



Jeffrey R. Gahler,
Sheriff

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PERSONNEL POLICY

Employee Performance - Guardian Tracking System

Distribution:	All Employees	Index:	PER 0902
Responsible Unit:	Human Resources	Rescinds:	
DLI Program:		MD Code:	

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1. Purpose

Employees are the most valuable resource of the Harford County Sheriff's Office. The Guardian Tracking System provides supervisors with a comprehensive tool for recognizing exceptional employee performance as well as the means to document employee shortcomings in a transparent manner. Understanding that its employees deserve recognition for exceptional performance and the opportunity to correct shortcomings, the Harford County Sheriff's Office will utilize the Guardian Tracking System. Supervisors will base employee performance appraisals on a comprehensive review and evaluation of all entries made in the Guardian System for the employee during the evaluation period. In addition to serving as a basis for employee performance appraisals, to the extent that it illuminates repeated negative performance or behavior, Guardian Tracking can serve as an employee early warning system. Supervisors should make every effort to remediate patterns of repeated poor performance or behavior before seeking adverse employment action against the employee.

2. Policy

The Harford County Sheriff's Office will base employee performance appraisals on a comprehensive review and evaluation of all entries made in the Guardian Tracking System for an employee during the evaluation period. The Guardian Tracking System should be used to document positive performance as well as to notify employees of performance deemed unacceptable. The use of the Guardian Tracking System as the Performance Appraisal Rating (PAR) tool will also provide data for making personnel decisions involving compensation, training, development, and discipline or termination.

3. Definitions

FORMAL COUNSELING: may include a review of applicable standards and policies, actions which may be expected if performance or conduct does not improve, and a reasonable time period established for correction and review.

GENERAL COUNSELING: may be undertaken when, in the discretion of the Agency, it is deemed necessary to improve performance, instruct the employee, and/or attempt to avoid the need for disciplinary measures.

4. Procedures

A. Documentation

- Supervisors will continually assess the performance, demeanor, and behavior of employees and utilize Guardian Tracking to document both positive and negative employee performance, demeanor, and behavior.

2. Though no specific frequency of documentation is required, supervisors are expected to record observations on a regular and continual basis.
 3. Supervisors will document positive work performance, to include:
 - a. letters of appreciation;
 - b. performance worthy of commendation;
 - c. noteworthy performance;
 - d. award nominations;
 - e. peer recognition of exceptional performance;
 - f. willingness to alter his schedule to support shift/unit needs;
 - g. volunteer work furthering a Sheriff's Office program specifically or a goal of the Sheriff's Office generally; or
 - h. any conduct that the supervisor believes is worthy of recognition.
 4. Any employee may make positive comments about another employee's job performance and are encouraged to do so.
 5. Supervisors will also document any negative employee performance, behaviors, and demeanor issues, to include, but not limited to:
 - a. poor attendance or attendance patterns; or
 - b. patterns of behavior indicating the existence of a problem.
 6. An employee who wants to bring the negative performance of a peer or co-worker to light must do so through his supervisor or the supervisor of the peer. Guardian Tracking will not accept negative comments of peers or coworkers.
 7. Complaints fitting the criteria set forth in HCSO Policy PER 0201 (Complaints Against Deputies) and HCSO Policy PER 0301 (Sexual Harassment-Workplace Harassment-Discrimination) will be documented according to the procedures outlined in those policies.
 8. General counseling need not be documented in an employee's evaluation.
 9. Formal counseling must be documented in an employee's evaluation.
- B. Mandatory Documentation
1. Supervisors will document all the following in Guardian:

- a. communications to the Agency from any source and by any means expressing positive comments about an employee.
- b. disciplinary actions.
- c. performance improvement required and the plan to implement necessary change.
- d. policy violation, except complaints documented on an IA-028.
- e. poor verbal communication skills (rudeness/attitude).
- f. tardiness and unscheduled absences.
- g. all monthly inspection discrepancies.
- h. any issue that the supervisor believes is worthy of documentation.

C. Supervisor Response to Patterns of Behavior

- 1. Supervisors will monitor Guardian entries for patterns associated with their subordinates.
- 2. Supervisors should consider for formal recognition employees with patterns of positive performance, behavior, or demeanor.
- 3. Supervisors recognizing a pattern of poor performance, behavior, or demeanor must document a performance improvement plan in Guardian and discuss the plan with the employee.
- 4. Periodic updates on the employee's progress toward his performance improvement should be documented.

