People First Performance Plan Process
Frequently Asked Questions

Suggested Audience:
All employees

Details:
The following questions and answers are intended to assist each agency with the performance plan process in the People First system.

1. **Does work information (e.g., work email address, reporting relationships, etc.) contained in the People First system impact the performance plan process?**

   Yes. The work information contained in People First is used to drive key activities. The data must be accurate in People First in order for the employee and manager to complete the performance plan process effectively. For example, the participant's work email address is used to send automatic emails when the participant needs to complete a performance activity.

2. **Are all performance plans processed in People First?**

   No. Only annual, probationary and performance improvement plans are processed using the People First Performance & Talent Management system. Other agency-specific performance plans are not included. For example, interim and trainee plans, and special recognition plans are handled outside of People First.

3. **Is there a formal process for midpoint performance plans in People First?**

   No. The performance plan in the system does not include a formal midpoint performance evaluation process. However, managers are expected to meet with and provide constant feedback to employees throughout the evaluation plan period.

4. **Does the performance plan in People First include Select Exempt Service (SES) and Senior Management Service (SMS) employees?**

   Yes. In addition to Career Service (CS) employees, the standard performance plan process includes all SES and SMS employees (except agency heads). There is not a separate performance plan for SES or SMS employees.

5. **Are agency heads, who do not report to anyone other than the Governor, Cabinet or other type of board or committee, required to have a performance plan completed in People First?**

   No. These employees are not put into a performance plan in People First; however, these employees have access as a manager and/or second-level manager.

6. **Does the performance plan in People First system include Other Personal Services (OPS) employees?**

   No. OPS employees are not included.

7. **Can overlapped employees and employees sharing a position (multiple employees in one position) use the performance plan in the People First system?**

   Yes. Employees who are overlapped in one position and employees sharing a position can use the performance plan in the same manner as all other employees.

8. **Can overlapped managers and managers sharing a position (multiple managers or second-level managers in one position) use the performance plan system?**

   Yes. When a manager or second-level manager position is overlapped, the manager's performance plan activities will be assigned to only one manager. If the other manager is responsible for completing the performance plan activities, the manager should contact his or her human resource office to have proxy access established for the other manager.

9. **Is there a standard annual performance plan period?**

   Yes. The standard statewide performance plan period is July 1 to June 30.

10. **Are there standard performance plan periods for probationary employees in the performance management system?**

    Yes. Employees appointed to probationary status will be placed in a probationary performance plan. The plan will contain the probationary period dates from the Appointment Status Details screen in People First. All steps in the process must be completed prior to the probationary status expiration date. Managers will receive an email notification from the system to complete the probationary performance plan.

    NOTE: The status expiration date is pulled from the Appointment Status Details screen in People First. This date must be accurate in the People First system in order for the employee's probationary performance plan period to be correctly assigned in the probationary performance plan.

11. **Are all steps within the performance plan process completed in People First?**

    No. While both the performance expectations setting and performance evaluation activities are completed in People First, managers are still responsible for discussing the employee's job performance with the employee throughout the year, including the official employee evaluation. The use of an electronic system does not remove a manager's responsibility to conduct all performance activities.

12. **Are position descriptions captured in the Performance & Talent Management system?**

    No. While position descriptions should always be reviewed and updated, if necessary, as part of the performance plan process, position descriptions are not stored or maintained in the Performance & Talent Management system.

13. **Do participants receive an electronic notification when an action is required during the annual and probationary performance plan processes?**

    Yes. System-generated emails are sent to the manager, second-level manager and employee when action is required. The work email address in People First is used for all email notifications related to the performance expectations setting and evaluation activities. Additionally, a task due will appear in the To Do tile on the Performance & Talent Management home page in People First. **Consequently, it's critical that work email addresses are accurately and timely maintained in People First to ensure that participants are notified when action is needed**.

NOTE: Notifications are sent to the manager, reviewer and/or employee only when the work email address is accurately maintained in People First. Your agency's current communication process must be utilized for employees without computer access and for employees whose email address is not accurate in People First.

14. What steps are included in the performance expectations setting process?
- Step 1: Manager reviews, updates and creates the employee's performance expectations.
- Step 2: Manager discusses the performance expectations with the employee.
- Step 3: Manager sends the performance expectations to the employee.
- Step 4: Employee acknowledges receipt of the performance expectations.

