



MANAGEMENT OF POOR PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

**HUMAN RESOURCES UTILIZATION AND
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT
[PMDS UNIT]**

MANAGEMENT OF POOR PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

Historical Account:

This document was developed in response to a need to have the management of poor performance guidelines for the Department of Human Settlements, Public Safety & Liaison (Public Safety and Liaison Branch). The Department is committed to assisting all employees to achieve and maintain satisfactory standards of performance. As a caring employer, the Department has developed the guidelines with the aim of assisting Managers/Supervisors in managing performance effectively. These guidelines will outline the process of discovering and analysing poor performance gaps, planning for the future improvements in performance, thereafter implementing interventions and evaluating the results.

Dealing with poor performance issues can be complex, If not handled properly in accordance with legal processes. The Department could be liable for unfair labour practices and unfair dismissal as well as compromise its reputation in the process. Issues relating to poor performance should always be handled sensitively and in a fair manner. These guidelines are intended to provide Managers and Supervisors with practical guidance on how to deal with poor performance.

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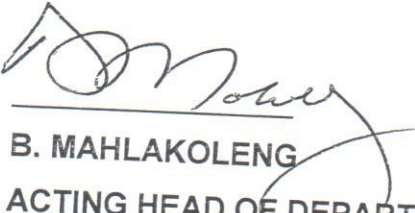
(i) FOREWORD

The Department of Human Settlement, Public Safety and Liaison (Public Safety & Liaison Branch) takes pleasure in releasing the Guidelines for the management of poor performance. This has to be utilised by all Employees, Supervisors and Managers within their work spheres. The Department is an equal employment opportunity employer and therefore relies heavily on the performance of its employees for the delivery of its services and as such it is critical that the performance of employees be managed appropriately, in order to identify and address poor performance. As such it is of utmost importance that the performance of employees is managed appropriately, in particular to identify and address poor performance.

These Guidelines are aimed not only at improving organisational performance but also at promoting individual skills development, personal career development and improved service delivery.

It is trusted that this will be used as a reference guide and will be of practical value to all stakeholders within the Department.

Kind regards


B. MAHLAKOLENG
ACTING HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC SAFETY & LIAISON BRANCH
DATE: 27/03/2013

1. Objective of the Guidelines

To provide clear practical guidelines and procedures to all departmental Employees, Supervisors and managers on how to manage poor performance. To ensure equitability and fairness in the processes and procedures of performance management.

2. Scope of Application

The Guidelines are applicable to all employees employed by the Department (i.e. employees on Salary Levels 1-12 and SMS).

3 Why is the Management of Poor Performance Important?

Management of Poor Performance should be seen as a two way process that is both the managed and the manager are equally responsible for management of poor performance. Performance Standards will be set at the beginning of each Performance cycle and where poor performance including inappropriate behaviour, they must address this with the employee concerned. Poor performance normally gets worse over time if Managers/Supervisors fail to manage it.

Managers and Supervisors must manage performance by letting employees know:

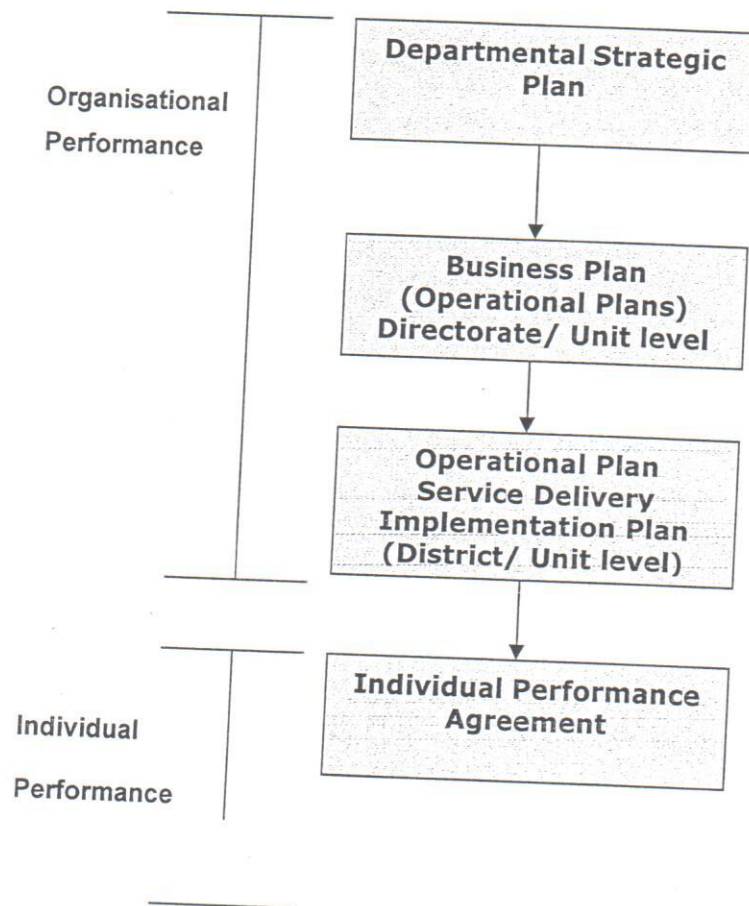
- What is expected of them,
- How they are doing based on those expectations,
- How they may improve on the job, and provide
- Feedback when they are doing a good/ bad (poor performance) job.

