Stage B: Progress Review

The following steps guide *supervisors, employees,* and *reviewers* through the Stage B Progress Review.

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Purpose

In the Progress Review stage, the supervisor and employee regularly talk about, and keep track of, job performance. The supervisor will inform the employee on how they are performing on the job. The supervisor can help the employee to think about ways to meet the defined performance criteria that were discussed in Stage A.

Summary

There are seven (potentially eight) steps in the Progress Review:

1. **Meet informally with the employee regularly** during the year so both parties understand areas of success and areas of improvement.
2. **Begin the mid-year review meeting** by explaining what will happen in this stage so the employee knows what to expect.
3. **Discuss and rate performance for each duty** so that the employee know how well they are performing each duty so far.
4. **Discuss and write down ways to improve performance** if necessary, so that the employee can perform better on specific job duties.
5. **Discuss and rate overall job performance** so the employee knows exactly how they are performing overall in their role.
6. **Update the duties and criteria** so that they are useful for the rest of the year.
7. **Sign the form and get signatures** to show that the supervisor, employee, and reviewer understand the ratings and comments.
8. ***Prepare a Remedial Development Plan*** *for any non-confidential employee who receives an overall "Below" rating at the Stage B Progress Review, so that they have the opportunity to achieve a "Meets" rating by the end of the fiscal year.*

How to Prepare for Stage B

The progress review stage has two parts. The first part is made up of informal review sessions, which begin as soon as Stage A has been completed and will continue until the end of the year. The second part is the mid-year Progress Review meeting.

Preparation for Informal Reviews

1. At the conclusion of the Stage A meeting, the supervisor should determine a schedule for regular informal review sessions with the employee. It is recommended to have at least two informal review sessions between each stage.
2. Ensure that the employee knows that they are free to request an informal review session at any time.
3. Keep track of the employee's performance. This may include the supervisor keeping reminder notes to themselves on areas that the employee is performing well or poorly. These reminder notes should be shared with the employee when written. **These reminder notes are informal and not part of the employee's official record.**
4. Suggest that the employee keep reminder notes as well on areas where they feel they are doing well or areas where they feel they could improve. The employee should list anything that is preventing them from doing their job correctly. The employee should share these notes with the supervisor when they are written.
5. The supervisor should ask the employee to review the job duties and criteria on their EPRS form before each review session.
6. A private and quiet location should be identified to hold these sessions, if possible.

Preparation for the Mid-Year Progress Review

1. Before the mid-year Progress Review meeting, ask the employee to think about and rate their performance for each job duty listed on the EPRS form and for overall job performance during Stage B.
2. Make sure that the employee has a copy of their EPRS form and the appropriate rating scale before the mid-year meeting.
3. Review the employee's performance and any notes from the past 6 months regarding employee performance. Compare this to the duties and criteria on the EPRS form.
4. **Pencil in** employee performance on the EPRS form (this can be accomplished by selecting the **Save for Later** button on the Stage B task). **Do not** make any final decisions on ratings until performance has been discussed between the supervisor and employee.
5. Speak with the reviewer on ratings thoughts **before** meeting with the employee.
6. Find a quiet, private place to hold the Progress Review.

Now the supervisor is ready to begin Stage B.

The 7 Steps of Stage B: Progress Review

Step 1. The Supervisor and Employee Hold Regular Informal Meetings

The supervisor should hold short informal progress review sessions regularly with the employee. At these sessions the supervisor and employee should discuss how the employee is performing.

These sessions are a way of "keeping on top of things" for both parties. Small issues can be addressed before they have the chance to become large problems. This also helps to avoid any surprises at the mid-year review.

Sessions should start being held shortly after the main job duties and performance criteria have been agreed upon during Stage A.

1. Talk about examples of job performance that have been seen, whenever possible. For example, one might discuss:
    - Unusually good or poor job performance
    - Things blocking successful performance and possible solutions
    - Changes in the job duties or criteria
    - Progress towards work unit objectives
2. During the sessions, be specific about job performance for each duty:
    - Talk about what the employee did or did not do
    - Talk about how the employee's performance was above or below expectations
    - If needed, talk about ways to improve the employee's performance
3. Change the duties and criteria on the EPRS form, only if there is a good reason to do so. Often the form will change when the assignments or procedures of the work unit change. If the form is changed, date and initial the change.
    - If you are using the paper form, make copies of the updated form for the employee and reviewer.
    - Be sure that the reviewer is told of any changes to the EPRS form made during the informal progress reviews.
4. Discuss with the reviewer how things are going with the employee during the year.