15. Do agencies have the ability to assign common performance expectations to all employees in the agency?
Yes. Performance expectations can be assigned to all employees prior to the beginning of each performance plan period. These types of performance expectations are referred to as agency performance expectations.

16. Can performance expectations be assigned to specific employee groups other than all employees in the agency, such as by the broadband code, organization code, etc.?
No. Agency performance expectations can be assigned only to all employees in the agency.

17. Can changes be made to agency performance expectations during the performance plan year?
Yes. Agency performance expectations are determined prior to moving employees into the performance plan and are pre-populated for the manager when setting expectations for each employee. However, managers will have update access to agency expectations but should only make updates if directed by your agency's executive team. Once the expectations are acknowledged and the performance plan period has started, updates to the agency performance expectations will require the agency to conduct a close-out evaluation on **all** employees. At that point, the agency's managers would establish new performance expectations with their employees.

Prior to the start of each annual performance plan period, agencies have the opportunity to provide new or revised agency performance expectations. The designated human resource staff will be responsible for reviewing agency performance expectations and providing updates to the People First team prior to the new performance plan's start date.

18. Can job-specific performance expectations be added to the employee's individual performance plan?
Yes. During the performance expectations setting process, the employee's manager should add job-specific performance expectations.

19. Does the second-level manager have the ability to update or add performance expectations to an employee's performance plan?
No. In order for second-level managers to have access to update or add performance expectations, in the event that the manager is unable to complete this step, the second-level manager would have to complete the step through proxy access for the manager. Proxy access,

other than a manager assigning access to their direct reports, must be assigned by agency HR staff or by the People First Service Center.

20. Can performance expectations be changed after the employee has acknowledged receipt?

No. Once the employee acknowledges the expectations, the manager can no longer make updates. If a situation occurs that requires individual performance expectations to change during the performance plan period, the manager will be required to close out the evaluation and set new expectations.

21. Do human resource staff have the ability to update or add performance expectations to an employee's performance plan?

No. Agency human resource staff do not have direct access to update performance expectations. In the event that human resource staff need this access, they must proxy as the manager.

22. Is there a required number of performance expectations for each performance plan?

No. There is no system requirement for a specific number of performance expectations. If there is an agency requirement, this must be addressed through agency policy and during agency-provided training.

23. Can the agency limit the number of performance expectations a manager can create for a performance plan?

No. There is no system requirement for a specific number of performance expectations. If there is an agency requirement, this must be addressed through agency policy and during agency-provided training.

24. Will performance expectations that are set by the manager require approval before they are sent to the employee for acknowledgment?

No. There is no approval process for the second-level manager for setting performance expectations.

25. Will job-specific performance expectations be copied from one performance plan period to the next performance plan period?

Yes. Job-specific expectations from the previous year's performance plan will be systematically (automatically) copied to the new performance plan at the beginning of each plan year so long as the employee continues to hold the same position. The manager will then be able to appropriately edit/delete the job-specific expectations prior to sending them to the employee for acknowledgement. Agency performance expectations will also be systematically populated at the beginning of each plan year.

26. Are job-specific performance expectations displayed in a particular order?

Yes. Job-specific expectations are displayed in the order in which they are entered (1.1, 1.2, etc.) and cannot be reordered after they are entered. Agency-specific performance expectations will be displayed after all job-specific expectations and will be numbered as follows: 2.1, 2.2, etc.

27. What steps are included in the performance evaluation process?

- Step 1: Manager documents the employee's job performance throughout the performance   plan period (use of the system for this step is optional).
- Step 2: Manager completes the employee's performance evaluation.
- Step 3: Second-level manager completes the review of the employee's performance evaluation.
- Step 4: Manager sends the performance evaluation to the employee to acknowledge receipt.
- Step 5: Employee acknowledges receipt of the performance evaluation, completing the performance plan process.

28. Is the manager and second-level manager systematically assigned in the performance plan process?

Yes. Both the manager and second-level manager are assigned based on the reporting relationships in People First. The manager (rater) is the supervisor of the employee, and the second-level manager (reviewer) is the supervisor of the rater based on the reporting relationships in People First.

