

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

15.1 ADMINISTRATION

PHILOSOPHY: In order to maximize efficiency, increase productivity, and provide feedback to employees, the Lakewood Police Department utilizes a written performance review system for all department employees. The objectives of the performance review system are:

- Foster fair and impartial personnel decisions
- Maintain and improve performance
- Provide a medium for personnel counseling
- Facilitate proper decision-making regarding probationary employees
- Identify training needs
- Provide an objective and fair means for recognition and measurement of individual performance in accordance with prescribed guidelines

15.1.1 Performance Review System (City Policy 400-06)

Principle: In an effort to provide an objective and fair performance review system it is necessary to create clear and specific guidelines. It is the preparation, discussion, analysis, and counseling that are involved in the review system that is the true value to the employee, supervisor, and department.

Practice:

- A. Measurement Definitions: (See Supervisor's Information Sheet)
- B. Procedures for Completing Performance Review Forms: (See City Policy 400-06)
- C. Rater Responsibilities: The rater on any performance review has the responsibility to adhere to the following procedures.
 1. Provide supervision and feedback to the employee on an ongoing basis.
 2. Advise the employee as soon as possible of deficiencies and of methods to correct the deficiencies.
 3. Document performance on an ongoing basis in the employee's supervisory performance file.
 4. Complete the Performance Review in a timely manner. If a rating of "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory" is anticipated, the rater must notify the employee in writing at least ninety days in advance of the review, to allow the employee the opportunity to improve their performance before the review is completed.
- D. Rater Training: Supervisors responsible for preparing employee reviews should receive training designed to introduce and reinforce effective performance management practices.

15.1.2 Annual Performance Reviews

Practice: Each non-probationary employee and non-probationary reserve officer shall receive an annual Performance Review. The reviews are completed based on the anniversary of the employee's date of hire, date of promotion to a new civil service rank, or date of graduation from the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA).

15.1.3 Probationary Employees

Practice: Employees on probation, including reserve officers, receive quarterly Performance Reviews. Entry level police officers are evaluated during, and immediately upon completion of, the Police Training Officer program. These reviews replace the three month Performance Review. Probationary entry level police officers are subsequently evaluated by Performance Review at six months, nine months, and one year, based upon their graduation date from the BLEA.

15.1.4 Rating Criteria

Practice: Criteria used for performance reviews have been developed to meet the expectations of the City of Lakewood staff throughout the organization. Job specific indicators have been determined by the Police Department for personnel assigned to the various units and sections.

15.1.5 Performance Review System

- A. The specific rating period is listed on the first page of the Performance Review form. Performance of the employee outside the rating period will be excluded from the performance review.
- B. Explanatory comments required when performance ratings are unsatisfactory or superior
- C. Each performance review report is reviewed and signed by the rater's supervisor
- D. Employees and reserves will be given the opportunity to sign and make written comments to supplement the completed performance review report.
- E. Employees and reserves are provided a copy of the review report
- F. Review Process: If an employee does not agree with his/her Performance Review and wishes to contest it, he/she shall meet with the supervisor who prepared the review. Areas of contention will be discussed and either the employee or the supervisor may add supplemental documentation to the Performance Review. If areas of contention still exist, additional personnel in the employee's chain of command may meet and discuss the review with any or all of the involved parties. Supplemental documentation may be attached to the performance review during any stage of review. Any supplemental documentation must be reviewed with the employee being appraised.
- G. Retention of Performance Reviews: All performance reviews shall be maintained for the entire duration of an employee's tenure and for a period of six years following separation of the employee with the Lakewood Police Department.
 1. The retention of performance reviews allows for the following uses:
 - a. To assist in providing information for decision-making processes of the department such as special assignments, promotions, transfers, terminations and tracking.
 - b. To be utilized to determine training needs for the department and individuals.
 - c. To be used along with other information in the Career Development Program.
 - d. To determine the department's effectiveness.
 - e. To assist in making re-employment or disciplinary decisions.
 - f. To document performance level.

