



USAID
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ADS Chapter 464

Foreign Service Performance-Based Actions

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Table of Contents

<u>464.1</u>	<u>OVERVIEW.....</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>464.2</u>	<u>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>464.3</u>	<u>POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES.....</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>464.3.1</u>	<u>Communicating Deficient Performance</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>464.3.2</u>	<u>Performance Improvement Plan</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>464.3.3</u>	<u>Maximizing Employee Performance Timeline.....</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>464.3.4</u>	<u>Initiating a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>464.3.4.1</u>	<u>Components of a Performance Improvement Plan</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>464.3.4.2</u>	<u>Implementing a Performance Improvement Plan</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>464.3.4.3</u>	<u>Performance Improvement Plan Final Rating.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>464.3.4.4</u>	<u>Satisfactory Final Rating and Accountability</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>464.3.4.5</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory Final Rating</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>464.3.4.6</u>	<u>Performance Improvement Plans and Annual Performance Evaluations.....</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>464.3.5</u>	<u>Assignment Changes During a PIP</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>464.3.6</u>	<u>PSB Review of FSOs Failing Performance Improvement Plans or Determined to Not Be Meeting the Standards of Performance For Their Class by a Board</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>464.3.7</u>	<u>Administrative Review</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>464.4</u>	<u>MANDATORY REFERENCES</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>464.4.1</u>	<u>External Mandatory References.....</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>464.4.2</u>	<u>Internal Mandatory References.....</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>464.4.3</u>	<u>Mandatory Forms</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>464.5</u>	<u>ADDITIONAL HELP</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>464.6</u>	<u>DEFINITIONS</u>	<u>16</u>

ADS 464 – Foreign Service Performance-Based Actions

464.1 OVERVIEW

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

The Foreign Service (FS) Employee Performance & Development Program (EP&D) is a performance management program that gives USAID employees the opportunity to assist in improving organizational effectiveness to accomplish the Agency's mission and goals (see [ADS 461, Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service Performance Management & Development Programs](#)). In support of EP&D, this chapter establishes policy for performance-based actions when career FS employees fail to achieve a satisfactory level of performance.

This chapter applies to all tenured, career FS and Senior Foreign Service (SFS) officers under the authority of the [Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended](#). This includes tenured FS and SFS employees assigned outside the Agency who have reemployment rights to USAID.

This chapter is not applicable to FS career candidates, Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs), Personal Service Contractors (PSCs), Civil Service (CS) employees (including Schedule C employees and employees whose appointments are administratively determined), other employees serving on non-career Foreign Service Limited (FSL) appointments, Presidential Appointees, Senior Executive Service (SES) employees, or experts and consultants under the authority of [5 USC 43](#) and [5 CFR 430](#) (see [ADS 489, Performance Based Actions - Civil Service](#) for performance based actions for CS employees).

[ADS 450, Termination of Time-Limited Appointments - Foreign Service \(FS\)](#) provides USAID's policy on the termination of appointments of FS career candidates and non-career FSL employees for failure to meet performance expectations. This chapter references FS career candidates in limited instances, but ADS 450 provides the controlling policy.

[ADS 461](#) contains information on the FS EP&D Program which is related to the employee performance and development activities described in this chapter.

[ADS 463, Foreign Service Promotion Eligibility Requirements and Performance Boards](#) contains information on the FS and SFS Promotion Boards and Performance Standards Board.

The procedures outlined in this ADS chapter do not impact or change the Agency's ability to separate FSL employees, in accordance with Section 612 of the FSA, as amended and [ADS 450](#), or FS employees for cause, in accordance with [Section 610 of the FSA, as amended](#). For guidance on initiating Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) please contact the Office of Human Capital Talent and Management, Employee Labor Relations (HCTM/ELR).