29. Is the manager and second-level manager systematically assigned if one of the positions is vacated?

Yes. If either the manager (rater) or second-level manager (reviewer) position becomes vacant (or both positions), the next level manager is assigned as the rater. For example, if the manager's position is vacated, the second-level manager will become the rater and the third-level manager will become the reviewer. If the vacancy occurs during the performance plan period, any information previously entered on the evaluation will be available to the new manager.

30. Can the manager or second-level manager be assigned to a different employee?

Yes. When a manager or second-level manager task is due for a specific employee, it can be assigned to another employee by granting proxy access. Once the proxy access is granted, the employee will be able to complete performance plan activities on behalf of the manager/second-level manager.

NOTE: Granting proxy access is addressed in the Performance Plan User Guide for Managers.

31. Is it appropriate for a manager or second-level manager to reassign a task because he or she does not want to complete the task?

No. Each manager must use professional judgment when deciding to reassign a task to another employee. Generally, the employee's current manager should complete the evaluation and not reassign the responsibility. In certain situations, assigning proxy access may be appropriate— for example, when the manager is on extended leave or the employee worked on a special project under a different manager. Each agency should provide guidance to managers on when it's appropriate to use proxy access.

32. Once the manager assigns proxy access to a task, will the manager continue to have access to complete the task?

Yes. Both the manager and the employee who has been assigned proxy access will have access to complete the task.

33. Is the standard 5-point rating scale used in the performance plan process?

Yes. The rating scale provided in Rule 60L-35, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) is used.

34. Are comments required for all performance expectation ratings?

Yes. The system will require comments for each expectation including ratings of 3 and N (None Given). Agencies should provide guidance to managers if agency policy does not require comments for ratings of 3.

35. Are ratings of N – None Given included in the average for the Overall Rating score of an employee?

No. Only the numerical ratings of 1 through 5 are included in the Overall Rating score for the employee.

36. Do managers have the ability to complete annual performance evaluations once the standard performance plan period has ended?

Yes. In accordance with Rule 60L-35 003(2)(b), F.A.C., managers have 60 days from the end of the annual performance plan period to complete performance evaluations.

37. Do managers have the ability to update an evaluation after the 60-day period following the end of the standard performance plan period?

No. Following the 60-day period, the performance plan is administratively closed, and the manager will no longer have access to update the performance plan. All steps of the performance plan process, including employee acknowledgement, must be completed within the 60-day period.

38. Does the second-level manager have access to change the manager's evaluation of the employee during the review step?

No. During the review step, the second-level manager can view the performance plan and provide overall comments on the employee's performance but is not able to change the manager's scores or comments, pursuant to Rule 60L-35.003(e), F.A.C.

39. Can the manager complete the performance plan process if the employee is unable to or refuses to acknowledge receipt of the performance expectations or performance evaluation?

Yes. If the employee is unable to acknowledge receipt or refuses to acknowledge receipt, the manager has the ability to complete the performance plan, in accordance with Rules 60L-35.003 (7) and (8), F.A.C. However, the manager will be required to add comments explaining why he or she is completing the process for the employee. This should take place only when the employee is unable or refuses to acknowledge receipt.

40. Can the employee add comments to the performance plan?

Yes. Once the performance evaluation is sent to the employee for acknowledgement, the employee has the opportunity to include comments prior to acknowledging receipt of the completed performance plan, pursuant to Rule 60L-35.003(7), F.A.C.

41. Is the manager notified when the employee acknowledges receipt of the performance expectations and evaluation?

Yes. Once the employee acknowledges the performance expectations, the manager will receive an email notification to begin monitoring and evaluating the employee. Once the employee has acknowledged receipt of the completed evaluation, the manager will receive an email notification to inform him or her that the evaluation is complete.

42. Does the system have the ability to include additional attachments such as Word documents or other documents?

Yes. Attachments can be added to the performance plan.

43. Can a close-out performance evaluation be completed when an employee changes positions in the same agency during the performance plan period?

Yes. If a close-out evaluation is conducted, it must be completed prior to the employee's last day in the position. Otherwise, the performance plan will be administratively closed. When appointment actions of original, promotion, demotion and reassignment are completed, new performance expectations must be created for the employee. Lateral appointment actions do not require a close-out performance evaluation.

