

ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

Policy Type	Subject of Policy	Policy No.
Administrative	Personnel Performance Evaluation System	1012

PURPOSE: Pursuant to Act 449 of 2007, the ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF (ASD) adopts a **Merit Pay Increase System** for performance evaluation standards. The Personnel Performance Evaluation System (PPES) shall be used by all ASD departments. The objectives of the system are as follows:

- To improve communication between supervisors and subordinate staff
- To evaluate employees' performance systematically based upon performance standards
- To help determine employee training needs to assist in improved individual performance
- To assist in identifying those employees who will be considered for a **job series promotion**

To accomplish the above, the supervisor and employee **must discuss** the duty areas, and standards of performance criteria that **will be** used in the evaluation process. These elements are to be monitored by the supervisor with appropriate feedback to the employee throughout the duration of the evaluation cycle. Near the end of the cycle, utilizing appropriate data and continuous communication with the employee, the supervisor is able to effectively rate the employee's performance.

II. SCOPE: This policy applies to all employees within ASD covered under the classification provisions of Arkansas Code Annotated 21-5-201.

III. PROCEDURES:

A. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION RATING PERIOD: Standards are to be established within the first thirty- (30) days of a hire, promotion, demotion or transfer. **The final evaluation is to be submitted to the Human Resources Office no later than thirty (30) days prior to the end of the employee's evaluation cycle.** Mid-point evaluations must be completed on any employee whose performance falls below satisfactory. All other mid-points are optional except those for probationary employees. The performance evaluation rating period is described within the Procedural Guidelines.

B. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION: Measurement of employee performance during the rating period shall reflect performance based upon established standards. Formal performance evaluation shall occur no more than ninety (90) days and no less than thirty (30) days prior to the end of the employee's evaluation cycle. Performance levels are defined as follows:

1. **Unsatisfactory** – **means performance does not consistently meet management expectations. Requires more than normal guidance and direction. Improvement and/or development are necessary if the rater**

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elects to continue employment with the incumbent.

2. **Satisfactory** – means performance all or most and may occasionally exceed work objectives and management expectations. Employee demonstrates good knowledge of job duties, and assignments are accomplished effectively with normal supervisory guidance.
3. **Above Average** – means on a regular basis, performance is characterized by high quality and quantity of work that exceeds most position requirements, key objectives, and management expectations. Employee demonstrates outstanding skills and abilities, and assignments are accomplished in a highly effective manner with limited guidance and direction.
4. **Exceeds Standards** – means performance consistently exceeds position requirements and management expectations. Resourcefulness and depth of knowledge are of the highest quality. Assignments are accomplished in an exceptional manner with minimal direction and are characterized by outstanding achievements seldom accomplished within the agency. Must show documentation of Exceeds Standards. Documentation must be specific.

- C. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:** Standards shall be developed at a level that represents satisfactory job performance. However, there must also be criteria within the standard that allows the employee and supervisor to know when levels of Unsatisfactory or Exceeds Standards performance has been reached. The supervisor shall retain final authority in determining job standards.
- D. OVERALL ASSESSMENT:** If a majority of duty areas are rated as Exceeds Standards, the supervisor may give an overall performance rating of Exceeds Standards. However, if the employee rates Exceeds Standards in the majority of the duty areas but does not rate Exceeds Standards in the most important duty area(s), the supervisor is not required to give an overall rating of Exceeds Standards. An overall Exceeds Standards rating **requires the approval of the Superintendent prior to sharing the evaluation with the employee.**
- E. TRAINING:** All employees will be provided information regarding the PPES by their supervisors. It is the responsibility of all reviewing officials to ensure that all rating supervisors are trained in the PPES.
- F. RATING FORMS:** The ASD PPES is used to document duty areas, standards, and signatures. The forms are reviewed and signed at the beginning and end of the rating period. The PPES is used to provide documentation of an employee's evaluation rating to the Human Resources Office at the end of the rating period.