464.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

a. The **Principal Officer of an Operating Unit (OU)** (the most senior USAID FS/SFS officer in the OU) is responsible for:

1. Ensuring all employees are contributing to the OU's work, and
2. Ensuring supervisors are maximizing employee performance.

b. The **Supervisor (Rating Official)** is responsible for:

1. Working closely with employees to establish work and skill development objectives;
2. Providing performance feedback;
3. Revising expectations and objectives, as needed, and evaluating performance;
4. Determining whether the employee's overall performance is satisfactory or unsatisfactory; and
5. Providing clear expectations and informal coaching and feedback on employee performance and progress, utilizing 360 sources, as appropriate.

c. **Employees** are responsible for:

1. Participating in their own performance and development planning from beginning to end. This includes helping to develop and document work and skill development objectives aligned with the skill standards of their class;
2. Identifying and working on professional development activities;
3. Working diligently to meet expectations and objectives established with their RO;
4. Participating in review and feedback discussions;
5. Evaluating themselves honestly; and
6. Completing the required Annual Accomplishment Records (AAR) or employee sections of the Annual Evaluation Form (AEF), as applicable.

d. The **Reviewing Official (second line supervisor) (or Principal Officer)** is responsible for:

1. Reviewing and approving implementation of the PIP and either concurring or not concurring with a determination by a RO that an employee is performing at an unsatisfactory level at the end of the performance appraisal cycle; and
 2. Ensuring the RO has conducted the required quarterly conversations with the employee prior to the implementation of the PIP.
- e. The **Performance Standards Board (PSB)** is responsible for:
1. Reviewing performance evaluation files of career FS employees who failed a PIP; and
 2. Reviewing performance evaluation files of career FS employees who have received two low-ranked ratings in five years.
- f. The **Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO), Office of Human Capital and Talent Management (HCTM)**, is responsible for:
1. Approving recommendations of the PSB to retire an employee, whether due to the employee's receipt of two low-ranked ratings in five years or their failure of a PIP;
 2. Reviewing the findings of the PSB to determine if there are extenuating circumstances that warrant retaining the employee; and
 3. Scheduling the administrative review per section **464.3.9**.
- g. The **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Center for Performance Excellence (HCTM/CPE)** is responsible for:
1. Formulating and monitoring the EP&D program;
 2. Providing advice to employees, supervisors, and ROs about the EP&D program requirements;
 3. Providing training for the PSB; and
 4. Coordinating with HCTM/ELR, when appropriate, to initiate action against those who fail to comply with any aspect of this program.
- h. The **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Office of Employee and Labor Relations Division (HCTM/ELR)** is responsible for:
1. Advising supervisors/ROs on performance counselings and PIPs; and
 2. Assisting ROs with drafting PIPs and facilitating the process associated with performance-based actions.

i. The **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Foreign Service Center (HCTM/FSC)** is responsible for:

1. Finding a suitable placement for an employee retained following failure of a PIP; and
2. Providing guidance and developmental opportunities, in coordination with HCTM/Staff Care and Backstop Coordinators, to address the deficiencies identified in the failed PIP, if the PSB or CHCO determine that there are extenuating circumstances that warrant retaining the employee.

j. The **Office of the General Counsel, Ethics and Administration (GC/EA)** is responsible for:

1. Reviewing PIPs before issuance;
2. Reviewing an RO's determination that an employee failed a PIP; and
3. Providing legal support to HCTM and supervisors regarding all aspects of this ADS chapter.

k. The **Regional Legal Officer (RLO)** advises management in conjunction with GC/EA regarding performance management issues and PIPs in their respective Missions.

464.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

464.3.1 Communicating Deficient Performance

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

A key premise of the Agency's performance management program is that employee performance and development is a shared responsibility between employees and their supervisors/Rating Officials (RO). ROs are responsible for working closely with employees in establishing work and skill development objectives and performance expectations, providing ongoing coaching and feedback, supporting employee professional development, and adhering to the established schedules and processes. Employees are expected to play an active role in setting performance objectives that are appropriate and challenging, establishing clear expectations to guide and assess their performance throughout the performance appraisal cycle, identifying and acting on areas for professional development to continuously improve performance, and completing and submitting required documentation on time.

Establishing clear performance expectations and providing frequent performance feedback are best practices to ensure expectations are being met. In many cases, an open line of communication between the RO and employee can resolve or improve performance problems.

