplary are designed to be cumulative, building on each other. This means a person must fulfill the criteria for Meets Expectations before being considered for Exceeds Expectations, and must fulfill the criteria for Exceeds Expectations before being considered for Exemplary.
- As part of the documentation for each Core Area of Performance, the employee may list additional information and/or achievements that are not covered by the benchmarks provided. This additional information is available for consideration in a supervisor's overall rating for that Core Area of Performance.

- All Core Areas of Performance are valued by Extension and are to be considered in determining a composite performance rating. It is expected that each employee will achieve at least “Meets Expectations” in each Core Area of Performance. The supervisor will have the option of assigning more emphasis to selected core areas of performance in any given appraisal period to assist in an employee’s professional growth. Employees are encouraged to provide their supervisor with input on the areas to be emphasized. The supervisor is to communicate which areas will be emphasized in the coming year at the annual appraisal. This “emphasis” on specific core areas of performance can also be discussed at the six (6) month review.

Goals

Individual performance goals will also be incorporated into each of the 3 Core areas of performance. These are set annually, at the time of performance appraisal, for the next performance period. Employee and supervisor mutually agree to them. Goals may be developed around any performance area, but must contribute to the overall mission of Extension. Each employee will have a minimum of 3 annual goals, one for each CAP. Goals are to be measurable and appropriately stretching, yet attainable. Challenges and resources needed should be discussed as these goals are set. It is also recognized that goals may change or evolve during the year; changes should be discussed with the supervisor as they are made. Evaluation will include goal completion/progress, accomplishments, and growth. Performance on goals should be addressed in the performance appraisal narrative. Progress on goal(s) will be included in determining the performance rating for each CAP.

PLANNING FOR PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Beginning of Performance Period

At the beginning of the performance period the supervisor and employee should discuss:

- employee goals,
- professional and organizational needs for improvement, as identified in the prior appraisal,
- appropriateness of benchmarks to individual’s position,
- benchmark measures to be applied,
- support, resources and/or training needed to meet goals, and
- work environment of the employee.

Mid-Year Update

Approximately halfway through the performance period, the employee and supervisor should schedule a time to visit informally about employee progress in meeting goals and expectations. Any changes in plans, work environment, applicability of benchmarks, and/or goals will be discussed and documented in a letter from the supervisor to the employee. Copies of this documentation will go to the employee, into the employee’s personnel file, and to the employee’s Regional Director.

Any time a supervisor becomes aware of possible unsatisfactory performance by any person they supervise, the supervisor should promptly determine if that is the case. If it is determined that there is unsatisfactory performance, the supervisor should inform the person immediately and proceed with procedures described in the “Performance Summary” section (page 9).

Ongoing Input

It is essential that employee and supervisor maintain open lines of communication and provide one another with praise, concerns, updates, observations and notice of changes in work environment, plan of work or performance expectations on an on-going basis. These conversations can and should be initiated by either party as needs arise.

It is expected that the supervisor will observe the employee in the performance of his or her job responsibilities annually.

CLIENTELE AND PEER INPUT

The peer and client input process will be conducted for all agents, every third year, beginning with the appraisal for the 2006 calendar year.

Peers and clients can provide additional perspectives on an employee's performance, especially when they represent the diverse community and roles in which an agent works. Each employee and their supervisor will jointly develop a list of ten clients and peers from whom to solicit input. Contacts selected should be relevant to the performance year being evaluated, represent the diversity of the individual's position and be capable of providing a variety of perspectives.

Guidelines for selecting contacts:

For Agents: Individuals who have worked with the employee in a collaborative or partnership role, regional or university specialists, clients who have participated in educational activities, peers with similar job responsibilities, members of an Extension team(s) on which the employee serves, advisory group members, etc.

For County/Area Directors and others in Administrative Roles: Same as the agent list above with the addition of: a county liaison (commissioner or county supervisor), member of the staff supervised, chair or member of the local advisory committee, etc.

While joint agreement on each of the ten names is preferred, it is not required. The employee will provide the supervisor with names and contact information as needed. The supervisor can add, subtract, or replace names provided by the employee to get a balanced array of input from clientele/peers. The supervisor will solicit input using the Extension Clientele and Peer Input Form. The form, along with a cover letter will go to each individual describing the need for input and how it will be used. The supervisor will provide the employee with a compilation of the clientele and peer input at the performance meeting.

The input can be used by both the supervisor and the employees as a means to see others' points of view, identify employee strengths and areas for improvement, as well as insights into the way the job gets done or needs to be done.

(NOTE: This process will not preclude the supervisor's authority and responsibility to solicit clientele and peer input at any time to determine on-going performance progress.)

