

Performance Evaluations

1001.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office performance evaluation system.

1001.2 POLICY

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office shall use a performance evaluation system to measure, document and recognize work performance. The performance evaluation will serve as an objective guide for the recognition of good work and the development of a process for improvement.

The Office evaluates employees in a non-discriminatory manner based upon job-related factors specific to the employee's position, without regard to actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and any other classification or status protected by law.

All Deputy Sheriffs/Correctional Officers at the rank of Captain and below shall be rated annually as described in this policy. Professional staff employees will be evaluated as outlined in the St. Mary's County Manual of Personnel Policies and Procedures.

1001.3 TYPES OF EVALUATIONS

The Office shall use the following types of evaluations:

Quarterly - An evaluation completed quarterly for newly hired Deputy Sheriffs/Correctional Officers who have completed the academy and FTO program (entrance level probationary employees), and all newly promoted Sergeants, Lieutenants and Captains. Upon completion of the probationary period, the final Quarterly Evaluation Report will serve as the employee's Release from Probation Report.

Annual - An evaluation completed annually by the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees who have been promoted should be evaluated as established by the Human Resources Department or minimally, on the anniversary of the date of the last promotion.

When an employee transfers to a different assignment in the middle of an evaluation period and less than six months has transpired since the transfer, the evaluation should be completed by the current supervisor with input from the previous supervisor.

Special - An evaluation that may be completed at any time the supervisor and Division Commander or the authorized designee determine an evaluation is necessary to address less than standard performance. The evaluation may include a plan for follow-up action (e.g., performance improvement plan (PIP), remedial training, retraining). The special evaluation may be for a 90-day period. Every 30 days a special evaluation will be completed and include a supervisor and employee conference. This will be accomplished through the use of the Special Evaluation Report.

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1001.3.1 RATINGS

When completing an evaluation, the supervisor will identify the rating category that best describes the employee's performance. The definition of each rating category is as follows:

Outstanding/Exemplary Performance - Performance exceeds highest expectations in most areas. Demonstrated the highest degree/level of competency. This category is reserved for the very highest level of performance and must be supported by written documentation (i.e. police reports, arrests, counseling, letters of recognition, awards, etc.) during the rating period. Awarding a 9-10 for outstanding/exemplary work should be rare and must be accompanied by such documentation.

Exceeds standards - Performance regularly exceeds expectations. Demonstrates motivation and independence. Produces work of high quality. Will accept additional responsibility. Requires minimum supervision. The awarding of Exceeds Standards should be reserved for those employees who consistently exceed performance standards.

Meets standards - Performance meets acceptable standards. Does a satisfactory job in all areas of responsibilities. Shows acceptable levels of motivation and independence. Required average levels of supervision.

Below Standards - Marginal performance. Areas exist that need to be developed to meet acceptable standards. May not show enough motivation or ability to accept responsibilities or improve performance. Needs close monitoring and continued supervision..

Poor/Unacceptable - Performance does not meet standards. Inferior performance. Demonstrates unacceptable levels of motivation, reliability, and ability. Performance requires immediate attention and improvement. Requires constant supervision. There must be evidence of interim supervisory counseling without responsive improvement using the quarterly or special evaluation. All ratings of 0-1 Poor/ Unacceptable work will be documented and attached.

Supervisor comments will be included in the evaluation to document the employee's strengths, weaknesses and requirements for improvement. Any job dimension rating marked as unsatisfactory or outstanding shall be substantiated with supervisor comments.

For procedures related to Ratings, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [Rating Categories and Factors](#)

1001.3.2 PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP) / SPECIAL EVALUATION REPORT

Professional Staff employees who receive an unsatisfactory rating may be subject to being placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The PIP shall delineate areas that need improvement, any improvement measures and a timetable in which to demonstrate improvement. The issuing supervisor shall meet with the employee to review his/her performance and the status of the PIP at least monthly. Prior to giving the PIP to the employee, the supervisor must send it to their Division Commander through the chain of command. The Human Resources Manager will make notification to the County Human Resources Director for any Professional Staff members.

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Deputies/Correctional Officers who receive an unsatisfactory rating may be subject to being placed on Special Evaluation Reporting.