The causes of Poor performance can be attributed to a number of factors, for example, lack of necessary competencies, lack of training or instruction, lack of motivation, lack of clear performance standards, or some underlying medical and/ or personal problem which is affecting performance at work.

4 Why is Performance Management Essential?

Performance management supports overall business goals by linking the work of each individual employee and Manager to the overall mission of his or her work unit. All employees therefore play a key role in the success of the Department. How well you manage the performance of your employees directly affects not only the performance of the individual employee and your work unit but also the performance of the entire Department. When employees are clear about what is expected of them and have the necessary support to contribute to an organisation efficiently and productively, their sense of purpose, self-worth, and motivation will increase.

The diagram below illustrates the link between the Department's performance and individual performance management.

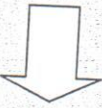
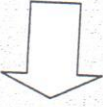
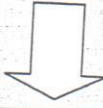
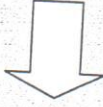


5. Performance Management Cycle

The performance management consists of four important key phases in the performance cycle (i.e. **Phase 1: Planning**, **Phase 2: Managing performance** (i.e. monitoring, half yearly performance assessments, feedback, training, coaching, mentoring, counselling), **Phase 3: Moderation** (Annual performance assessments) and **Phase 4: Rewarding**). Very often, Managers concentrate on conducting the performance reviews at the end of financial year and neglect the other phases of performance management. Training, coaching, mentoring and counselling can be provided at any stage of the performance cycle where performance gaps are identified.

The four phases of performance management are discussed in the table below:

Diagram 2: Performance Management Phases

Planning	Managing performance	Moderation	Rewarding
This is about jointly identifying individual performance expectations and gaining the employee's commitment to achieving these expectations.	This is a crucial phase of continuously tracking and improving performance, through feedback and reinforcement of key results and behaviour.	This phase involves the reviewing of the final overall ratings allocated to jobholders to ensure that the correct assessment procedure has been followed with a view to make recommendations for approval of performance incentives. Recommendations on the overall improvements are also made during this phase.	This phase establishes the link between performance and reward/incentives. It aims to direct and reinforce effective work behaviour by determining and allocating equitable appropriate rewards to employees.
			
Outcome	Outcome	Outcome	Outcome
The employee's work is linked to the objectives of the Department/ Directorate/ District/ Unit and ultimately to those of the Department. Knowledge, skills and behaviour needed by employee are identified.	As a Manager, your expectations are clear and you give the employee positive feedback when he/she is not doing well and you help him/her to improve.	Employees' achievements are measured against the set standards/ expectations to determine appropriate performance levels.	Based on employee's performance, recommendations with regards to payment of performance incentives are made.

6 How to manage performance effectively?

6.1 Communicate Expectations

Managers and supervisors must ensure that performance standards and expectations are communicated and agreed upon with jobholders to ensure that efforts are directed at the achievement of strategic/ operational objectives of the Department. Should there be no agreement on the set standards, both parties should seek advice from the relevant units and ultimately reach agreement. Feedback should also be provided for any level of performance and the job related learning needs and possible ways to address them should be identified.

6.2 Observe and Document Performance

Managers and Supervisors should throughout the performance management cycle observe employee's performance and identify instances of both good and poor performance. Specific events and details are important for employees to clearly understand the impact, results and consequences of their performance. Through documentation (e.g. Action plans, weekly/ monthly and quarterly performance assessment reports), supervisors will be able to recognise good performance and help the jobholder to correct poor performance.