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- G. MONITORING:** ASD requires supervisors to monitor employee performance continuously during the evaluation period, provide periodic feedback and, if necessary, employee training.
- H. DOCUMENTATION:** All ratings of Exceeds Standards or Unsatisfactory must be justified by documentation, e.g. supervisor narrative, letters, reports, etc. Satisfactory ratings require only the submission of the rating forms.
- I. RATING PERIOD:** The rating period established for evaluations will be June 1st to May 31st each year.
- J. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY:** This policy shall be administered in a non-discriminatory manner as it relates to an individual's race, color, creed, sex, age, religion, national origin, mental or physical disability, disabled veteran, Vietnam era, veteran status or political affiliation.
- K. FAILURE TO COMPLETE AND SUBMIT ANNUAL EVALUATION:** Management or supervisory personnel who fail to complete an annual evaluation of the employees under their administrative control shall **not be eligible for merit payments** themselves. Any supervisor or manager who submits an evaluation to the Human Resources Office after the designated deadline shall be considered "fail to complete" an evaluation.
- L. APPEALS PROCESS:** Employees of ASD have 30 days to appeal the accuracy of any information on the PPES documents.
- M. PPES PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES:** Procedural guidelines for implementing the provisions of this policy are developed and maintained by the ASD Human Resources Office. Procedures shall be deemed to comply with this policy unless a procedural irregularity materially impairs an employee's substantive rights.
- IV. INITIATING SECTION/DEPARTMENT:**

Arkansas School for the Deaf Personnel Office
2606 West Markham
Little Rock, AR 72205
Telephone: (501) 603-3528 (V/TTY)

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ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM

GUIDELINES

A. Job tasks, Duties and Responsibilities

OPM develops generic specifications for each job classification which include general examples of duties which might be performed. Supervisors (raters) develop functional job descriptions with tasks to tailor the class specifications to the specific ASD functional activity. The functional job description/tasks (your primary tasks, duties and responsibilities) and performance factors are meant to guide the employee during the rating period and are not intended to address every minute of the workday. Employees are responsible for contacting their supervisors for clarification if needed. Assigned functional job tasks, duties and responsibilities may not be contested or refused.

B. Rating Employees

A rater must have the ability to determine the quality and quantity of employee work; be familiar with the duty areas to be performed by the employees to be evaluated; and be in a position to periodically observe, review and document employee job performance. An annual performance appraisal must be completed on each employee. Throughout the evaluation period, the rater should monitor performance and provide appropriate feedback to the employee. It is important that employees have the opportunity to provide input into the performance review process. **Performance evaluation ratings require prior approval and sign-off of the reviewing official before discussion with the employee.** The rater will discuss the approved PE with the employee, secure the employee's signature, and forward all original documents to the Human Resources Office.

C. Performance and Merit Levels

Performance levels are used to indicate the level of performance an employee has achieved on each performance factor. The four performance levels and merit increase percentages will be awarded to eligible employees in accordance with the merit matrix below, and compliance with the Code of Ethics and Employee Conduct Standards Policy. If the employee is a supervisor, he/she must have conducted the PEs on the employees he/she supervises within the time frames established. Merit increases are dependent upon meeting all established criteria and availability of funds.

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MERIT INCREASE MATRIX

Performance Evaluation Rating	Merit Increase as % of Annual Salary
Exceeds Standards	4.50%
Above Average	3.00%
Satisfactory	1.50%
Unsatisfactory	0.00%

D. Unsatisfactory Performance

A supervisor may recommend termination or placement of an employee on probation for all categorical ratings of less than satisfactory performance in a critical or overall rating performance factor(s). Appropriate documentation should be available to support the rating.

MERIT INCREASE PAY SYSTEM

- A. To be eligible, an employee must have continuous employment with the state in a regular full-time position for twelve months. An employee would have to have been in continuous state employment since October 1, 2006 to be eligible to receive an increase on October 1, 2007. Those employees who have not accumulated twelve months of continuous state employment by October 1, 2007 shall have their latest hire date in a regular position become their merit increase eligibility date. For example, an employee hired on December 15, 2006 will be eligible for a merit increase payment on December 15, 2007.
- B. Part-time employees in a regular salaried position that complete 2080 hours are eligible as well. Once a part-time employee reaches the 2080 hour mark, the merit increase eligibility date is established and will be re-established each time the employee reaches 2080 hours.
- C. Employees that are rehired into state employment who have not accumulated twelve months of continuous state service by October 1, 2007 shall have their latest hire date become their merit increase eligibility date. This date will then become their merit increase eligibility date for the remainder of their career with the State of Arkansas.