D. Office of Professional Standards

- 1. Any conduct documented on the "Complaint Against Personnel" (IA-28) form will not be documented in the Guardian System.
- 2. For each employee who has an administrative charge sustained against him, the Human Resources Director will, as soon as practical, enter into the Guardian Tracking System an entry noting that a charge was sustained as well as the date of the incident and the date of the sustained finding.

E. Evaluations

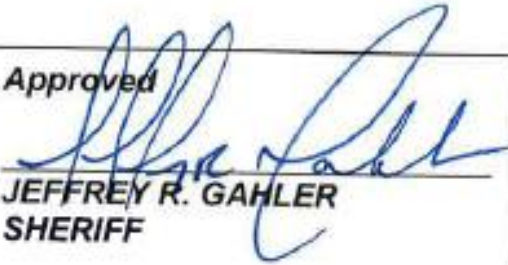
- 1. The Guardian System will be the means by which Agency employees are tracked for evaluation purposes as noted in PER 0901.
- 2. Items not documented in the Guardian System will not be used for evaluation purposes unless exceptional circumstances exist (i.e. statistics of employee performance run merely to place into an evaluation do not need to be entered into Guardian first).
- 3. To initiate a satisfactory performance appraisal, the supervisor will:

- a. make an entry in the Guardian System under the “Performance Appraisal - Satisfactory” heading;
 - b. make a note in the entry indicating the dates which the evaluation covers;
 - c. mention any specifics the employee may need to concentrate on in the coming rating period.
4. To initiate an unsatisfactory performance appraisal, the supervisor will:
- a. make an entry under the “Performance Appraisal - Unsatisfactory” heading;
 - b. make a note in the entry indicating the dates which the evaluation covers;
 - c. specifically detail the deficiency or deficiencies and document the steps taken by supervisors to rectify the deficiency or deficiencies;
 - d. use previous Guardian entries as appropriate supporting documentation for the unsatisfactory rating; and
 - e. must detail an action plan to rectify the performance issues in the upcoming appraisal period.
5. Evaluation Approval and Submission
- a. The employee’s supervisor in the unit or assignment will complete the PAR in the Guardian System.
 - b. Upon entry, the highest ranking unit or assignment member, below Division Commander, will comment and approve the PAR in Guardian (first approval).
 - c. The Division Commander will comment and approve (second approval).
 - d. Upon the second approval, by the Division Commander, the entry will automatically be made available to the rated employee.
 - e. All PAR’s must be completed in the Guardian System, to include approval through Captain, within 30 calendar days of the close of the rating period.


F. **Expungement Process**

1. Upon written request to the agency’s Human Resources Director, a Harford County Sheriff’s Office employee may have expunged from their personnel file all performance evaluations older than five years from the date of the request. This would include all paper forms, as well as all Guardian Tracking System electronic entries. You may not choose certain items to expunge. If the request is made, all performance documentation (positive and negative) older than five years will be destroyed. Employees may only make this request once per calendar year.
 - a. Complete a Memorandum (SO-212) addressed to the Human Resources Director requesting that all performance documentation older than 5 years be expunged. Refer to Appendix A for a template of this Memorandum.

- b. Upon receipt of the Memorandum (SO-212), the Human Resources Director will expunge the requested records. The date of expungement will be noted on the Memorandum and a copy sent back to the employee for confirmation.

Approved

JEFFREY R. GAHLER
SHERIFF
DATE 7-21-2021

APPENDIX A: Performance Evaluation Expungement Memo

 <p>HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE COURAGE HONOR INTEGRITY</p> <p>Sheriff Jeffrey R. Gahler</p>	
MEMORANDUM	
DATE:	
TO:	Tracey Martinelli HR Director, Services & Support Bureau
FROM:	Your name and Rank Title, Bureau and Division Assignment
SUBJECT:	Performance Evaluation Expungement
<p>Pursuant to HCSO policy PER 0902 please accept this memorandum as an official request to expunge all files (paper and electronic) of performance documentation in my personnel file and my Guardian Tracking System electronic file. I understand that all performance documentation (positive and negative) for the 5-year period prior to the date of this memorandum will be destroyed.</p>	
_____ Employee Signature	_____ Date
_____ Division Commander Signature	_____ Date
Record Expunged:	
_____ HR Director Signature	_____ Date
7/21	SO 212