6.4 Provide Feedback

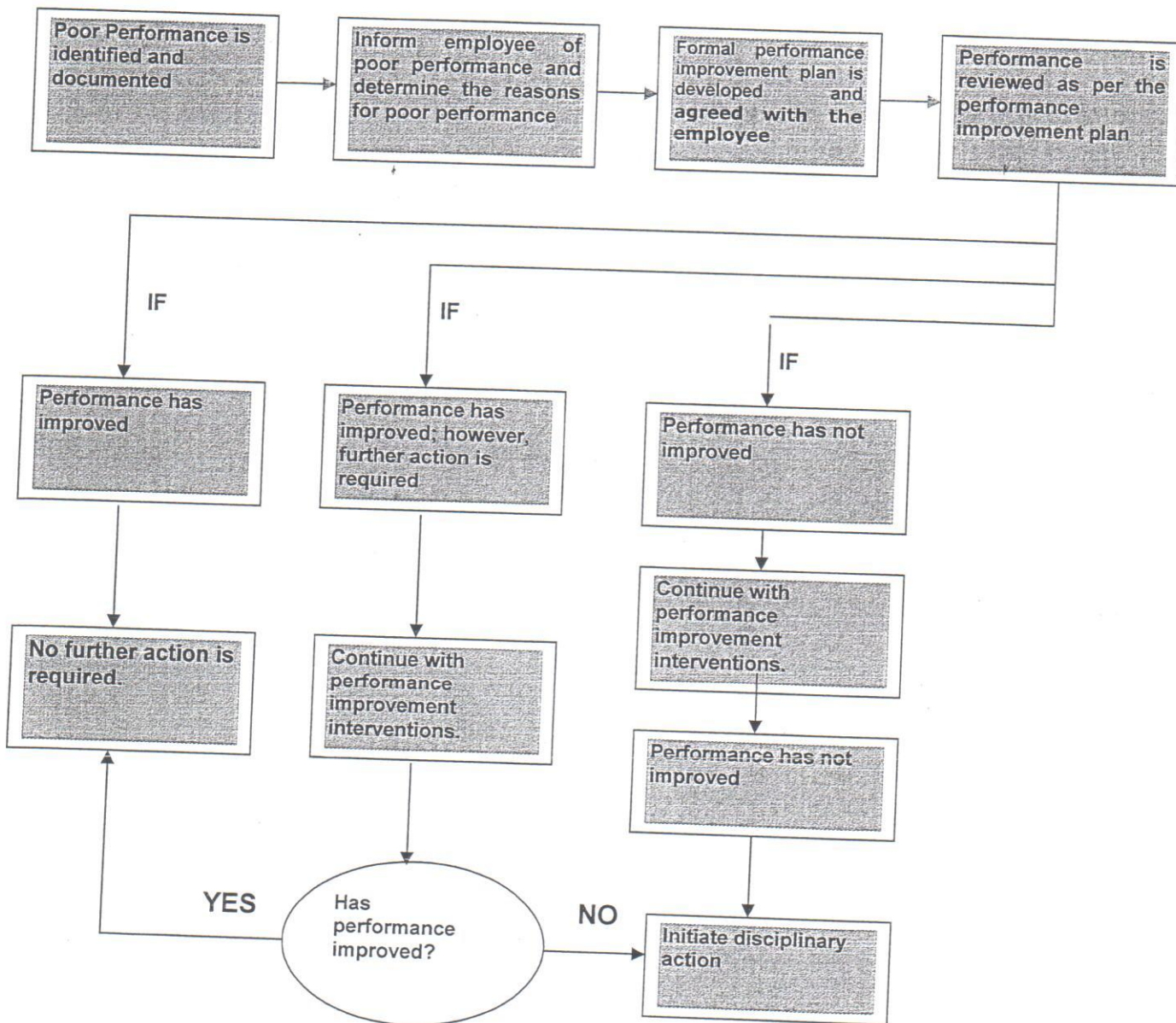
Managers and Supervisors must provide frequent performance feedback and coaching to employees throughout the year. In order for employees to be effective, feedback needs to be immediate, specific, and expressed in relation to a particular outcome and expectation.

7. How to provide assistance to jobholders?

Managers and Supervisors must ensure that performance expectations are specific, measurable, and achievable and time bound. Any performance that is below the set standards must be communicated thoroughly with the jobholder. Assistance should be provided to such jobholders and a record of such assistance should be kept at all times. In instances where managers/ supervisors and jobholders are aware that the problems experienced are affecting well-being, jobholders should be

encouraged to use Integrated Employee Health & Wellness Programmes before any impact of job performance is evident (informal referral). If problems experienced by the jobholder affect his/ her performance, the manager/ supervisor should formally refer the jobholder to Integrated Employee Wellness Programme for intervention.