44. Can a close-out performance evaluation be completed when an employee changes agencies during the performance plan period?

Yes. A close-out evaluation should be completed prior to the employee exiting the agency so that the employee has the opportunity to acknowledge receipt of the evaluation. Once the appointment PAR is completed, the employee is placed in the appropriate performance plan at the new agency.

45. Is a close-out performance evaluation required when an employee's supervisor changes during the performance plan period?

No. If the employee's supervisor changes but the employee remains in the same position, a close-out performance evaluation is not required. However, agency human resource staff will have to reassign the employee's evaluation to the new manager.

46. Are agencies required to print and keep a hard copy of the performance plan in the employee's personnel file?

No. Many paper transactional documents that agencies historically maintained in a traditional personnel file for pay, appointment, status and other employee actions (e.g., performance evaluations) are being rendered obsolete by the automation of numerous human resource processes in the People First system. Consequently, the electronic version of the performance plan that resides in People First is the official (master) record of completed performance plans for all Career Service, Select Exempt Service and Senior Management Service employees.

However, the system allows a hard copy of the completed performance plan to be printed so that the manager can discuss it with employees who do not have computer access. This

function also allows all employees to print and retain an administratively convenient copy, if desired. In addition, the ability to print a hard copy allows agencies to respond to public record inquiries in which the employee's completed performance plans have been specifically requested.

Please note that managers will still complete the performance plan process using the system, even if the employee does not have access to a computer. In cases in which an employee cannot electronically acknowledge receipt of the completed performance evaluation, the manager will be responsible (and accountable) for noting in the system that the completed performance evaluation was discussed with the employee.

47. Do employees have access to view previous performance plans completed in People First?

Yes. Active employees have access to all performance plans completed in People First on or after July 1, 2013. To access plans completed for the periods of 2016 – 2017 and beyond, employees should select the My Information link from the Performance & Talent Management home page. To access completed performance plans between the periods of 2013 and 2016, employees should select their Talent Profile on the My Information tile from the Performance & Talent Management home page.

48. What role does human resource staff have in the performance plan process?

Human resource staff (A, H, and X security role codes) are responsible for providing policy guidance to agency employees and ensuring that all work units within the agency are completing performance processes (oversight) in a timely manner. Additional access is available to human resource staff to view performance information statewide. They also have administrative access to complete administrative tasks when required, such as reopening requests, assigning proxy access, reassigning performance activities to a new user or completing tasks on behalf of a user.

49. Is training provided for the performance management system?

Yes. In addition to the multiple training sessions offered to human resource staff by the Department of Management Services, training materials for managers and employees, including videos, PowerPoint presentations and user guides, are available on the January 2017 Performance and Recruiting Implementation Department of Management Services, People First Team website.

50. Are agencies required to train employees and managers?

Yes. While the Department of Management Services is providing training materials and conducting training sessions for agency human resources and training staff, agencies are responsible for training their employees and managers.

51. Are reports available in the People First system for the performance plan process?

Yes. Reports are available for managers, upper-level managers (e.g., agency heads, directors) and human resource staff to monitor the performance plan process.

52. Who is responsible for each performance plan activity?

Performance Evaluation Responsibilities				
Task	HR Staff	Manager	Second-Level Manager	Employee
1 Provides performance plan training to all managers and employees	X			
2 Creates agency performance expectations to be defaulted for all employees in the agency (prior to each performance plan period)	X			
3 Creates job-specific performance expectations for employee		X		
4 Reviews performance expectations with employee		X		
5 Reviews and acknowledges receipt of performance expectations				X
6 Tracks employee performance throughout performance plan period (optional)		X		
7 Rates the employee for the performance plan period		X		
8 Reviews completed performance plan			X	
9 Discusses completed performance plan with employee		X		
10 Sends performance plan to employee for acknowledgement		X		
11 Reviews and acknowledges receipt of performance plan				X
12 Provides policy guidance to managers and employees regarding the performance plan process	X			
13 Monitors the performance process using the reporting tools in People First	X	X	X	

For People First **system-related questions**, contact the People First team at:
- PeopleFirstTalentManagement@DMS.FL.Gov

For **policy-related questions**, contact Mark Helms at Mark.Helms@DMS.FL.Gov or 850-488-8176.