



U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of Human Capital

Performance Management System (370 DM 430) Frequently Asked Questions

These questions and answers accompany the revised performance management policy for the U.S. Department of the Interior (Department or DOI), which is effective on October 1, 2018. The Departmental Manual (DM) chapter 370 DM 430 establishes a new performance management system for the general workforce (non-SES/SL/ST employees).

Additional detailed guidance is also available in the Performance Management Handbook, which consists of two parts:

- Part 1: The Performance Appraisal Process
- Part 2: Addressing and Resolving Poor Performance

The DM chapter, Handbook, Employee Performance Appraisal Plan (EPAP) forms, and other guidance are housed on the Department's Non-SES Performance Management Toolbox site at <https://www.doi.gov/pmb/hr/non-ses-performance-management-toolbox>.

If you have any additional questions, please contact your servicing Human Resources Office.

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What's New: Transition Between Performance Management Policies

1. Why is the Department changing its performance management policy?

The prior DOI performance management system, in effect from October 2004 to September 2018, posed several challenges and concerns for addressing problematic employee performance. Primarily, while the old system clearly delineated expectations for various levels of performance, it allowed for an employee to be a marginal performer (performing at the Minimally Successful level) without any significant consequence. Federal laws and regulations only allow agencies to take action to remove or change to a lower grade employees who perform at the Unacceptable level. Employees who received Minimally Successful ratings were able to remain in their positions indefinitely, impeding the DOI mission from being accomplished efficiently and placing a burden on their high-performing colleagues. The Department therefore evaluated and ultimately decided to change the prior five-level performance management system to four levels by eliminating the Minimally Successful rating level. This change fulfills Presidential and Secretarial priorities for Federal government reform by strengthening employee accountability and streamlining supervisory procedures for improving performance.

2. What is the biggest change in the performance management policy?

The primary change is that DOI is moving from a five-level performance appraisal system to a four-level system, with modifications to the names and descriptions of rating levels, as shown in the table below:

Old Rating Level/Points	Old Standard	New Rating Level/Points	New Standard
Exceptional (Level 5; 5 points)	Particularly excellent performance in all aspects of the position that is of such high quality that organizational goals have been achieved that would not have been otherwise.	Outstanding (Level 5; 5 points)	Exceptional performance in all aspects of the critical element that is of such high quality that organizational goals have been achieved that would not have been otherwise. The employee consistently achieved expectations at the highest level of quality possible and accomplished objectives even when faced with unanticipated challenges.
Superior (Level 4; 4 points)	Unusually good performance that exceeds expectations in critical areas and exhibits a sustained support of organizational goals.	Exceeds Expectations (Level 4; 4 points)	High level of performance that exceeds expectations in significant areas of the critical element and exhibits a sustained support of organizational goals.
Fully Successful (Level 3; 3 points)	Good, sound performance that meets organizational goals. Employee effectively applies technical skills and organizational knowledge to get the job done.	Fully Successful (Level 3; 3 points)	Consistently successful performance that contributes positively to organizational goals. The employee effectively applies technical skills and organizational knowledge to deliver results based on measures of quality, quantity, efficiency, and/or effectiveness within agreed-upon timelines.
Minimally Successful (Level 2; 2 points)	Performance shows serious deficiencies that require correction. Work is marginal and only meets the minimum requirements with close supervision.	Not Applicable	
Unsatisfactory (Level 1; 0 points)	Quality and quantity of work are not adequate for the position. Work products do not meet the minimum requirements expected.	Unacceptable (Level 1; 0 points)	Quality and/or quantity of work are not adequate for the position. Work products do not meet the requirements expected.

3. What additional changes are included in the new policy?

The new policy also:

- Shortens the timeframe for rating officials to finalize/approve performance plans from 60 days to 45 days of the start date of the new appraisal period, the date an employee changes positions, or the date the rating official is assigned to a new or different supervisory position.
- Places additional responsibilities on heads of bureaus/offices and reviewing officials to hold subordinate supervisors/managers responsible for appraising employees accurately and consistently based on their accomplishments and contributions and ensuring that all covered employees receive timely performance plans and appraisals.
- Allows employees who receive a Fully Successful summary rating to be eligible to be considered for a performance-based award. Employees rated at the Fully Successful level were not previously eligible for performance-based awards.
- Eliminates the requirement that employees who are not contesting the rating received on a given performance element be afforded an opportunity to submit/append written comments to their Employee Performance Appraisal Plan (EPAP) form regarding the rating of record, element ratings, and/or narrative comments. Bureaus may provide this as an option for employees in their supplemental procedures--however, it is no longer required that they do so.
- Changes the name of “performance improvement plan (PIP)” to “notice of opportunity to demonstrate acceptable performance” to more closely align with the language in the governing law and regulations.
- Incorporates recently issued policy changes aimed at streamlining procedures for dealing with poor performance—specifically, 1) clarifying that procedures under 5 CFR 752, Adverse Actions should be used in appropriate cases to address instances of unacceptable performance; and 2) opportunity periods to demonstrate acceptable performance (previously referred to as “performance improvement periods” or “PIPs”) will generally last no more than 30 days except when the supervisor determines that a longer period is necessary to provide sufficient time to evaluate the employee’s performance.
- Addresses when employees on Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) assignments are eligible for a rating of record.
- Clarifies that the procedures for taking disciplinary/performance-based actions contained in 5 CFR 752 and 5 CFR 432 do not apply to Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) contract educators. The procedures governing poor performance for these employees are described in Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Manual 62 BIAM 11.

In addition to these substantive changes, language used in many places throughout 370 DM 430 has been rewritten to offer more clarity to the reader and/or to track more closely with the requirements of applicable laws or regulations.

4. Why are the new rating levels numbered 1-3-4-5 instead of being sequential?

Government-wide regulations govern the rating level patterns that agencies can use in developing a performance appraisal program ([5 CFR 430.208](#)). With this new performance management system, DOI is moving from Pattern H to Pattern E and our rating pattern must align with the levels established for Pattern E, which are: Level 1 (Unacceptable), Level 3 (Fully Successful or equivalent), Level 4, and Level 5 (Outstanding). The Department's personnel and payroll system captures ratings based on these OPM patterns. Changing the level numbers in the policy would result in unnecessary confusion in recording ratings and comparing ratings across performance years. As a result, DOI has retained these level designations in the performance management policy.

5. Are the Employee Performance Appraisal Plan (EPAP) forms changing?

Yes. The EPAP form for non-supervisory employees (DI-3100) has been updated to reflect changes made to the available rating levels and descriptions (as reflected in the benchmark standards) and to clarify instructions and formatting.

The EPAP form for supervisory employees (DI-3100S) includes similar changes as the DI-3100, but also includes a revised mandatory supervisory/managerial critical element and revised benchmark standards. The mandatory supervisory/managerial critical element now includes a sample performance standard at the Fully Successful level. While the description of the revised mandatory supervisory/managerial critical element cannot be changed, the sample Fully Successful standard for that element may be modified or further specified to the supervisory employee's position as necessary.

6. When are these changes effective?

The new policy is effective on October 1, 2018, at the start of the 2019 fiscal year (FY), which corresponds to the start of the 2019 performance appraisal cycle. The prior version of the policy and any related bureau/office-level procedures remain in effect for the closeout of FY 2018 performance appraisals. The transition to the new policy will govern new performance plans established on or after October 1, 2018, but it will not impact ratings, awards, or other closeout procedures related to work performed in FY 2018.

7. If I am rated Fully Successful for the FY 2018 appraisal cycle, will I be eligible for a performance-based award?

No. The 2004 version of 370 DM 430 in effect for FY 2018 governs all ratings assigned for work performed in FY 2018. As the prior version of the policy did not allow for performance-based awards for employees receiving a Fully Successful year-end rating of record, employees

receiving a Fully Successful rating for FY 2018 performance will not be eligible for a performance-based award.

Performance Management Overview

8. What is performance management?

The objective of performance management is to articulate expectations of individual and organizational performance, to provide a meaningful process by which employees can be rewarded for noteworthy contributions to the organization and its mission, and to provide a mechanism to improve individual/organizational performance as necessary. The performance management process organizes the dialogue between an employee and his/her rating official around the most important work assignments or responsibilities that the employee needs to accomplish in order to support the DOI mission in his/her particular position (known as critical elements).

In addition to the minimum procedural expectations set out in the DOI performance management policy, the performance management process works best when employees and their rating officials regularly discuss the employee's performance against the established critical elements and their standards (the requirements or expectations that must be met to be appraised on a critical element at a particular level of performance). Frequent conversations about performance provide timely feedback and can avoid confusion or surprise, resulting in efficient accomplishment of the DOI mission.