15.1.6 Notification of Unsatisfactory Performance

Practice: Employees shall receive written notification of "Needs Improvement" performance in a major rating category when it has been identified. The written notification will inform the employee of the performance category where performance is needs improvement, and provide specific guidance regarding actions to be taken in order to improve performance. Notification will take place a minimum of ninety days before the annual review is completed, unless the needs improvement behavior occurs during the last ninety days of the rating period, in which case notification will be made as soon as practicable once it has been identified. A copy of the written notification provided shall be included in both the employee's personnel and supervisory performance files.

15.1.7 Annual Employee Performance Counseling

Principle: The one-on-one counseling provided by supervisors to employees can be fundamental to the development and success of individuals. Although this type of support should be offered on a continuous basis, supervisors will be expected to counsel each employee in the below listed areas at the conclusion of the review period.

- A. The results of the performance review.
- B. Expectations and goals for the next review period and rating criteria.
- C. Career counseling relative to such topics as advancement, specialization, or training appropriate for the employee's position.

15.1.8 Review of Raters

Principle: All performance reviews must be approved by each level of command in an employee's chain of command. One of the purposes of this procedure is to provide an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness and fairness of the rater. When a higher-ranking employee observes a deficiency in the rater's use of the performance review process, the rater shall be provided additional training. The observations may be included in the supervisor's Performance Review.

15.1.9 Early Warning System

Principle: The Lakewood Police Department recognizes that to maintain an intricate environment of teamwork and accountability, systems must be in place to support members when facets of the profession challenge them and they may need additional assistance or intervention in meeting department expectations. The purpose of the early warning system is to provide early, identifiable negative performance indicators that will assist supervisors and administrators in identifying an employee whose performance may need review with potential corrective action. This system is a tool for monitoring performance and is NOT a disciplinary process and the result of the Early Warning System (EWS) is not considered disciplinary action. The EWS Board consists of the PSS Sergeant, a Lieutenant and the Assistant Chief. The employee's first level supervisor works directly with the board once convened.

Practice:

- A. Threshold Indicator: Behavior considered to be a threshold indicator may indicate "out of ordinary" behavior patterns and will be evaluated, by the EWS Board, for the need to initiate corrective action. The threshold indicator is based on department norms, but reaching the threshold does not in and of itself indicate "out of ordinary" behavior.
 - 1. Three complaints of a similar nature in a six month period.
 - 2. Two preventable collisions in a six month period.
 - 3. Failure to show up for training or court three times in a twelve month period.
 - 4. More than eight Force Response Reports in a six month period.
 - 5. Any combination of four incidents from 1-3 in a twelve month period.

- B. Agency Reporting Requirements: Supervisors and the Professional Standards Section (PSS) work together to monitor the threshold indicators. Whenever a supervisor becomes aware that one of his/her employees has reached a threshold indicator, the supervisor will notify the EWS Board to determine if corrective actions are necessary. The Professional Standards Section will monitor administrative investigations completed in compliance with Chapter 22 of this manual to identify if an employee may have reached a threshold indicator. The Professional Standards Section will provide notification to the employee's supervisor.
- C. Early Warning System Annual Evaluation: The EWS Board will conduct an annual evaluation of the Early Warning System and review it for effectiveness.
- D. Role of Supervisors:
 - 1. First level supervisors may initiate corrective action based on any combination of behavior that raises concern for employee welfare and/or performance. They will notify the second level supervisor of the referral and assist as needed. Referral to the EWS board by the employee's supervisor may be for:
 - a. Negative change in performance
 - b. Experiencing personal or professional traumatic incident.
 - c. Negative changes in behavior.
- E. If intervention is needed the following are possible actions:
 - 1. Referral to Peer Support
 - 2. Coaching by a supervisor
 - 3. Development of a skill specific training schedule
 - 4. Referral to the city's Employee Assistance Program (EAP)