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- D. Employees that transfer laterally, promote, involuntarily demote, or voluntarily demote within an agency/institution or to another agency/institution will be eligible to receive an annual merit increase on their merit increase date if they have completed six months of service in the new position. The employee's performance evaluation and date of merit increase eligibility remain October 1 or the latest hire date, whichever is applicable. However, if the employee has not completed six months, merit increases will be delayed until six months of service has accumulated. This will not affect future merit increase dates.
- E. **Employees who receive a written performance-based or disciplinary reprimand during the twelve month rating period are not eligible for a merit increase.** The employee's performance evaluation and date of merit increase eligibility remain October 1 or the latest hire date, whichever is applicable.
- F. Merit increase percentages will be added to the employee's base salary. If the merit increase amount exceeds the maximum of the salary range, the merit increase or portion of the merit increase exceeding the salary range maximum will be paid in a lump sum, which will be considered salary for the purposes of retirement eligibility. Merit increases and lump sums should be processed within two pay periods of the employee's merit increase eligibility date.
- G. The employee has not been disciplined for a violation of the Code of Ethics and/or Employee Conduct Standards Policy; AND
- H. The employee has a PE score equivalent of "satisfactory" or above; and, if applicable, AND, as appropriate,
- I. The employee is a supervisor and has completed all required PE reviews and submitted them on the employees he/she supervises to the Human Resources Office in a timely manner and if the supervisor fails to complete an annual evaluation of employees under their administrative control he/she shall not be eligible for merit payments themselves.

JOB SERIES PROMOTIONS

- A. Promotions and new hires within a job series should start at an entry level classification of the job series to allow for employee progression within the pay plan itself. **Exceptions to employee placement at this level must be approved by the Office of Personnel Management upon review of detailed documentation and justification submitted by the human resources department.** To be eligible for a job series promotion, the employee must meet the established minimum qualifications of the higher level, have at least a satisfactory performance evaluation rating, and meet any other criteria established by the agency. Agency specific criteria should be submitted to the Office of Personnel Management for review and approval prior to implementation.
- B. If a promotion occurs during the performance evaluation cycle, the performance evaluation and date of merit increase eligibility will not change from October 1 or the latest hire date, whichever is applicable. However, the incumbent must

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remain in the promoted position for six months in order to be accurately evaluated before the merit increase is awarded. Promotional percentages will remain the same, 6% for a one grade promotion and 8% for a two or more grade promotion.

PROCEDURES

A. Employee

Employees should maintain records of job duties performed, recognition, training, and other accomplishments, and provide desired input to the supervisor prior to the end of their rating period.

B. Rater

Raters (supervisors) manage the performance evaluation process as follows:

1. Functional Job Description and Tasks – Supervisors must develop and review the Functional Job Description and Tasks annually (revising as appropriate) for each employee. Supervisors should consider employee questions, concerns or recommendations regarding the job description; however, the supervisor has the final authority to prescribe job duties and tasks. Employee and supervisor signatures are required to indicate understanding. The supervisor must provide a signed copy to the employee at the beginning of each rating period.
2. Performance Evaluation – Supervisors must provide the employee a copy of the appropriate “Performance Evaluation” and the Functional Job Description, at the beginning of the rating period.
3. During the rating period – Supervisors must monitor employee performance. If the rater determines an employee’s performance has fallen below satisfactory in one or more duty areas, he or she must contact the Human Resources Office to establish counseling of the employee and, if warranted, place him/her on performance probation and document the action. The rater must provide constructive feedback and encourage the employee to perform his/her best. When substantial changes in the job occur, the supervisor must promptly update the Functional Job Description/Tasks, obtain supervisory review and approval, and provide a signed copy to the employee.
4. End of the rating period. The rater must perform the following:
 - a. Schedule the review and, obtain and consider any employee performance input provided.
 - b. Accurately rate the employee’s performance on the Performance Evaluation Form, considering any employee’s performance input, contents of the supervisor’s file, and knowledge of the employee’s performance. Scores above or below satisfactory must be justified in