The performance management process culminates in a summary performance rating for all employees that serves as a basis for training, rewarding, reassigning, promoting, reducing in grade, retaining, and removing employees.

9. What are the stages of the performance management process?

The full process – known as the rating cycle, appraisal cycle or appraisal period – consists of the phases in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Performance management process

10. Who is covered under 370 DM 430?

All permanent and temporary employees are covered by the general workforce performance management policy, EXCEPT:

- Presidential appointees
- Senior Executive Service (SES), Senior Level (SL) and Scientific and Professional (ST) employees, whose performance is appraised under a different system established by the Department
- Temporary and/or excepted service employees whose appointments are not expected to exceed 120 days in a 12-month period
- Employees outside the United States who are paid in accordance with local prevailing wage rates
- Administrative law judges appointed under 5 U.S.C. 3105
- Employees occupying other positions excluded by U.S. Office of Personnel Management regulations

11. What are the basic requirements of the performance management policy?

All covered employees must be issued a performance plan that includes critical elements and corresponding performance standards appropriate to their positions. Employees must be periodically evaluated against the performance plan by receiving an appraisal with ratings assigned to each element and a corresponding summary rating. Rating officials must encourage employee participation in establishing performance standards and must use the results of performance appraisals as a basis for training, rewarding, reassigning, promoting, reducing in grade, retaining, and removing employees.

12. What is the performance appraisal cycle?

The appraisal cycle is the established 12-month period during which performance is reviewed and a rating of record is prepared. The DOI appraisal cycle corresponds to the fiscal year and therefore runs from October 1 through September 30 of the following year, unless the Department's Office of Human Capital approves a different schedule.

For temporary employees whose appointments are longer than 120 days but less than one year, the appraisal cycle runs from date of appointment to termination of appointment. For temporary employees whose appointments are longer than one year, the appraisal cycle is the same as for permanent employees.

13. What are the roles of rating and reviewing officials in the process?

The rating official, ordinarily an employee's immediate supervisor, is responsible for establishing critical elements and performance standards, managing and evaluating the employee's performance, and assigning performance ratings. The reviewing official, generally an employee's second-level supervisor, has the responsibility to review and approve ratings at the Outstanding and Unacceptable levels, to prepare performance ratings in the absence of a rating official, and to hold subordinate managers/supervisors accountable for performance management. Bureaus/offices may establish additional requirements for reviewing officials, such as reviewing performance plans when they are established or approving all performance ratings at any level.

Development of Performance Plans

14. What is a performance plan?

A performance plan is a written document consisting of the critical elements—work assignments or responsibilities of such importance that unacceptable performance on the element would result in a determination that the employee's overall performance is unacceptable for their position—and the performance standards that identify expected levels of performance for each critical element. The performance plan is documented using the Employee Performance Appraisal Plan (EPAP) form, numbered DI-3100 for non-supervisory employees and DI-3100S for supervisory employees.

In addition to including between one and five critical elements and corresponding standards, the EPAP form must also include at least one critical element that is linked to the strategic goal(s) of the organization.

15. How many critical elements must or can be written for a position?

Each performance plan must have at least one, and not more than five, critical elements listed on the EPAP form.

16. How closely do critical elements have to match the employee's position description (PD)?

There must be a reasonable relationship between the PD and the elements used for appraisal. For example, if a PD states that the incumbent is responsible for supervising employees, the mandatory supervisory/managerial performance element addressing supervisory responsibilities would be included in the performance plan. The critical elements and corresponding performance standards must be appropriate to the employee's grade level in complexity and scope.

17. When must performance plans be established?

Signed and approved EPAP forms must be in place within 45 days of:

- The beginning of the appraisal period;
- The employee's entrance on duty;
- The employee's assignment to a new position;
- The employee's assignment to a detail or temporary promotion scheduled to exceed 120 days; or
- The assignment of the employee to a new or different rating official.

18. How are performance plans established?

Rating officials must encourage employees to participate in establishing the performance plan for their position in order to give them a clear understanding of their performance expectations, as well as the role their position plays in achieving the mission, goals, and objectives of their organization.

The responsibility for and final decision regarding critical elements and performance standards always rests with management. A performance plan is established when it has been signed by the rating official and issued to the employee. Employees should sign the EPAP form to acknowledge that they have received the performance plan, not to indicate agreement with its content. If an employee refuses to sign the EPAP form, the rating official must document the refusal on the EPAP form.