If an employee is not performing satisfactorily against established work objectives or job expectations, or is displaying deficiencies in specific FS skill areas or technical backstop competencies, the RO must immediately notify the employee of the deficiency (i.e., the RO does not need to wait for a quarterly conversation). The RO must notify the employee either verbally or in writing initially, but if one or more notices does not result in needed improvements, the RO must document their counseling in writing as follows:

1. Specify in which job requirement(s), technical backstop competencies, work objective(s), or specific FS skill area(s) the employee is performing poorly; and
2. Communicate identified objectives that constitute a satisfactory level of performance for the deficient area.

The RO may contact HCTM/ELR for assistance in drafting a written counseling.

464.3.2 Performance Improvement Plan

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

A PIP is a formal written plan provided to an employee whose performance in one or more work objectives, job requirements, technical backstop competencies, and/or FS skill areas is determined to be unsatisfactory at any point during the performance appraisal cycle. In addition to defining the length of the opportunity period, the PIP provides a structured means of identifying the areas of unsatisfactory performance and devising a plan for an employee to improve their performance. It is the last opportunity for an employee to improve their performance prior to a performance-based action or referral to the PSB.

If, after issuance of a written counseling and a reasonable time period for the employee to improve (no less than 10 working days), an employee continues to perform in an “unsatisfactory” manner, the RO must implement a written PIP, consistent with section **464.3.6**. The RO may issue the PIP at any time prior to the end of the rating period, which may be extended, as necessary, to accommodate the PIP.

464.3.3 Maximizing Employee Performance Timeline

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

An RO may implement a PIP at any point during the performance appraisal cycle. USAID has established a performance appraisal cycle for the FS EP&D process that runs for one year from April 1 through March 31. The minimum (and typical) duration of a PIP is 90 calendar days.

A supervisor may extend the annual performance appraisal cycle, as needed, in order to allow an employee to complete a PIP before they receive their official rating of record for the performance appraisal cycle. A supervisor may, in rare instances, end a PIP before the requisite 90 calendar day period if the employee demonstrates sustained satisfactory performance before the scheduled PIP end date. The supervisor may also extend the 90 calendar day timeframe if they and HCTM/ELR agree that an extension is warranted due

to extenuating circumstances (e.g., medical emergencies, or unforeseen operational circumstances that may affect PIP deadlines).

Principal Officers must determine whether the official end of an employee's tour will occur prior to the conclusion of a PIP. If so, the Principal Officer must consult with HCTM/FSC regarding available solutions, which may include the extension of the employee's tour.

The PIP process for career candidates is outlined in [ADS 450.3.5.1](#).

464.3.4 Initiating a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

464.3.4.1 Components of a Performance Improvement Plan

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

Prior to initiating a PIP, the RO must consult with HCTM/ELR regarding the path forward. If, after consulting with HCTM/ELR, the supervisor determines that a PIP is warranted, the supervisor must work with HCTM/ELR and their RLO, if appropriate, to write the PIP and GC/EA must clear the PIP before it is formally issued.

The PIP must include the following:

- A description of the nature of the skill(s) or performance deficiencies that are unsatisfactory;
- A description of the supervisor's efforts to notify the employee of these deficiencies through feedback and counseling;
- The general performance or skill level expected of an FSO in that position and grade, and what the employee needs to do or demonstrate in order to receive a "satisfactory" rating at the end of the PIP;
- The official start and end dates of the PIP (the "opportunity to improve" period or "PIP period");
- That the employee's performance will be reevaluated at the end of the PIP period;
- Signature of the RO; and
- Signature of the employee, or if the employee declines to sign, a note to that effect and the date the PIP was delivered to and reviewed with the employee.

464.3.4.2 Implementing a Performance Improvement Plan

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

During the implementation of a PIP, the RO must review the employee's progress on a continuing basis and provide guidance and/or feedback regarding the employee's work assigned under the PIP.