Remember, a supervisor does not need to wait until these meetings to mention good or poor performance. **Any time** a supervisor sees an employee performing well, they should let the employee know that they have noticed. And if a problem arises which needs attention, the supervisor or employee are encouraged to ask for a special session to discuss it.

Step 2. Update the Duties and Criteria

Once you are through reviewing the job duties and performance criteria for the first half of the performance year, it is time to think about any updates to the form for the next half of the performance year. Together, the supervisor and employee should think to themselves, "Have the duties or criteria changed?"

1. Make sure that the **duties** listed are still the most important for the rest of the year.
    - If a duty should be added, supervisors please review the Manage Job Duties & Performance Criteria job-aid.
    - If a duty is no longer performed, supervisors please select the "N/A- Duty No

Longer Performed" option during the Stage C Annual Review for the applicable job duty.

2. Make sure that the **performance criteria** for each duty are still the most useful.
    - The criteria may have to change during the year. Please note, that criteria are job specific not employee specific.
    - Criteria should detail how to successfully perform the job duty. They should be objective and not contain bias.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to keep the EPRS form up to date. The EPRS should be updated as changes occur, rather than only during the mid-year meeting whenever possible. However, keep in mind that changes to the EPRS form should not happen frequently. Changes should be made to job duties when the duties expected of the role change to meet the demands of the work unit.

Step 3. Begin the Mid-Year Review

The supervisor should start the mid-year meeting by going over the EPRS and reviewing next steps for Stage B so that the employee knows what to expect.

Here are some examples of what might be said by the supervisor during a Progress Review meeting:

- *"The purpose of this meeting is to let you know how well you are doing and to help you improve in certain areas, if needed."*
- *"We are now in the middle of the year, and it is time for the mid-year progress review. At this time, we will go over the following:*
    1. *You and I will discuss job performance so far this year.*
    2. *I will rate your job performance so far.*
    3. *We will discuss the duties and criteria we will use to evaluate your performance for the rest of the year.*
    4. *Signatures are to be provided by myself, yourself, and the reviewer.*
    5. *If you disagree with or would like to comment on the progress review ratings, you may do so in your assigned MyPath Stage B task."*
- *"You are able to print a copy of your performance review within your assigned MyPath Stage B task."*
- *"You may access your completed Stage A performance review within MyPath for reference."*
- *"The EPRS rating scale is available via this link."*

The supervisor should keep in mind the following during the meeting:

- They should listen carefully to what the employee has to say about their performance. The employee knows most about the details of their day-to-day routine.
- They should focus on what the employee is doing well.
- They should try to help the employee notice and find ways to solve any problems they encounter while on the job.
- The supervisor may need to help the employee understand what successful job performance is.
- They should remember that the employee may not appeal the mid-year advisory rating.

Step 4. Discuss and Rate Performance for Each Duty

This is a key function of the mid-year Progress Review meeting. When possible, the supervisor should provide examples of job performance that have been observed. This step is easier to complete when regular informal progress review sessions have taken place.

The supervisor and employee should both have copies of the EPRS rating scale.

EPRS Rating Scale

Rating	Definition
Below	Performance generally fails to meet criteria or requires extremely high levels of supervision. The employee is not doing the job at the level expected. Unsuccessful job performance is due to the employee's own lack of effort or ability. The employee's performance may hurt the performance of the work group overall. The employee's performance is **unsatisfactory**. When a supervisor rates performance on one job duty, they should consider the criteria listed on the EPRS form for that duty. **Note:** Supervisors and reviewers must always explain a "below" rating. If an overall rating of below is selected, a Remedial Development Plan must be created and your EPRS Coordinator must be notified.
Meets	Performance satisfies the job requirements. Generally, the employee performs according to the criteria, doing **a good job**. The employee is doing the job at the level expected for employees in this position. This good performance is due to the employee's own effort and ability. Usual levels of supervision are needed. The employee may make a strong contribution to meeting the work group's goals. A large number of employees will fall in this category/ this rating includes a **broad range** of performance, from just **barely satisfactory** to **highly satisfactory**.
Exceeds/Excels	Performance is greatly above the job requirements. Generally, the employee does well beyond the performance criteria, doing **outstanding** work. Job performance is excellent, and above and beyond what is expected of employees in this job. The employee requires less than usual supervision. Performance that exceeds criteria is due to the effort and ability of the employee. Any performance below criteria is minor or due to events not under the control of the employee. The employee's performance may have an important positive effect on how well the work group does overall. The employee's performance is **superior**. **Note:** Supervisors and reviewers must always explain an "exceeds/excels" rating.