For procedures related to Special Evaluations, see the [St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: 1009.5 Special Evaluation Report](#)

1001.3.3 USES OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION RESULTS

- (a) Performance evaluation rating results may be used in the following instances:
 - 1. Granting or denying merit increases for those employees whose merit increases are dependent on the performance evaluation;
 - 2. Consideration for transfer to or from a division, section or unit, or special assignment;
 - 3. Consideration for promotion to DFC and/or corporal, and/or retention or termination.
- (b) An employee may be denied transfer or assignment to a specialized unit if he/she does not receive a "meets standards" rating or better in all factors as documented in the employee's last two (2) performance evaluations.
- (c) An employee may not be released from probation if he/she does not receive a "meets standards" rating or better on their final quarterly report.

1001.4 EVALUATION PROCESS

Supervisors should meet with the employees they supervise at the beginning of the evaluation period to discuss expectations and establish performance standards. Each supervisor should discuss the tasks of the positions, standards of expected performance and the evaluation criteria with each employee.

Performance evaluations cover a specific period of time and should be based upon documented performance dimensions that are applicable to the duties and authorities granted to the employee during that period. Evaluations should be completed by each employee's immediate supervisor. Other supervisors directly familiar with the employee's performance during the rating period should be consulted by the evaluating supervisor for input.

Assessment of an employee's job performance is an ongoing process. Continued coaching and feedback provides supervisors and employees with opportunities to correct performance issues as they arise and to acknowledge good work. Periodic discussions with the employee during the course of the evaluation period are encouraged. Supervisors should document all discussions in the prescribed manner.

Non-probationary employees demonstrating substandard performance shall be notified in writing of such performance as soon as possible in order to have an opportunity to remediate the issues. Such notification should occur at the earliest opportunity.

All supervisors shall receive training on performance evaluations within one year of a supervisory appointment.

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For procedures related to Evaluation Process, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [Probation](#); [Special Evaluation Report](#); [Procedures for the Quarterly Evaluation](#); [Professional Staff Employees](#); and [Employee Counseling](#)

1001.5 EVALUATION FREQUENCY

Supervisors shall ensure that all employees they supervise are evaluated at least once every year. The annual evaluation period is from the 1st of July until the 30th of June the following year.

Those employees who are required to successfully complete a probationary period should be evaluated quarterly. Evaluations will be completed by the employee's immediate supervisor no later than 15 days after the evaluation period end date, and forwarded through the chain of command to the Division Commander no later than the 25 days after the evaluation period end date.

1001.6 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CONFERENCE

When the supervisor has completed his/her evaluation, a private discussion of the evaluation should be scheduled with the employee. The supervisor should discuss the evaluation ratings and respond to any questions the employee may have. The supervisor should provide relevant counseling regarding advancement, specialty positions and training opportunities. Any performance areas in need of improvement and goals for reaching the expected level of performance should be identified and discussed. If the employee has reasonable objections to any of the ratings, the supervisor may make appropriate adjustments to the evaluation. The reason for such adjustments shall be documented.

Employees may write comments in the identified Notes section of the evaluation. The supervisor and employee will "Accept" the evaluation to forward it to Human Resources for processing.

For procedures related to Evaluation Interview, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [Performance Evaluations](#) and [Procedures](#)

1001.6.1 DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT AFFIRMATION

At the time of each employee's evaluation, the supervisor shall ensure access to and review the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Discriminatory Harassment Policy with the employee. The supervisor will ask the employee if he/she acknowledges the following:

- (a) The employee understands the harassment and discrimination policies.
- (b) The employee has had all questions regarding the policies sufficiently addressed.
- (c) The employee knows how to report alleged harassment and discrimination policy violations.

1001.7 APPEAL

An employee who disagrees with his/her evaluation may provide a formal written response that will be attached to the evaluation, or may request an appeal.

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For procedures related to Appeal, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [Appeal Process](#)

1001.8 RETENTION AND DISTRIBUTION

For deputies/Correctional Officers, the original performance evaluation and any original correspondence related to an appeal shall be maintained by the Office in accordance with the Personnel Records Policy.

A copy of the evaluation and any documentation of a related appeal shall be provided to the employee. The PO3 form is forwarded to the St. Mary's County Human Resources Department.

For professional staff, the original performance evaluation shall be forwarded to the St. Mary's County Human Resources Department.