464.3.4.3 Performance Improvement Plan Final Rating

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

At the conclusion of the PIP period, the RO must:

1. Determine whether performance is:
 - Satisfactory - Employee is now meeting expectations, or
 - Unsatisfactory - Employee has not met expectations for performance; and
2. Issue a brief narrative to the employee summarizing performance demonstrated during the PIP period (generally not to exceed two double-spaced pages) and enter the final performance rating. The RO may, but is not required to, attach supporting documentation.

The RO must give the employee no more than seven calendar days to write a brief narrative (not to exceed two double-spaced pages), if they choose to do so, describing their experience or performance related to the PIP. The employee may attach supporting documentation. The employee may not reference psychological or physical health issues in their statement.

The RO may submit an additional reply to the employee's statement. The RO may, but is not required to, attach supporting documentation.

464.3.4.4 Satisfactory Final Rating and Accountability

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

If an employee improves to a satisfactory level, the RO must rate the employee as "Satisfactory" for the PIP period in the final evaluation section of the PIP.

Employees who have satisfactorily completed a PIP must maintain that satisfactory level of performance for 12 months from the start date of the PIP on the skills or performance areas addressed during the PIP (even if the employee changes assignments or supervisors during this time period). If at any point during the 12 month period the employee's performance becomes unsatisfactory in the skill or performance area(s) addressed during the PIP, the following must occur:

- The RO/supervisor must issue a supplemental memorandum to the employee describing the current/continuing performance issue(s) to demonstrate that performance is again unsatisfactory;
- The second level Reviewer must review, comment, and sign the supplemental memorandum, and management must follow the same response process in section **464.3.4.3**, i.e., the employee must be provided no more than seven calendar days to write a brief narrative (not to exceed two double-spaced pages), if

they choose to do so, regarding the RO's supplemental memorandum, and the RO may submit a reply to the employee's statement that may include supporting documentation, if desired; and

- HCTM/ELR, in consultation with GC/EA, must review and determine the appropriate next steps, which may include a referral to the PSB for a potential low-ranked rating and/or recommendation to the CHCO for retirement, pursuant to [Section 608 of the FSA](#).

464.3.4.5 Unsatisfactory Final Rating

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

If the employee fails to bring their performance up to the satisfactory level by the end of the PIP period, or fails to maintain satisfactory performance in the subject matter addressed by the PIP (e.g., a work objective, a skill, a technical backstop competency, or a job requirement) for one year from the date the PIP is initiated, the RO must give the employee an "unsatisfactory" rating. When the final rating is unsatisfactory, a Reviewer (typically the RO's supervisor) must also review and sign the PIP. If the Reviewer does not concur with the RO's assessment, they must provide an explanation; however, the Reviewer's non-concurrence does not overturn the RO's evaluation. The PSB must determine how to resolve any discrepancies in the RO and the Reviewer's evaluations.

If, at the end of the PIP, the RO finds that an employee's performance is unsatisfactory, during the ensuing administrative processes, the RO must consult with HCTM/ELR, GC/EA, and the FSC to consider and arrange appropriate next steps related to the employee's interim status.

464.3.4.6 Performance Improvement Plans and Annual Performance Evaluations

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

A supervisor may extend the annual performance appraisal cycle to allow the employee to complete a PIP before they receive their official rating of record for the performance appraisal cycle.

An individual who demonstrates a satisfactory level of performance during the PIP period and maintains that level of performance until the end of the performance appraisal cycle must receive a satisfactory annual performance evaluation (unless a new PIP addressing a different performance area is initiated and the employee does not achieve a satisfactory level of performance in that area).

An unsatisfactory rating at the conclusion of a PIP becomes the official rating of record, no matter when such rating is determined during the appraisal cycle, and results in an automatic referral to a PSB.

Employees who are on a PIP when the performance cycle ends on March 31, or who completed a PIP during the performance cycle for which performance is continuing to be assessed by the RO, or who received an unsatisfactory APE for failing a PIP during the

most recent performance appraisal period are not eligible to compete for promotion that calendar year. However, an employee whose time-in-class (TIC) limits expire, if not promoted, who is on a PIP when the performance cycle ends may request a waiver from HCTM to be considered for promotion by the Promotion Board. In that instance, HCTM must make the Promotion Board aware that the employee is currently on a PIP. The employee must review their records and [ADS 440](#) to know when their TIC date is, and to request the waiver from HCTM.