19. What are performance standards?

Performance standards are the management-approved expression of the performance threshold(s), requirement(s), or expectation(s) that must be met to be appraised on a critical element at a particular level of performance. Performance standards must be focused on results and must include credible measures such as quality, quantity, timeliness, cost effectiveness, etc.

Benchmark standards for each of the four possible levels of performance are described in the DOI Performance Management Handbook and are part of the EPAP forms. These benchmark standards can be applied to every position, but should be further defined with specific standards that describe the results expected at the various levels of performance for each critical element.

Federal regulations require, at a minimum, that a specific performance standard be established for each critical element at the Fully Successful level. In addition, supervisors are strongly encouraged to develop standards at additional levels so that employees clearly understand their performance expectations.

Monitoring Performance and Changes During the Appraisal Period

20. Are progress reviews required during the appraisal period?

Rating officials are expected to establish effective and ongoing communication with employees regarding their performance and ways of improving it. An annual discussion is required wherein the rating official discusses accomplishments against critical elements and standards with the employee. One progress review at approximately the mid-point of the appraisal period is also required, and that review is documented on the EPAP form. Additionally, periodic counseling sessions throughout the year are recommended as a good management tool to ensure that employees are kept up-to-date on the rating official's assessment of their performance. No specific timetables are set for these counseling sessions and no form or other documentation is required to be filled out on such counseling sessions unless necessary to document negative performance or unless required by an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

21. Can performance plans be changed during the appraisal period?

Absolutely. Rating officials and employees should check progress against the established performance plan throughout the year and update the EPAP form whenever work assignments or responsibilities shift in a significant enough way to influence the content of the critical elements or performance standards. If changes are made to the performance plan, the rating official must sign the new plan and provide it to the employee for signature as well.

Changes can be made to the EPAP form up until 90 days before the end of the appraisal period (generally July 1 of each year). Employees must be given a minimum of 90 days to perform against established critical elements and performance standards before they can be assigned a performance rating. If the performance plan must be modified in the last 90 days of the appraisal period due to a significant change in the employee's work assignments, the appraisal period must be extended in order to afford the employee at least 90 days to perform against the new plan.

22. What happens if I go on a detail, temporary promotion, or Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) assignment during the appraisal period?

Whenever an employee is assigned to a detail or temporary promotion that is scheduled to exceed 120 days, they must have a new performance plan established for the temporary assignment. When the employee completes the temporary assignment, the temporary supervisor must assign an interim rating on the employee's performance against the temporary assignment performance plan. A copy of the interim appraisal must be provided to the employee and to the employee's permanent rating official. The interim appraisal is then used by the rating official in assigning the annual summary rating in a proportional manner.

For employees on details/temporary assignments outside of the Department for over 120 days, the rating official must make a reasonable effort to obtain performance information from the external agency/organization.

Employees on IPA assignments may receive a rating of record based on a combination of their IPA and Department service or solely on the basis of their IPA performance (if they did not work at the Department during the appraisal period) if the following conditions are met: (i) critical elements and performance standards for the IPA assignment were approved by the DOI supervisor of record; (ii) the employee has had an opportunity to perform under the performance plan for at least 90 days during the appraisal period; and (iii) the IPA supervisor provides input regarding the employee's performance for the rating of record. The DOI supervisor of record evaluates the performance information, assigns a rating level for each critical element and assigns an overall rating of record.

23. What happens if I change positions during the appraisal period?

When an employee has served 90 days under a performance plan and changes positions via reassignment, promotion, or change to lower grade during the annual appraisal period, the rating official for the employee's old position must assign an interim rating. The new rating official must establish a new performance plan for the employee within 45 days of the effective date of the new assignment. At the end of the appraisal period, the rating official must consider the interim rating in proportion to the work performed against the new performance plan in determining the employee's annual rating of record. In determining the proportional weight that the interim rating should have, the rating official should take into account not only the time spent in each position, but also other factors, such as the amount/complexity of the work throughout the year.

24. What happens if my rating official leaves during the appraisal period?

Departing rating officials must complete an interim appraisal for any employee who has been under a performance plan for at least 90 days when the rating official leaves his/her position. If the rating official leaves his/her position in the final 90 days of the appraisal period, and the supervised employees otherwise meet the criteria for receiving a rating, the departing rating official will prepare a summary rating for his/her employees, which will serve as the rating of record for that appraisal period. If an employee has not been supervised by the rating official for 90 days, the reviewing official may prepare the summary rating.