EMPLOYEE PREPARATION FOR FORMAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

In preparing for the performance appraisal, each employee will complete the following activities:

- submit completed self-appraisal to supervisor two (2) weeks in advance:
 - assessment of benchmark achievement,
 - indication of level of accomplishment for the core area of performance,
 - documentation in support of level of accomplishment,
 - progress toward goals set at prior performance appraisal,
 - initial goals and/or plans for improvement for the next performance period, and
 - additional information as appropriate for consideration in the appraisal.

Completing the Self Appraisal

–Performance Documentation

Employees have up to five (legible) pages to summarize information for themselves and to provide information to their supervisor regarding specific efforts that address achievement in the Cores Areas of Performance. Documentation should have the Core Areas of Performance arranged in alphabetical order. For each core, the employee should provide

1. Documentation of Performance: The employee should indicate the level of individual accomplishment for the Core Area of Performance and for each of the benchmarks within the Core Area. It is expected that staff will look first at the “Meets Expectations” column to ensure they have achieved the organizational standard before moving to the right to higher levels of performance. The documentation presented should be sufficient in description, scale and/or intent to show the employee performed at the level indicated. Specific behaviors, outcomes, impacts or events should be cited where possible.

2. Report on Prior-Year Goals and/or Plans for Improvement: The employee should also include a report back on any goals developed or plans for improvement made as part of the prior year’s performance appraisal.

3. Goals and/or Plans for Improvement for the Coming Year: Employee should put some thought to a potential goal (s) for each of the CAPs for the next review period. Goals for the next performance period will be discussed and agreed upon with the supervisor at the time of the annual appraisal.

4. Additional Information: This is an opportunity for an employee to provide information about individual performance related to a particular core area not covered by the listed benchmarks. This information also needs to be considered by the supervisor and employee in the appraisal process. The information may include, but not be limited to, discussion of specific challenges encountered, extenuating circumstances, directed projects, new understandings or approaches, lessons learned and/or additional accomplishments. Supervisor and/or employee may add to this section during the performance appraisal discussion.

5. Complete the PS-1 form with overall core rating.

SUPERVISOR PREPARATION FOR PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Information Review

All of the information and documentation should relate to the employee’s performance during the prior calendar year. It is expected that the supervisor will observe the employee in the performance of his or her job responsibilities annually. In addition to reviewing and becoming familiar with the input provided by the employee, the supervisor will reference the individual’s relevant plan(s) of work, annual impact reports (both individual and team oriented), the employee’s COERS data base, the professional improvement plan and Clientele and Peer Input Forms. The supervisor may also reference the employee’s position announcement, job description, and administrative input (from Director, Assoc. and/or Asst. Director), personal observations, work samples and/or informal input (solicited or unsolicited) that are relevant to job performance. It is the supervisor’s responsibility to review this information and provide input to the employee as part of the performance appraisal process. If the supervisor has questions, needs clarification or requires additional documentation from the employee, these should be requested prior to the review.

Documentation

While it is expected the supervisor will review the benchmark documentation the employee provides, it is also expected and appropriate that the supervisor prepare information or documentation to share with an employee regarding particular benchmarks and levels of achievement. This documentation, particularly if describing performance as “Does Not Meet Expectations,” should be sufficiently descriptive in terms of behaviors, impacts, outcomes or events to show the employee performed at the level indicated. The same should be expected when a supervisor’s information indicates a higher level of performance has been achieved. In both instances, this documentation provides a basis for discussion and planning for future direction between the employee and supervisor.

Summary Supervisor Preparation

It is expected that the supervisor will observe the employee in the performance of his or her job responsibilities annually.

Approximately two months prior to review:

1. Set actual date, time and location for appraisal meeting.

Prior to review:

2. Review materials submitted by employee; request clarification and/or additional information as needed from employee.
3. Prepare and incorporate clientele and peer input.
4. Review individual's current job description, plans of work, accomplishment reports, COERS inputs, plans for improvement/goals for appraisal period (prior year's form P-1 or CAPs), and professional development plan for the prior calendar year.
5. Review additional information as available and/or appropriate.
6. Prepare information to share with employee regarding benchmark and Core Area of Performance achievement.

The supervisor should be well prepared to discuss the current year's performance, future performance, and growth opportunities with the employee during the appraisal meeting.

THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL CONFERENCE

Environment

The performance appraisal conference should take place in a private, neutral, comfortable place where there will be no interruptions.

Conducting the Appraisal Conference

Both the employee and the supervisor should work to set a tone of open, honest, interactive communication focused on employee development. The conference should include:

- review of accomplishment or progress since last appraisal period,
- review of employee performance during appraisal period,
- development of plans to improve and/or enhance employee performance in order to meet both organizational and employee goals,
- recognition of employee's strengths and contributions to the organization,
- review of programming, professional development and personal goals set for the appraisal period,
- recommended initial performance appraisal rating, and
- understanding of what happens next in the performance appraisal process.