Note: If a job duty is no longer performed, please select "N/A- Duty No Longer Performed"

During the discussion, the supervisor and employee should:

1. Go over the rating scale, which should be supplied to the employee before the meeting. The differences between each rating should be discussed. The employee should be asked if they understand these ratings.
2. Review each duty recorded so far in MyPath.
    - Go over the individual job duties and performance criteria. For each duty:
        - While reviewing the job duty and performance criteria, the employee should be asked how they feel they have been doing. The employee should provide details, if not the supervisor should inquire about additional supporting information.
        - The supervisor should ask the employee if there are any difficulties faced when completing the job duty.
        - The supervisor will communicate to the employee how they view the employee's performance while being as specific as possible.
        - Both parties must remember that they are discussing job performance in a professional capacity. **They must remain objective.**

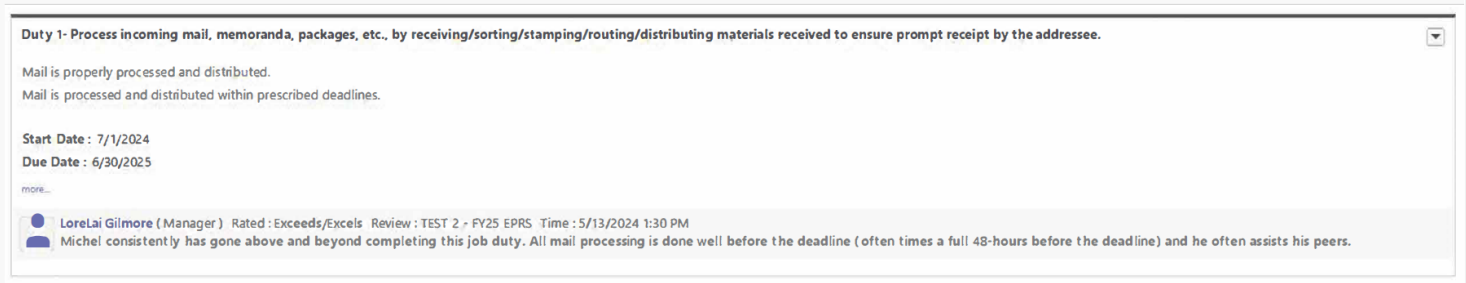
          An example of what not to say: "You have handed in incomplete work because you don't care about your work."

What to say instead: “The last 3 monthly summaries have been incomplete. All parts must be filled in to be considered complete.”

- Supervisors are encouraged to focus on the positive. If the employee is doing 90% of the job correctly, then 90% of the meeting should be spent discussing what the employee has done right. This open communication will encourage the employee to continue performing at their current level or higher.
- The two can discuss areas where they agree and disagree. Key areas of the job can be discussed, remember not to focus on unimportant details.
- If the duty or criteria have changed since the EPRS form was written, the supervisor can update them in MyPath.

3. An advisory rating for each job duty will be assigned by the supervisor in MyPath. The EPRS rating scale must be referenced when selecting a rating.
   - While it is recommended that the supervisor writes comments to explain their ratings, ratings are only required if they are a “Below” or “Exceeds/Excels.”

Job Duty Advisory Rating Example with Comments



Note: The employee in this example has an Exceeds/Excels rating so a comment is required in this instance. According to their supervisor they have gone above and beyond what is required of them, and their rating reflects!

Step 5. Discuss and Write Down Ways to Improve Job Duty Performance

Once duties have been rated, areas of improvement can be discussed to improve job performance, when needed. If improved performance is needed, the supervisor might want to discuss with the employee ways to improve their work to change their job duty performance trajectory over the next six months.