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- writing.
- c. Prior to any performance review with the employee, forward the completed Performance Evaluation to the reviewing official for comment and signature.
 - d. Make appropriate adjustments based on reviewing official comments.
 - e. Review the Performance Evaluation with the employee and obtain his/her signature and any comments. Also have the employee re-sign the agency's code of ethics and rules of conduct acknowledgement document.
 - f. Forward the Functional Job Description and Tasks, Performance Evaluation, and supporting documentation to the Human Resources Office.
 - g. An employee who receives an "unsatisfactory" rating on his/her performance evaluation is not eligible to receive a merit pay increase.
5. Processing Delays – As soon as a supervisor realizes that an appeal will delay submission beyond the employee's increase eligibility date, he/she must notify the Human Resources Manager. Supervisors who fail to complete a performance evaluation of an employee within the required time frame (including extensions) forfeit the next opportunity for a merit increase.
- C. Reviewing Official – The responsibilities of the reviewing official are as follows:
1. Ensure duty areas and tasks are clearly expressed, aligned with the job classification, and lead to established goals, objectives, mission, expected practices and outcomes.
 2. Ensure ratings are timely, fair, and consistent with recorded performance results. Employee comments concerning the evaluation are appropriately addressed, appeals are resolved, and documentation justifies ratings.
 3. Ensure employee concerns are appropriately addressed and any necessary appeals process is observed and resolved.

D. DOCUMENTING PERFORMANCE RESULTS AND THE EMPLOYEE FILE

- A. Observation and/or documentation of employee performance begin as soon as performance standards are established and continues throughout the evaluation period.

NOTE: Formal documentation does not have to be submitted to the Human Resources Office for a Satisfactory evaluation. However, it is still important to maintain documentation to assure that at the end of the rating period if the employee's rating is either Exceeds Standards or Unsatisfactory, which do require documentation, the supervisor will have appropriate records for that purpose.

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- B. As the date of the employee's evaluation conference approaches, the supervisor will refer to all documents used to record employee performance during the evaluation period.
- C. When employee performance is applied to the established standards, the results can be objectively measured - either standards have or have not been met. However, extenuating circumstances can prevent an employee from meeting his/her performance standards. Such circumstances should be fully documented and the employee not held accountable.
- D. An assessment of the work performed should be more than a determination as to whether or not standards were met. They should include a brief narrative that specifies how the standards were met and any other accomplishments or problems evident during the evaluation cycle.
- E. A description of performance is written in the appropriate "RESULTS" section of the PPES which applies to the standard being reviewed.
- F. Documentation and/or results of employee performance are not carried over from one rating period to another. Employees are rated on the current evaluation period, not on information from past evaluation periods.
- G. Two (2) files are required for each employee: the official file located at the Human Resources Office and the supervisor's file. Only pertinent information that supports the performance assessment given by the rating supervisor should be retained. These files must be kept available for employee review.
- H. **Monitoring/Documentation**

Through the evaluation period, the rater will review the employee's work performance according to the MOMs (Method of Monitoring) identified in the performance standards. Since monitoring provides the data by which overall performance is rated, the rater would document the results, then at the end of the evaluation period review the documentation and make an overall evaluation of the employee's performance. The notes are usually kept in the "employee file". The file will contain information that is crucial to job performance and the information will describe performance which meets, exceeds, or falls short of the satisfactory level.

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Following are some guidelines for using the employee file:

1. *Be consistent.* Keep documentation on all employees, not just a select few. Document similar situations on all employees.
2. *Document activities, not attitudes.* Write down actual behavior observed, not how you feel about it.
3. *Make the file accessible but confidential.* Allow your employees access to their individual file but maintain confidentiality from other employees.
4. *Document incidents that describe all levels of performance.* Ensure that all noteworthy activities are documented to give you a complete picture of the employee's performance, both exceptional and unsatisfactory.
5. *Be timely.* Record and discuss the activity as soon as possible after the occurrence.
6. *Be accurate.* Record only the facts; do not include hearsay information or rely on your memory. Do not include opinions. Do not put down what you hear in the coffee room.
7. *Review.* Review the incident documentation prior to the actual performance evaluation.
8. *Do not carry over employee information from one evaluation cycle to another.* In other words, rate your employees on current information, not on notes from past evaluation periods.
9. *Maintain your file.* File documentation that affects a personnel action must be maintained for several years: at least three and sometimes five years. Some class action suits require information that goes back seven years.
10. *A word to the wise from the Attorney General's Office: OVERDOCUMENT.* Keep more than what seems necessary and all information concerning salary and personnel decisions.
11. *You are encouraged to maintain two files; the official file located in the Human Resources Office, and a day-by-day supervisor's file for job performance purposes.* However, if an incident is to be mentioned in both, be sure they are consistent with each other. Legally, the supervisor's file is considered a part of the official personnel file.
12. *Do not keep files from the employee.* Files must be made available for employee review.
13. *It is recommended that you have the employee to sign the file notes (complaints, written warnings, etc).*
14. *This is not a "Gotcha!" system.* Make sure your documentation reflects the complete picture of an employee's performance. If not, you may find yourself trying to defend yourself against accusations of "case-building" on certain employees.
15. *Support documentation* will include specific incidents, instances, and work samples, commendation and complaint letters, noteworthy occurrences, certificates of completion from training programs, and certificates of

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achievement and merit.

- I. **Performance Evaluation Packet** - The total performance evaluation packet must be submitted to the Human Resources Office and retained for a minimum of three (3) years. The performance evaluation packet consists of the following:
 1. PPES
 2. Pertinent supporting documentation of Unsatisfactory and Exceeds Standards ratings
 3. Any documentation used during the evaluation period

The employee receives a copy of the PPES after all appropriate signatures are obtained.

J. APPEALS PROCESS

Employees of ASD may appeal the accuracy of any information on the PPES documents. The following is the sequence of the appeal process:

- A. To appeal, the employee must provide a written statement explaining the reasons for the appeal and attach all supporting documents. The written statement and attachments must be received by the rating supervisor within five (5) working days from the date the employee signed or refused to sign the PPES form.
- B. Utilizing the supporting documents, the supervisor must respond to and/or meet with the employee within three (3) working days of receipt of the appeal and information.
- B. Within five (5) working days of this response/meeting the rating supervisor will render a written decision to the employee.
- C. If the employee desires to appeal the rating supervisor's decision, the employee must submit a written request with all supporting documentation to the reviewing official within three (3) working days after receipt of the rating supervisor's written decision.
- D. Utilizing the supporting documents, the reviewing official will respond to

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and/or meet with the employee within three (3) working days of receipt of the appeal.

- E.** Within five (5) working days of this response/meeting the reviewing official will render a written decision to the employee.
- F.** If the employees desires to appeal the reviewing official's decision, the employee must submit a written request with all supporting documentation to the Agency Director (Superintendent) within three (3) working days after receipt of the reviewing official's written decision.
- G.** Within five (5) working days of this response/meeting the Agency Director (Superintendent) will render a written decision to the employee. This decision will be final and binding.
- H.** All appeals, written statements and documentation will be retained in the supervisor's file a minimum of three years.

NOTE: In determining the time constraints, working days refers to Monday through Friday. Any working day on which any of the involved parties are scheduled to be out of the office and thus are unavailable will not be counted. However, this out of the office schedule must have existed at the time of the original evaluation meeting with the rating supervisor and employee. Extenuating circumstances will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

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**MERIT PAY PLAN/PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
JOB STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT**

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

In the planning/implementation stage, the supervisor and employee discuss the standards that will be used to evaluate the employee's performance throughout the performance cycle.

STEP 1: Identify Job Tasks

To ensure that performance standards are job related, you must first analyze the job by breaking it down into its smallest components, called job tasks. The task statement is usually a brief description of an activity. It tells what is to be done, not how it is done. It is usually an action verb and object.

Please Note: Be sure to include all job tasks for an employee. The Human Resources Offices recommends discussing these tasks with the employee themselves. Accurate information is crucial to achieving success at this and other stages of the performance evaluation process.