8. Poor Performance Management Map



9. Steps in the management of poor performance

9.1 What should be done when an employee is performing poorly?

If an employee is performing poorly, Supervisor should at the earliest possible opportunity arrange a meeting with the employee concerned. Advise the employee in writing of the reasons why it is necessary to initiate the performance improvement process and arrange the meeting with the employee.

The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- Inform the employee that his or her work does not meet the required performance standards,
- Explain to the employee the performance standards required,
- Determine the reasons for the poor work performance,
- Determine the manner in which poor work performance is to be addressed.

It is further important that a joint problem solving approach is adopted during a meeting. Supervisor should give the employee an opportunity to explain, in his/her own terms, the reasons for the poor work performance.

9.2 What happens during the meeting?

The following should be indicated to the employee with regard to his/ her poor work performance, for example:

- Where deadlines were not met,
- Cases where the work was of poor quality,
- Where work was not done at all.

After going through the reasons for poor performance with the employee, you need to discuss a course of action with the employee to address the problem. The course of action should include remedial steps such as:

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- Providing the employee with clear instructions on the best way to perform his/her tasks so that the employee can meet the required performance standards,
- Set measurable performance goals and allow reasonable timeframe for improvement,
- Make Informal/ formal referral to the confidential counselling services offered by the Unit: Integrated Employee Wellness
- Providing guidance or coaching (if necessary),
- Provide the employee with, or arrange formal or informal training (if necessary), and
- Set a review date and follow-up meetings to check on the employee's progress.

9.3 Conduct Follow-Up Meetings

A number of follow-up meetings may be necessary to track the performance of the employee. These meetings may be scheduled for once a month or as regular as you deem appropriate. Further remedial actions should be considered or applied as and when possible during the meeting. Such remedial action could include the involvement of a third party that will be deemed appropriate by both parties. The Manager/Supervisor should make it clear to the employee during the course of the follow –up meeting that his/her performance is improving or not.

9.4 What Should I Do if the Performance of the Employee Does Not Improve?

If the employee's performance does not improve during the time allocated, the Manager/Supervisor should arrange a final review meeting with the employee. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Give the employee a written report on the outcome of the process followed thus far, and
- Explain the outcome of the process and measures to address any problems indicated in the report.

9.5 What happens if a decision is taken to dismiss the Employee or Place him/her in another job?

Before placing the employee in an alternative job or charging him/her with misconduct/ incapacity, the manager/ supervisor must grant the employee a hearing. If a decision is taken to place the employee in a different job that entails lower pay, the employee must, in terms of section 14 (3) (a) of the Public Service Act, 1994 (as amended) agree to this.

A disciplinary action can be initiated based on an employee's poor performance. The action must be taken in accordance with PSCBC Resolution 1 of 2003 (Disciplinary Code and Procedures).

10 Role Clarification on the Management of Poor Performance

10.1 What is the role of the Head of Department (HoD)?

The HoD oversees the overall performance of the Department and holds Managers accountable for the management of performance and poor performance.

The HoD also has the responsibility of creating an enabling, conducive working environment for the optimal functioning of all Employees. This should be made by availing all required resource per different occupational groups.

10.2 What is the role of Managers/ Supervisors?

- Supervisor are required to first identify and then, in line with a developmental approach, deal with unacceptable performance of employees under their supervision. The supervisor must comply with the procedural requirement of PSCBS Resolution 10 of 1999 and Resolution 1 of 2003 – “Incapacity Code”. The EPMDS provides for the early identification and resolution of unacceptable performance. The employee's performance rating as “not fully effective” or lower during the annual performance assessment should not be the first indication of the employee's shortcomings. Performance monitoring, including the performance reviews, provide opportunities to ensure that this does not happen. Intervention by the

supervisor to overcome performance shortfalls on the part of the employees can include any or all of the following:

- Personal counselling
- On-the job mentoring and coaching
- Formal training/re-training
- Restating the work plan performance requirements
- Work environment audits to establish other factors affecting performance.

Should the employee not responding to reasonable and continuous attempts to improve, Performance and an overall performance assessment score of less than 3.00 is consistently the results of the assessment process, the employee must be formally registered on an “Incapacity Programme and advised of this in writing.