Guiding questions a supervisor may ask:

- *Are you satisfied with your performance of the assigned job duties?*
- *Are there any job duty ratings that you disagree with?*
  - *Why do you disagree?*
- *Is there anything getting in the way of job performance which I can help to correct?*
- *Was completing your job duties more difficult than expected? If so, why?*
- *This job duty was completed well in prior fiscal years, why do you think this year is different?*
- *Are there any skills or knowledge that you would like to gain in order to help you on the job?*
- *Is there anything that I can do to help?*

If the supervisor and employee have agreed upon ways to improve job performance this information can be recorded in the comments section of Stage B, or a document can be attached to the performance review.

Step 6. Discuss and Rate Overall Job Performance

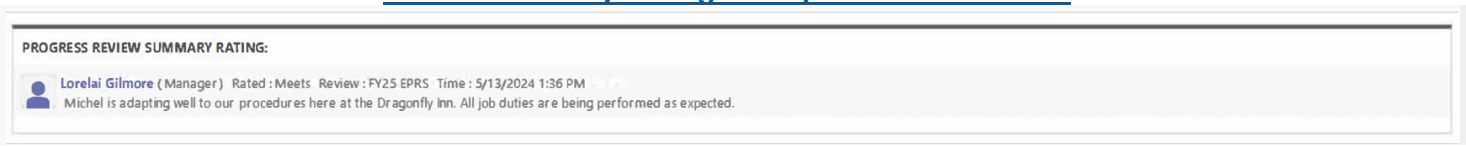
After job duty performance has been discussed overall performance can be reviewed and rated. Comments are required if an “Exceeds/excels” or a “Below” rating is selected.

Additionally, a “Below” rating should prompt the creation of a Remedial Development Plan (RDP).

Guiding questions a supervisor may ask:

1. *How do you think you have performed over the past 6 months?*
2. *Are there any key job duties that you perform that are not on the EPRS and may need to be updated on your Form 30?*
3. *This is an advisory rating; it is not the final rating. If you are dissatisfied with your overall rating, how will you improve your performance between now and the annual performance review?*
4. *Do you have any questions regarding the rating scale?*

Overall Advisory Rating Example with Comments



Note: The employee in this example has a meets rating so a comment is not required in this instance. Please remember that comments are required if an “Exceeds/Excels” or a “Below” rating is selected. Additionally, a “Below” rating should prompt the creation of a Remedial Development Plan and the EPRS Coordinator should be contacted.

If a Remedial Development Plan is needed, supervisors should give notice and begin coaching the employee by April 1st.

Step 7. Form Signatures & Printing

After the job duty ratings, summary progress review rating, and any comments have been recorded by the supervisor, each party will be assigned a signature task. The supervisor will sign first. After the supervisor signs, the form will progress to the employee for review, comment, and signature. And then finally, after the employee submits their form, the reviewer will be assigned a task for review, comment, and signature.

The supervisor’s signature means that they have done the advisory ratings and discussed them with the employee.

The employee’s signature means that the employee understands the evaluation and comments written on the EPRS. If they do not agree, the employee is encouraged to add comments before signing the form.

The reviewer’s signature means that they have read the advisory ratings and comments from the supervisor and employee. If they do not agree with the rating, the reviewer is encouraged to add comments before signing the form as this is not the final rating for the performance year.

Once fully signed, ensure that the supervisor, employee, reviewer, and human resources department have a copy of the EPRS.

- If electronically accessing EPRS, each participant may enter MyPath to print their own form.
- If completing the paper form, ensure a copy of the original is stored and that the employee and reviewer both have copies.

Step 8. Create a Remedial Development Plan (Situational)

This step is only necessary if an employee has received an overall "Below" progress review rating. The purpose of the EPRS Remedial Development Plan (RDP) is to assist employees who would benefit from receiving additional assistance to improve performance. RDPs are formulated jointly between the supervisor and the employee if a "Below" rating is received during Stage B or if the supervisor anticipates a "Below" rating will be given during Stage C. **If a Remedial Development Plan is needed, supervisors should give notice and begin coaching the employee by April 1st.**

Please note, confidential employees are not eligible for Remedial Development Plans.