Boards are instructed that non-traditional start or end dates for performance periods must not to be construed as either positive or negative.

464.3.5 Assignment Changes During a PIP

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

When an employee has been placed on a PIP, an assignment change that would take place during the PIP and would accordingly disrupt the PIP should not be permitted under any circumstances (see [ADS 436.3.17.1\(h\)](#) for information regarding curtailing due to performance issues). In the rare circumstance that an employee's current assignment ends for some reason before the end date of the PIP, the RO must summarize the employee's performance on the PIP as of the last working day of the employee's assignment, mark the PIP incomplete, and send the PIP and all supporting documentation to HCTM.

HCTM must forward the documents to the employee's next RO, along with the employee's completed and signed AAR (for FS Officers) or Appraisal Input Form (for SFS Officers) for the PIP period through the date of departure. The new RO, in consultation with HCTM/ELR and GC/EA, must review the PIP to determine how to apply it in the new assignment, including how elements of the PIP must be retained, supplemented, or revised in the future assignment. If the new RO revises the PIP, they must notify the employee in writing of their decision and hold a meeting with the employee to present revised deadlines and/or requirements, as appropriate. Prior to resumption of the PIP, the employee must be given a grace period of 14 calendar days to allow for settling-in and getting established at the new assignment or however many days may be needed to revise the PIP for the new assignment, whichever period of time is longer. At the conclusion of the PIP period, the RO must close out the PIP following the procedures described in section **464.3.4**.

If the RO is reassigned while the PIP is in effect and the employee remains in the same position for which the PIP was established, the RO must summarize the employee's performance on the PIP as of the last week of the RO's assignment. The RO must provide documents and communications with the employee related to the employee's performance under the PIP to whoever is designated as the employee's new or temporary RO. The new RO must take over responsibility for monitoring and closing out the PIP, including the final evaluation and summary.

Employees on a PIP may not submit an out-of-cycle bid for a new assignment that would require departure while the PIP is in effect.

464.3.6 PSB Review of FSOs Failing Performance Improvement Plans or Determined to Not Be Meeting the Standards of Performance For Their Class by a Board

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

The PSB reviews career Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) whose performance remains unsatisfactory, even after coaching, feedback, and a 90 calendar day opportunity to improve under a PIP (in addition to its role in reviewing files of career FSOs who have received two low-ranked ratings from Promotion Boards) (see [ADS 464maa, Precepts for the Performance Standards Board](#)).

1. **Board meetings:** Boards may meet virtually or in person, as needed, to provide timely reviews of the records of any FSO who was placed on a PIP and failed to bring their performance to a satisfactory level within the 90 calendar day PIP period.
2. **Board reviews:** The PSB must review the completed PIP and five years of performance records (or as many as are available if less than five years of records are available, to include AEFs and AARs and promotion packages submitted to Performance Boards in the past five years, plus prior Board ratings and memoranda, and documentation related to current and previous performance issues and PIPs) for career FSOs who have failed a PIP or for individuals who initially passed a PIP but failed to retain a satisfactory performance level for one year from the start of the PIP, to determine if there are reasons the individual should not be retired (i.e., subject to mandatory retirement under [Section 608 of the FSA](#)).

Factors that might lead to a determination that the individual should not be referred for mandatory retirement may include a serious person-job mismatch (i.e., an inappropriate assignment) that affected performance, an improperly conducted PIP process, or other unusual extenuating circumstances. The PSB must not consider employee psychological or physical health issues.

The PSB should rely upon the information HCTM provides to make its decision. In rare circumstances, however, if the PSB believes it needs additional, relevant factual information to make its decision, the PSB may request this information from HCTM, and HCTM may provide the information if appropriate, documenting the request and the responsive information provided. For example, if a supervisor states that an employee missed a deadline and the employee states that they did not miss it, and there is no documentation on the matter in the file at hand, if the PSB believes they need additional information to make their decision, the PSB may ask for documentation showing when the employee submitted the given assignment. HCTM may then ask the supervisor for this documentation (or to state that none exists, as applicable).