Employee Development During the Appraisal Period

25. What is an Individual Development Plan (IDP)?

An individual development plan (IDP) is a guide to help employees reach individual career goals within the context of organizational objectives. It is a developmental action plan to grow

employees from their current state by providing systematic steps to improve and build on strengths. An IDP may identify a broad spectrum of developmental activities, including on-the-job training, distance learning, formal classroom training, details, shadow assignments and self-development. It balances the needs of the organization and of the employee beginning with a focus on maximizing employee performance in the current job.

An IDP is a partnership between the employee and the supervisor for personal and professional development. Preparing an IDP involves open feedback, clarification, and discussion about developmental needs, goals, and plans. Periodic communication between the supervisor and the employee is key to ensure currency and relevance of an IDP. The most common goals of an IDP are to:

- Learn new skills to improve current job performance;
- Maximize performance in support of organizational requirements;
- Increase employee engagement; and/or
- Establish a career path, identifying the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for professional growth.

26. Am I required to have an IDP?

Consistent with [370 DM 410: Human Capital Training and Development](#) and Personnel Bulletin 06-04: Supervisory Development, all employees in supervisory positions are required to have an IDP that is updated annually. In addition, some Bureaus/Offices may require an IDP for employees in non-supervisory positions or other specific positions. Check with your servicing Human Resources Office about any specific requirements.

Performance Ratings

27. Who is eligible to receive a performance rating?

All permanent full-time and permanent part-time employees who have been covered by a performance plan for at least 90 days are eligible to be rated. All temporary employees who have worked more than 120 days during the annual appraisal period and for at least the last 90 days of the appraisal period have been supervised by the same rating official and covered by a performance plan, are also eligible for ratings. The annual appraisal period may be extended for up to a maximum of 90 days past the end of the appraisal period to allow for rating of employees who have not been in the same position, under the same rating official, or under a performance plan for the full 90 days at the end of the appraisal year.

28. I have had more than one rating official during the year. How will my rating be prepared?

The rating official for appraisal purposes is the individual supervising the employee at the end of the performance appraisal period. The rating (or in some cases the reviewing) official will assign the rating of record, provided he or she has supervised the employee for at least 90 calendar days and provided the employee has worked under the same set of performance standards for at least 90 days prior to the end of the appraisal period.

If the employee has received a performance evaluation from another rating official during the current rating period, the rating official must consider that rating when assigning the summary rating of record. Please refer to Questions 21-23 for information about when interim ratings are prepared and how they are considered in assigning year-end ratings of record.

If, at the end of the performance appraisal period, the rating official has not supervised the employee for at least 90 calendar days, the reviewing official may serve as the rating official. The appraisal period may be extended by up to 90 days past the normal end date if an employee, on the normal end date of the appraisal period, has not been under performance standards for at least 90 days and has not received an earlier closeout rating from a departing rating official within the past 90 days.

29. When are performance ratings due?

Rating officials must complete annual appraisals and ratings within 30 days of the end of the appraisal period (i.e., normally by October 31 of each year). Rating officials must submit the final EPAP forms to their servicing Human Resources Office within 60 days of the end of the appraisal period.

30. How are performance ratings determined?

A year-end rating of record will be based on individual employee performance during the 12-month period of the rating cycle, including any temporary assignments longer than 120 days. The rating official may seek input on the employee's performance from all appropriate sources to assist in determining the appropriate rating to assign. In appraising performance, rating officials may not take into consideration work that is not completed because of an absence for which the employee is on any type of approved leave.

A numerical rating level is required for each critical element. Only one numerical rating level is assigned for each critical element, regardless of the number of sub-elements described. The rating assigned reflects the level of the employee's performance as compared to the standards established, and must align with the benchmark standards.

31. How are summary ratings calculated?

After rating each critical element, the rating official calculates the summary rating by adding the numerical rating for each critical element and then dividing by the number of critical elements. If an employee does not have an opportunity to perform an element, it is designated as “Not Rated,” no points are assigned to that critical element, and it is not considered in the calculation. The table below shows the requirements for each rating level:

Summary Rating	Summary Rating Points and Critical Element Rating Requirement
Outstanding	4.6 – 5.00 <u>AND</u> no critical element rated lower than Exceeds Expectations
Exceeds Expectations	3.6 – 4.59 <u>AND</u> no critical element rated Unacceptable
Achieved Results	3.0 – 3.59 <u>AND</u> no critical element rated Unacceptable
Unacceptable	One or more critical elements rated Unacceptable

32. What if I have a summary score in the Outstanding range (4.6 to 5.0), but I have one critical element rated at the Fully Successful level?