Remedial Development Plan Creation Guidelines:

1. "Below" summary rating participants will be re-evaluated 30 days after the completion of Stage B and/or Stage C.
2. The RDP is to be placed in the employe's personnel file.
3. The employee is to be re-evaluated every thirty (30) days until a "meets" or "exceeds/excels" rating is achieved or six (6) months pass, whichever is first.
4. Employees nearing a "below" rating should be counseled by their supervisor three (3) months in advance of Stage C to allow for ample time to change the performance trajectory. The goal is to work with the employee to help them attain a "Meets" or "Exceeds/Excels" rating.
5. During the thirty (30) days re-review, if the employee continues to receive "below" ratings they have the ability to make a one-time appeal via the Merit Arbitration Board.
    - This appeal must be filed within ten (10) days of the last review rating.
    - Any decision in favor of the employee will be from the month of the appeal forward.
    - Such appeal may not be filed if the employee has already filed an appeal at the time of the final unsatisfactory review.
6. Once the employee receives a "Meets" or "Exceeds/Excels" rating during the review process, they will become eligible for the denied step and/or denied salary increases. Salary increases will go into effect on the date that the employee receives the "Meets" or "Exceeds/Excels" overall rating.
7. The employee's anniversary date for step purposes will not be affected by this process.
8. Any employee who may be adversely impacted by an untimely evaluation will be made whole upon the completion of the performance review and upon achieving a final rating of "Meets" or "Exceeds/Excels."
9. All financial considerations (i.e., merit increases/step rate increases) are based on the employee's most recent, final annual evaluation.
10. When work-related circumstances occur over which the employee/agency has no control, the employee is not to be prevented from attaining an overall rating of "Meets" or "Exceeds/Excels."

Ending Stage B and Preparing for Stage C

Informal progress review sessions will continue for the remainder of the performance evaluation year. Supervisors should keep track of employee performance. This will allow for them to bring meaningful discussion topics to these information meetings leading up to the Stage C Annual Review in June.

Supervisor Check List for Stage B

This checklist is a useful tool for supervisors. It can be used to keep track of important steps leading up to and during Stage B of the EPRS performance review process.

☐ Have informal progress review sessions been held, as needed?

☐ Have the job duties & performance criteria been updated as needed?

☐ Has the employee been explained the Stage B process?

☐ Has the rating scale been reviewed and discussed?

☐ Were job duty ratings discussed?

☐ Was the overall progress review rating discussed?

☐ Were positive performance instances discussed?

☐ Were ways to improve performance discussed?

☐ Was Stage B signed by you, the employee, and the reviewer in MyPath?

☐ Have you begun formulating a Remedial Development Plan (if necessary)?

Reminder: RDPs are only needed for employees who have received overall “below” ratings.

☐ Have you printed a copy of the performance review for your record?

Reviewer Check List for Stage B

This checklist is a useful tool for reviewers. It can be used to keep track of important steps leading up to and during Stage B of the EPRS performance review process.

☐ Have you spoken with the supervisor on the employee’s performance? Reviewers and supervisors should meet at least a few times during the year.

☐ Have any objectives, job assignments, or work procedures of the unit changed? If yes, the reviewer should help the supervisor make any necessary changes. The supervisor will then update the EPRS form.

☐ Have you met with the supervisor prior to the mid-year Progress Review meeting to discuss the employee?

☐ Have you answered any supervisory questions regarding the EPRS rating scale?

☐ Do the ratings and comments recorded by the supervisor make sense?

☐ Is there consistency in ratings across supervisors? For instance, are employees doing equal work on similar duties being rated alike? Joint meetings with all supervisors reporting to you may assist with this.

☐ Were comments entered by the supervisor on all “Below” and/or “Exceeds/Excels” ratings?

☐ Was a Remedial Development Plan created for any employee assigned an overall “Below” rating?

☐ If a Remedial Development Plan was assigned, was a meeting scheduled for the employee and supervisor to meet (within 30 days) to review the employee’s progress with the RDP?

☐ Have you reviewed and signed Stage B in MyPath?

Reminder: The reviewer does not assign a progress review rating. If the reviewer disagrees with the supervisor’s rating, they should comment and sign the form.

☐ Have you printed a copy of the performance review for your record?

Employee Check List for Stage B

This checklist is a useful tool for employees. It can be used to keep track of important steps during Stage B of the EPRS performance review process.

☐ Have you met with the supervisor for a formal Progress Review (Stage B) meeting?

☐ Have you reviewed and signed Stage B in MyPath?

☐ Have you printed a copy of the performance review for your record?