Although the PSB must review records for possible extenuating circumstances, except in rare cases, properly documented unsatisfactory performance in the current assignment

reflects a failure to meet performance standards of the class and is sufficient to warrant a mandatory retirement recommendation.

1. Documenting extenuating circumstances: If the PSB determines that extenuating circumstances warrant an exception, they must document the basis for their decision and submit this document to the CHCO along with any recommendations they have for addressing the situation (e.g., curtailment, compassionate leave of absence, reassignment, etc.).
2. When separation is not recommended by the PSB: The CHCO, after reviewing the PSB's recommendation and consulting with the Mission Director/Head of the OU or other USAID personnel familiar with the situation, must make a final decision regarding what, if any, actions must be taken including, but not limited to, reassignment or training. The final PIP, including the employee statement and RO's reply, and the low-ranked rating must be retained by HCTM/ELR along with the APE. The CHCO does not have the authority to mandatorily retire an employee without the PSB's recommendation.
3. When separation is recommended: If the PSB determines that there are no compelling reasons for retaining the individual who failed a PIP, failed to maintain satisfactory performance for one year from the date of the PIP, or received two low-ranked ratings in five years, they must submit a recommendation to retire the career FSO to the CHCO for failing to meet the standards/expectations of performance for their class pursuant to [Section 608 of the FSA](#). HCTM/CPE must provide the CHCO with the entire set of documentation the PSB received for its review. If the CHCO accepts the recommendation of the PSB, HCTM must initiate the actions required to retire an employee under [Section 608 of the FSA](#). If the CHCO decides not to accept the recommendation of the PSB, the CHCO must determine if an alternate course of action is appropriate.
4. Automatic low-ranked ratings: Except in the rare case where a PSB determines that a PIP was improperly instituted or conducted, an unsatisfactory PIP evaluation, or failure to maintain satisfactory performance for one year from the date of the PIP—where the PSB declines to recommend separation or the CHCO chooses not to separate the employee—results in an automatic low-ranked rating. This low-ranked rating may be used as the basis for a subsequent retirement action pursuant to Section 608 of the FSA if the individual receives a second low-ranked rating in a five year period.
5. Promotion eligibility: Individuals who receive a low-ranked rating at any point during a performance cycle, who are on a PIP at the end of the regular performance appraisal period, or who completed a PIP during the performance cycle for which performance is continuing to be assessed by the RO, or who received an unsatisfactory APE for failing a PIP during the most recent performance appraisal period are not eligible to compete for promotion when the Promotion Boards meet in the year in which the performance cycle at issue concludes.

6. Within-grade increases: Individuals who receive a low-ranked rating at any point during a performance cycle (from a PSB or a Promotion Board) must not receive the next scheduled within grade increase.
7. Grievance process: Employee grievance rights are described in [ADS 486, Grievances – Foreign Service](#) and [3 FAM 4430](#).

464.3.7 Administrative Review

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

When a PSB recommends an employee for separation/mandatory retirement, based on a determination that the employee is not meeting the standards of the class, the CHCO must schedule an Administrative Review and notify the employee that they have the right to be represented and to be heard. The employee must be given at least 15 calendar days to prepare their response if on a domestic assignment and 30 calendar days if serving on an assignment outside of the continental United States, which can include an oral and/or written presentation. As part of their written or oral response, the employee may present evidence of extenuating circumstances that they believe impacted their performance. This may include physical and psychological health issues. In the latter instance, the employee should recognize that, as the law sets forth, an employee with a disability must meet the same production standards, whether quantitative or qualitative, as a non-disabled employee in the same job. The employee should also recognize that the Agency's reasonable accommodation process is offered and designed to provide employees with disabilities the accommodations they need to meet production standards.

During the Administrative Review, the CHCO must consult with a senior member of the employee's backstop (FS-1 or SFS) in making their determination. The CHCO should rely on the information HCTM provides them to make their decision. In rare circumstances, if the CHCO believes they need additional, relevant factual information to make their decision, the CHCO may request the information from HCTM. HCTM may provide the information if appropriate, documenting the request and the responsive information provided.