STEP 2: Identify Duty Areas

As you complete your list of tasks, you will probably notice that the tasks begin to group themselves into areas with a common theme. For example, tasks dealing with decision-making may stand out. As you identify the duty areas of the position, you will also see that you are defining the major responsibilities of the position. Duty areas are the reason a position exists.

It may be more comfortable for you as a supervisor to begin the process at this step than at Step1. Please, if you begin by identifying duty areas, do not forget Step 1. If you conscientiously make a list of all of the tasks which comprise each duty area, you may find that one of the tasks listed is really important enough to be another duty area.

If you have identified more than six key duty areas, you may have defined the job too broadly. RECOMMENDATION: Each employee should have 5 duty areas.

STEP 3: Identify Performance Indicators

Performance indicators provide a link between the general duty and the specific performance standard. It is a general description of what defines successful performance of the duty area but lacks a quantitative and qualitative description of the level of acceptable performance. A performance indicator may be one or two words, usually an adverb that describes what is important in the performance of the duty area, or it may be a statement that describes what is to be done.

Performance indicators are not part of the final standard. However, the use of

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indicators can help to bridge the gap between the duty area (what is to be done) and the next step; the performance standard (how it is to be done). In order to complete the performance standard the indicator must be converted to something concrete and measurable.

STEP 4: Identify Performance Standards

The performance standard describes in specific detail what is considered the satisfactory level of performance. This description allows the rater to identify when an employee exceeds the standard or performs below the acceptable level of performance.

The Performance Evaluation Plan uses a four-level range of performance categories to rate the employee's actual performance as stated in the standards.

Although you are required to write standards only for the "satisfactory" level, if you have trouble determining what that level is, consider writing the standards for the "exceeds" and "above average" levels as well. This will help you identify and communicate your expectations for each level. It will also be helpful in explaining what the employee must do to exceed the fully satisfactory level. In addition, it will be easier to apply the rating scale to the employee's performance at the end of the evaluation cycle.

A performance standard will be:

- Measurable and observable
- Realistic in terms of the job
- Within the employee's control
- Expressed in terms of expected results

Standards can be expressed in terms of specific quantities, such as numbers or percentages, or quality measures that include accuracy, judgment, or opinion ratings. If percentages are used, it is important to identify the total universe from which they are chosen, and ensure the field will be large enough to provide an adequate sample of work performance. If a standard can be written with both a quantitative and qualitative measure, it will enable you to obtain a better overall measure of the employee's performance.

A performance standard is composed of three parts:

1. **An activity statement** that tells what is to be done. If there are guidelines or procedures that cover the activities that are to be performed, the activity statement can refer to them, or the specific tasks can be included in the statement.
2. **A qualifier** that describes the fully satisfactory level of performance. This is what the rater will use to compare the employee's actual performance against the expected performance. This is where the performance indicators are turned into something concrete and measurable, i.e. "quickly" becomes within two days of

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receipt.

3. **A method of monitoring (MOM)** that refers to how and how often the rater plans to observe the employee's work performance. The MOM is used to record the necessary documentation that will be used to determine an overall score at the end of the evaluation period. In order to effectively monitor the employee's work performance, the rater must have a method that is both appropriate and feasible. The intent of this step is not to increase paperwork. In most cases a MOM already exists that can be used to determine how well the employee is performing his or her duties. Monitoring may be conducted on a random or periodic basis. If random monitoring is chosen, be sure to observe work performance over the entire evaluation period. Do not check performance at the beginning of the evaluation cycle and fail to check performance the remainder of the period. **The important thing to remember is that a supervisor cannot wait until the end of the performance evaluation cycle to correct problems.** By monitoring performance, problems can be identified and the employee can get back on track quickly. Monitoring also helps the rater to reinforce good performance when it occurs.

Types of MOMS include:

1. Reviewing work, either total output or sample
2. Observing employee work activities
3. Reading reports, charts, timesheets, work records, logs, etc.
4. Self-reporting on progress by the employee
5. Surveying other units, the public, or customers or services
6. Noting and investigating complaints and commendations

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APPROVED

Superintendent, Arkansas School for the Deaf

Date

Chairman, Arkansas School for the Deaf School Board

Date

Administrator, Office of Personnel Management

Date