- Managers should ensure that there are no surprises at half yearly review stages. Where there are any issues of difficulties in respect of performance these should be addressed as and when they arise and not “saved up” for the review.
- Oversee the performance of employees,
- Ensure that employee performance is linked to the Department’s overall objectives,
- Ensure that employees understand what is expected from them,
- Provide employees with constructive feedback on their performance,
- Capacitate employees to perform their duties by facilitating and providing the necessary training and/or resources,
- Conduct performance reviews, and
- Implement the recommendations of Moderating committees, Performance Assessment Appeal Panel (PAAP), Disciplinary committees and any other committee appointed by the Head of Department or delegated authority.

10.3 What is the role of Employees?

- Taking responsibility for their own continuous performance improvement and development;
- Creating action plans and following through to achieve objectives;

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- Request advice, assistance and any information related to performance of their duties from their Managers/Supervisors in order to meet their objectives;
- Planning for performance by ensuring that they understand what is expected of them;
- Participating actively in performance reviews;
- Requesting feedback on their performance; and
- An ongoing effort to perform duties to the required standards set by the Department and report any challenge/obstacle to their supervisors

10.4 What is the role of Performance Management (PMDS) Unit?

- Monitor the application of the PMDS within the Department;
- Provide practical guidance to managers in the management of performance and poor performance;
- Develop and communicate policies and procedures on the management of poor performance;
- Provide/facilitate training to managers and employees on the Performance Management and Development System;
- Provide/facilitate training on skills needed to manage performance; and
- Provide advice to managers and employees on performance management matters.

10.5 What is the role of Labour Relations Unit?

- Provide advice to managers/supervisors on how to manage poor performance in terms of Chamber Agreements, other national norms, standards and legislation;
- Provide practical guidance to managers/supervisors on the correct implementation of Disciplinary procedures in dealing with poor performing employees;
- Input into the Department's policy on the management of poor performance; and

- Keep records on cases of poor performance within the Department.

10.6 What is the Role of Human Resources Development?

- Assist Managers and Supervisors in the identification of training needs of employees,
- Provide advice to Managers and Supervisors on the implementation of training and other performance improvement interventions, and
- Ensure that employees in the Department are trained in terms of the Workplace Skills Plan and their Personal Development Plans (PDP's).

10.7 What is the Role of Integrated Employee Health & Wellness Programme?

- Provide therapeutic intervention to employees who are experiencing personal/work related problems that may affect their job performance.
- Provide health and wellbeing programmes that will enhance productivity and morale of staff.
- Provide training/ advice to Managers/ Supervisors in identifying and referring employees who are experiencing difficulties.
- Ensuring that employees are not unfairly discriminated on the basis of disability, race, gender, health condition, etc.
- Provide advice, guidance and recommendations to managers/ supervisors with regards to Integrated Employee Wellness interventions including reasonable accommodation of employees.
- Ensure that performance management policies/strategies /practices are not discriminatory.
- Ensure that Employee Wellness policies are integrated into the performance management policy.

10.8 What is the Role of Human Resources Management (HRA)?

- To administer transfers, demotions, rotations, suspensions and terminations related to the management of poor performance.

10.9 What is the Role of Human Resources Administration (Recruitment)?

- To ensure the right people with the right competencies are recruited for a specific position at the right time.
- To ensure that potential employees are subjected to competency assessments.

10.10 What is the Role of Organizational Development?

- To compile clear and consistent job descriptions that are aligned to strategic objectives of the Department.

11 The Regulatory Framework on the Management of Poor Performance

The applicable legislative framework relevant for the management of poor performance in the public service is discussed below:

- **Senior Management Service Handbook**

Chapter 4 of the Handbook describes the process and requirements of performance management and development for members of the SMS. This Chapter further outlines in **Section 6 and 15.11** the approach in dealing with unsatisfactory performance by members of the SMS.

- **PSCBC Resolution 1 of 2003**

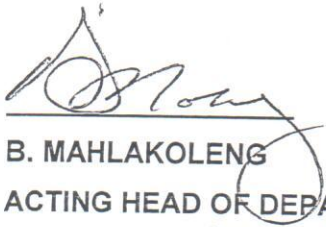
The Resolution provides for the disciplinary procedures for the Public Service and outlines conduct that are considered serious misconduct, warranting formal handling.

- **PSCBC Resolution 10 of 1999**

Section 4 of the resolution outlines a procedure in respect of poor performance.

12. ENDORSEMENT/ APPROVAL

These guidelines have been approved by the Head of Department: Human Settlement, Public Safety and Liaison (Public Safety Branch).



B. MAHLAKOLENG

ACTING HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

DATE: 27/03/2013