For example, if a supervisor states that an employee missed a deadline, the employee states that they did not miss it, and there is no documentation on the matter in the file at hand, the CHCO may ask for documentation showing when the employee submitted the given assignment. HCTM may then ask the supervisor for such documentation or to state that none exists, as applicable). If the Administrative Review substantiates that a career member of the FS has failed to meet the performance requirements of their class, HCTM must retire the employee from the FS and provide them with the appropriate benefits, in accordance with [Section 609 of the Foreign Service Act](#). HCTM must retire the career member from the FS effective no later than 60 calendar days from the date of the Administrative Review decision. Nothing in this paragraph overrides the protections provided in [ADS 486](#) (see [3 FAM 4400](#)).

464.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

464.4.1 External Mandatory References

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

- a. [3 FAM 4363](#)
- b. [3 FAM 4430](#)
- c. [5 CFR 430, Subpart B, Performance Appraisal for General Schedule, Prevailing Rate, and Certain Other Employees](#)
- d. [5 USC 43, Performance Appraisal](#)
- e. [Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended](#)

464.4.2 Internal Mandatory References

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

- a. [ADS 414mac, Precepts for USAID's Foreign Service Tenure Board](#)
- b. [ADS 440, Time-in-Class \(TIC\) Limitations and Limited Career Extensions \(LCEs\)](#)
- c. [ADS 461, FS & SFS Performance Management & Development Programs](#)
- d. [ADS 461mab, USAID Employee Performance and Development Process: Guidebook for Supervisors](#)
- e. [ADS 461mac, Employee Performance and Development Process: Guidebook for Employees](#)
- f. [ADS 463, Foreign Service Promotion Eligibility Requirements and Performance Boards](#)
- g. [ADS 463mai, Precepts for Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service Performance Boards](#)
- h. [ADS 464maa, Precepts for the Performance Standards Board \(PSB\)](#)
- i. [ADS 489, Performance Based Actions- Civil Service](#)
- j. [ADS 490, Agency Administrative Grievance Procedure](#)

464.4.3 Mandatory Forms

Effective Date: 07/05/2024

- a. [AID Form 461-1, Foreign Service Annual Performance Evaluation Form](#)
- b. [AID Form 461-3, Foreign Service Skills Assessment Worksheet](#)
- c. [AID Form 461-5, Foreign Service Annual Accomplishment Record](#)
- d. [Foreign Service Quarterly Conversation Record \(QCR\) for Employees and Supervisors Form](#)

464.5 ADDITIONAL HELP
Effective Date: 07/05/2024

- a. [Performance Improvement Plan \(PIP\) Template](#)

464.6 DEFINITIONS
Effective Date: 07/05/2024

See the [ADS Glossary](#) for all ADS terms and definitions.

360 degree sources

Customers, peers, other managers, subordinates, and other individuals with whom or for whom an employee may have worked who can provide feedback, from their various perspectives, about an employee's performance during any period of performance currently being evaluated. Selection panels are prohibited from directly or indirectly soliciting feedback from implementing partners on the performance of Contracting/Agreement Officers (COs/AOs) and Contracting Officer's Representatives/Agreement Officer's Representatives (CORs/AORs). (Chapter [421](#), [457](#), [461](#), [462](#), [463](#))

Annual Accomplishment Record (AAR)

The form completed by FSOs at the end of the performance period, or prior to changing assignments or supervisors, to document key accomplishments and any special challenges or circumstances that affected performance during the period. (Chapter [461](#) and [464](#))

Annual Evaluation Form (AEF)

The form used for evaluating performance under the Employee Evaluation Program (EEP). (Chapter [415](#), [459](#), [461](#), [462](#), [464](#))

Annual Rating Cycle (Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service)

A one-year evaluation period, also known as the performance period, which runs April 1 – March 31. (Chapter [461](#) and [464](#))

Appraisal Input Form (AIF) (Senior Foreign Service)