Review of Individual Benchmark Indicators

The supervisor and the employee should keep in mind that the appraisal covers performance during the prior calendar year. Both must be as objective as possible and make decisions based on information available. The supervisor should disregard past performance ratings and concentrate on the specific performance information at hand. Ratings should be based on facts and the documentation should support the rating decision. The supervisor should also be aware of situations employee did/did not have control over.

After the supervisor introduces the Core Areas of Performance, the employee should discuss his/her own individual job performance and relevant documentation or evidence to support that rating. The supervisor should likewise provide information relevant to the Core Area of Performance. Supervisor and employee should discuss any additional information as necessary to assure understanding of the indicator, the documentation, and circumstances of the work environment. It is the supervisor's responsibility to accept the self-assessment rating or change it based on the information discussed.

The supervisor should counsel with the employee as Core Areas of Performance are discussed to recognize employee strengths, growth opportunities, future goals and areas where improvement is needed. It is also important that the supervisor and employee review and discuss any additional information to determine its relevance.

Arriving at a Core Area of Performance Rating

Once employee performance has been rated using the benchmark indicators as a guide, the supervisor will assign an overall Core Area of Performance rating based on a composite of the individual benchmark ratings and accomplishment/progress toward goals for that Core Area of Performance. The supervisor shall use professional judgement in awarding the employee the rating most reflective of his/her work. The overall documentation of performance must support the rating. Additional information, if needed, to clarify the Core Area of Performance rating should be added to the documentation.

Extension expects its employees to perform at a “Meets Expectations” level or higher. When an employee is rated as “Does Not Meet Expectations” in a benchmark, specific improvement plans must be developed by the supervisor and employee to address the need(s) identified. The supervisor shall give special consideration to new employees who have potential for growth with training and experience.

Unsatisfactory performance for any Core Area of Performance will result in an overall initial performance rating of “Does Not Meet Expectations” and requires more serious action by the supervisor. This action is described in the following section.

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Performance Summary

This is an opportunity for the supervisor to summarize an employee’s overall performance for the appraisal period. The summary should note employee’s strengths, areas of growth, as well as areas needing improvement. The summary will also include a recap of the ratings assigned for each of the Core Areas of Performance. All information should be summarized on form PS-1.

Arriving at an Overall Initial Performance Recommendation

Arriving at an overall initial performance rating is the responsibility of the supervisor. (The rating is not “final” until the Regional Director has reviewed it for consistency and fairness within the Region and either the initial rating, or a change in rating at the discretion of the Regional Director, has been approved by the Director.) This rating should reflect a composite of the Core Area of Performance ratings for the individual’s annual performance unless any Core Area is rated as “Does Not Meet” (see next paragraph). When there is evidence of an employee’s overall rating falling between two or more ratings, the supervisor must use professional judgement in awarding the employee the rating most reflective of their overall performance. The overall documentation of performance must support the rating given. Unless an emphasis is indicated, all core areas of performance will be considered of equal value in determining a performance rating, except when performance in a Core Area of Performance is rated as not meeting expectations.

Extension expects its employees to perform at a “Meets Expectations” level or higher in every Core Area of Performance. An employee receiving a “Does Not Meet Expectations” in any Core Area of Performance will receive an overall initial performance recommendation of “Does Not Meet Expectations” regardless of performance in other Core Areas. An employee receiving an overall performance score of “Does Not Meet Expectations” should be told what needs to be done to correct the situation, and needs to be given a reasonable amount of time (not to exceed 3 months) to correct their performance. The supervisor should meet with the individual at least monthly to determine if the individual’s performance is improving at an acceptable rate, and should document the progress. If the individual’s performance is not meeting expectations at the end of this process, the supervisor should initiate the process to terminate the individual’s employment. (This process is described in the Extension Employee handbook, Section 5, Pages 11 - 13.)

Signatures

Both the employee and the supervisor will sign the performance document where indicated on the last page. Signatures indicate both individuals participated in the review and are aware of and have discussed its contents. A signature does not necessarily indicate concurrence with any or all of the contents or ratings on the part of the employee.

Employee Comments

As part of the performance appraisal, the employee is invited to comment in writing. These comments, suggestions, and/or issues are added at the discretion of the employee and become part of the performance appraisal. If provided, these comments should be incorporated in the area designated on the signature page. If space is insufficient, additional comments can be attached and noted as an attachment in the “employee comments” section of the form. Once an employee has received a copy of their review from their supervisor, they have two weeks to provide comments to be included in the review.