The summary rating would be Exceeds Expectations.

33. What if I am rated Unacceptable on a single critical element?

The summary rating would be Unacceptable.

34. What if I don't want to sign my EPAP form?

The purpose of an employee's signature on the EPAP form is to acknowledge that the performance rating has been presented to him/her—not to indicate agreement with the rating. In the event the employee refuses to sign the EPAP form, the rating official still has the authority to implement the performance rating. The rating official should note that the “Employee refused to sign” on the employee's signature block in Part D of the EPAP form. The rating official must provide a copy of the completed EPAP form to the employee and forward a copy to the servicing Human Resources Office within 60 days of the end of the appraisal period to be filed in the employee's electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF). The rating official should also retain a copy of the EPAP form for his/her records.

35. What can I do if I disagree with the rating I received on a critical element that, if it were changed, would affect my summary rating?

When employees have a concern about the rating given on a particular critical element that, if changed, will affect the rating of record, they are entitled to request reconsideration of this rating through their bureau/office reconsideration process. The Department's Administrative Grievance Procedures (370 DM 771) do not apply to reconsideration requests. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement that includes a reconsideration procedure will be governed by that procedure as the exclusive method to request reconsideration. Additional information regarding guidance for establishing reconsideration processes is contained in the DOI Performance Management Handbook. Please contact your servicing Human Resources Office to learn about the reconsideration process for your bureau/office.

Performance Problems

36. What happens if my performance falls to the Unacceptable level?

A supervisor has the responsibility and authority to take action against an employee based on Unacceptable performance in accordance with 5 CFR Part 432, Performance Based Reduction in Grade and Removal Actions, or 5 CFR Part 752, Adverse Actions.

In order to initiate a demotion or removal action for Unacceptable performance under 5 CFR Part 432, the employee must first be provided written notice of the critical elements for which performance is Unacceptable (i.e., Notice of Opportunity to Demonstrate Acceptable Performance – commonly known as a PIP) and be afforded a reasonable opportunity to demonstrate at least Fully Successful performance. This notice must also inform the employee that unless his/her performance in the critical element(s) improves to and is sustained at an acceptable level (Fully Successful or higher), the employee may be reassigned, reduced in grade or removed.

This opportunity period will generally last no longer than 30 days, except when the supervisor determines that a longer period is necessary to provide sufficient time to evaluate the employee's performance. The opportunity period begins on the day the employee is issued a Notice of Opportunity to Demonstrate Acceptable Performance, unless the notice document indicates otherwise.

If the employee's performance remains Unacceptable during the opportunity period, appropriate action must be initiated. In accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 4302(c)(6), appropriate actions for employees who do not demonstrate at least Fully Successful performance during the opportunity period include reduction in grade, removal or reassignment.

When appropriate (e.g., depending on the particular facts and the type of evidence), supervisors should address instances of Unacceptable performance using the adverse action procedures in

5 CFR Part 752 and 370 DM 752, which include an advance notice period and an opportunity for the employee to respond to the proposed action, but do not include an opportunity period to demonstrate acceptable performance.

Performance and Pay

37. What are the eligibility requirements for performance-based awards?

Beginning with work performed against performance plans established in FY 2019, an employee must be rated at the Fully Successful or higher level to be eligible for one or more of the following performance-based awards: cash award, time-off award, or other appropriate equivalent recognition. Employees rated Outstanding must be considered for a performance-based award and are also eligible to receive a Quality Step Increase.

38. What are the requirements for granting or denying within-grade increases?

To receive a within-grade increase, the employee must have a current rating of record of at least Fully Successful. This may require a rating official to prepare a new rating of record before the end of the appraisal period to document the appropriate level of performance at the time the WGI is due, if the most recent rating of record does not reflect the WGI determination decision. A WGI determination may be delayed if the employee has not been under a performance plan for his/her current position for the minimum appraisal period and does not have a rating of record in any position that was issued within the 90 days before the end of the WGI waiting period.

**If you have any additional questions, please contact your servicing
Human Resources Office.**