An evaluation form covering a period of performance that is long enough to require written documentation of performance against an established performance plan but not long

enough to be considered representative of the employee's performance for the entire annual rating cycle. (**Chapters [461](#), [462](#), [464](#)**)

Core Skills

The core skills that are required for all FSOs and Senior FSOs are defined in the FS/SFS Skills Framework. (**Chapter [461](#) and [463](#)**)

Feedback

Communicating to employees the extent to which their performance does not meet, meets, or exceeds expectations, the adequacy of their relevant skills, and their progress toward career development goals. (**Chapters [461](#), [462](#), [464](#)**)

Performance Appraisal Cycle

The 12-month cycle during which performance is appraised. In some circumstances, the performance appraisal cycle can be split into multiple performance appraisal periods. (**Chapter [461](#) and [464](#)**)

Performance Appraisal Period

Periods of performance appraisal that occurs within the performance appraisal cycle, initiated when an employee changes supervisors or assignments. (**Chapter [461](#) and [464](#)**)

Performance Counseling Memorandum

A Performance Counseling memorandum is a written document that puts the employee on notice that the employee's performance is unsatisfactory in one or more areas (skills, work objectives, job requirements) and that if the employee does not improve the performance to a satisfactory level, the employee may be put on a Performance Improvement Plan. (**Chapter [464](#)**)

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) (Foreign Service)

A formal written plan provided to an employee whose performance in one or more work objectives, job requirements, technical backstop competencies, and/or FS skill areas is determined to be unsatisfactory. (**Chapter [464](#)**)

Principal Officers

The most senior officer in a USAID Operating Unit in the field, *e.g.*, USAID Mission Director or the USAID Senior Development Advisor or USAID Representative, if properly designated by the cognizant Regional Assistant Administrator pursuant to **ADS 102**. Principal Officers also include the directors of USAID/W/Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance and Office of Transition Initiatives when those offices are implementing emergency disaster relief and assistance to internally displaced persons, humanitarian emergencies, or immediate post-conflict and political crisis response in a cooperating country. For non-presence countries, the cognizant Principal Officer is the Senior USAID officer in a regional USAID Operating Unit responsible for the non-presence country, or in the absence of such a responsible Operating Unit, the Principal U.S. Diplomatic Officer in the non-presence country exercising delegated authority from USAID. (**Chapter [320](#), [461](#), [462](#), [463](#), [464](#)**)

Rating Official

The employee's immediate supervisor or team leader, who prepares the initial summary rating. (**Chapter [421](#), [461](#), [462](#), [463](#), [464](#)**)

Reviewing Official

The second-level supervisor (supervisor of the rating official) who reviews and concur/not concur with the implementation of a PIP and on any end of year evaluation in which the Rating Official determines that the rated employee is not performing at a satisfactory level. (**Chapter [461](#) and [464](#)**)

Skill Development Objectives

Expectations for how an employee will work to develop or enhance skills or sub skills during the performance period, as established through discussions between the supervisor and employee. (**Chapter [461](#) and [464](#)**)

Skill Level

The level that an employee is rated against to determine whether he or she is meeting or exceeding the expectations of their personal grade. (**Chapter [461](#) and [464](#)**)

Skills Framework

A chart that provides the core skill area and sub skill definitions as well as proficiency indicators that describe expectations across the FS grade levels and SFS. (**Chapter [461](#) and [463](#)**)

Subskills

Specific skills that are aligned to a core skill and defined within the skills framework, reflecting the requirements of Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service Officers. (**Chapters [461](#), [463](#) and [464](#)**)

Work Objectives

Expectations for an employee established by management for a particular rating period. (**Chapter [450](#), [461](#), [463](#), [464](#)**)

Work Objectives (Foreign Service)

Expectations for the work that an employee will accomplish, as established through discussions between the supervisor and employee. Work objectives may be short or long-term (e.g., annual) and updated as needed throughout the performance period. While employee participation in the development of work objectives is encouraged, the Rating Official maintains the final authority to set work objectives. (**Chapters [461](#), [462](#), [464](#)**)

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