FOLLOW-UP

Next Steps

The performance appraisal documents should then be assembled for submission. The submission consists of 1) the completed PS-1 form, and 2) the performance documentation as described on pages 6 & 7, including any additional documentation cited as part of the performance appraisal process. The employee should be provided with a copy of the performance appraisal submission, as should the immediate supervisor. The original record should be forwarded to the appropriate Regional Director’s office for review and placed in the individual employee’s personnel file.

Review Process

The Regional Director will review performance appraisals to ensure fairness and consistency. In the case of an initial recommended rating that appears unfair or inconsistent, the Regional Director and appropriate supervisor will discuss relevant issues and recommend changes in the initial rating, as appropriate. The Regional Director may elect to request additional information as necessary.

The recommended ratings will then be forwarded to the Director of Extension for final review. If there are issues with any of the recommended ratings, the Director and appropriate Regional Director will review those issues and make rating changes as needed.

Notification of Final Rating

Once the Extension Director has approved the ratings, Regional Directors will notify all employees of their final performance rating. This notification will be in written form. The letter will note the final rating approved and provide reason(s) for a change in rating if one occurred. The employee’s supervisor will receive a copy of the letter. A copy of the letter will also be attached to the employee’s performance appraisal on file in the Regional Director’s office.

Appeal Process

If an employee feels he/she has not been treated fairly and/or consistently in regard to performance appraisal, it is highly recommended she/he re-contact the immediate supervisor in an effort to work through any areas of disagreement, to gain additional information or to clarify concerns. If this process does not yield a satisfactory outcome or the employee decides to forego a second meeting with the supervisor, the employee has the option of appeal through either the Extension or Colorado State University systems. The specific process chosen should reflect the administrative channel for that employee. Regardless of the desired process, initial steps must be initiated within twenty-five (25) days of the performance appraisal conference or notification of the final performance rating. Employees may choose one of the following three (3) appeal processes. Employees should check to make sure they have the most current version/information available concerning an appeal process and its deadlines.

- Informal Extension Process: Within twenty-five (25) days of the initial performance appraisal conference or of receiving the final performance appraisal rating, the employee contacts an ombudsperson as an objective third party. This person can provide feedback and advice to the employee with the hopes of resolving the conflict at this point. If the conflict cannot be resolved, the ombudsperson will act as an objective third party and guide the process, as he/she deems appropriate. If desired, the employee may request a second interview with the supervisor to resolve the discrepancy. If still not resolved, the employee has the option of taking the appeal through the formal Extension or Colorado State University appeals processes.

- Formal Extension Process: The employee is responsible for submitting specific information in writing concerning items with which he/she disagrees to the supervisor and to the supervisor's supervisor within twenty-five (25) days of the initial performance appraisal or of receiving the final performance appraisal rating, or within three days of the failure of the informal process to resolve the conflict. Within fifteen working days of receipt, the reviewing supervisor will notify the employee in writing of the appeal decision. This notification will include specific reasons for concurrence or non-concurrence with the appeal. If the answer is not satisfactory to the employee, he/she may, within fifteen working days of receipt, appeal in writing to the supervisor's supervisor. Within fifteen working days of receipt, the supervisor's supervisor will notify the employee of the decision of the appeal. This notification will include specific reasons for concurrence or non-concurrence with the appeal. If the answer is still not satisfactory to the employee, he/she may, within five working days of receipt, appeal in writing to the director of Extension. Within fifteen working days of receipt of the appeal, the Director will notify the employee in writing of the decision regarding the appeal. This notification will include specific reasons for the decision. If still unsatisfied, the employee has the final option of filing a formal appeal through the Colorado State University system. This process is detailed in Section K of the Academic Faculty and Administrative Professional Staff Manual.

- Colorado State University Appeal Process: Employee should refer to Section K of the Academic Faculty and Administrative Professional Staff Manual for details. Check the website at <http://facultycouncil.colostate.edu/files/manual/sectionk.htm> to ensure you have the most current version of this process.

Please note: Filing an appeal under any of the above shall not preclude the filing of an appeal/complaint under any other applicable procedure if the employee alleges that illegal discrimination has occurred.

CONCLUSION

The Extension performance appraisal process is intended to provide fair, consistent review and appraisal of each employee's performance. The performance appraisal process is designed to improve an employee's job performance through identification of personal and professional strengths and areas that need improvement. Performance appraisal should be an on-going process. Open, honest communication should occur between employee and supervisor on a regular basis throughout the year. The annual performance appraisal is meant to be a compilation or summary of performance data already reviewed and discussed throughout the appraisal period. Annual appraisal should not be a time for surprises. Appraisals are conducted to enhance staff development as well as to promote accomplishment of the educational mission of Extension.

Recommendations on improving the performance appraisal system are always encouraged. Recommendations can be made to supervisors, Regional Directors, the Director of Operations or the Director of Extension.

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