

## Performance Management for the Intelligence Community Civilian Workforce

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**A. AUTHORITY:** The National Security Act of 1947, as amended; the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004; Executive Order (EO) 12333, United States Intelligence Activities, as amended; and other applicable provisions of law.

**B. PURPOSE:** This Intelligence Community Directive (ICD):

1. Revises ICD 651, Performance Management System Requirements for the Intelligence Community Civilian Workforce, which addressed the conduct and performance management requirements for Intelligence Community (IC) employees at GS-15 equivalent and below grades;
2. Establishes a framework for managing the performance of IC employees at GS-15 equivalent and below grades to be incorporated into the performance management processes established and administered by IC elements;
3. Promotes a more agile workforce; and
4. Aligns IC performance management requirements with the Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-17-22, Comprehensive Plan for Reforming the Federal Government and Reducing the Federal Civilian Workforce, April 12, 2017.

**C. APPLICABILITY**

1. This Directive applies to the IC, as defined by the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, and to such other elements of any department or agency as may be designated an element of the IC by the President, or jointly by the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) and the head of the department or agency concerned.
2. This Directive also applies to IC employees at or below the GS-15 grade, or equivalent, appointed on a time-limited basis, including Joint Duty Rotations (JDRs), or certain other employees of an executive department appointed to IC positions on a limited-time basis, as designated by the head of that department, to the extent permitted by law.
3. For IC elements within departments, this Directive complements departmental performance management policies. To the extent there is conflicting guidance between this ICD and departmental policies, departmental policies shall have primacy.



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## D. POLICY

1. The performance expectations of IC elements and their senior leaders shall be linked to the National Intelligence Strategy and applicable departmental and IC element strategies. The performance expectations of subordinate managers, supervisors, and employees should align to the performance expectations of their IC element and senior leadership.

2. The performance management framework includes: common guiding principles (Section D.5), the IC employee performance management cycle (Section D.6) which includes three phases (Section D.7), and the core performance elements (Annex B).

3. Each IC element shall establish, implement, adequately resource, and administer a performance management program in accordance with the framework provided by this Directive. This program shall align with the common guiding principles in Section D.5 and incorporate the common core performance elements set forth by this Directive (Annex B). These common core performance elements sustain a strong, cohesive IC and promote consistency among IC element performance management programs. IC elements may, consistent with this Directive, implement additional performance management policies, requirements, and elements, at their discretion.

4. IC elements shall provide their employees adequate time throughout the performance assessment period for training on and administration of the performance management cycle. In addition, all IC elements shall adhere to and comply with merit system principles, to the extent required by law.

5. IC elements shall adhere to the common guiding principles listed below to maximize employee performance and ensure that employees and managers share a clear understanding of the mission and are held accountable in a performance-driven culture. These principles shall emphasize regular engagement between IC employees and managers to promote a shared understanding of ongoing performance including frequent, informal feedback. These common guiding principles include:

a. Developing employees with a focus on future growth potential by providing ongoing, actionable feedback;

b. Ensuring Human Capital Officers serve as strategic case managers for IC employees and managers, and as a liaison to other relevant element offices, as appropriate;

c. Establishing a common understanding of clear guidelines identifying an organization's performance standards; and

d. Providing appropriate training to managers and supervisors on addressing performance issues with clear guidance on the use of Performance Improvement Plans, and providing real-time access to resources such as training, counseling, and mentoring, for addressing immediate performance issues.

6. Each IC element shall develop a performance management cycle which, at a minimum, provides for:

a. The assessment of IC employees' performance by establishing individual annual performance objectives at the beginning of the performance assessment period, adjusting those

objectives as appropriate during the assessment period, and then comparing employees' progress and achievements in meeting those performance objectives at the conclusion of that period;

b. The assessment of how IC employees achieved their objectives using the core IC performance elements set forth in Annex B, as well as any additional IC element-specific performance elements. All such additional performance elements shall be based on job competencies validated by the IC element;

c. The establishment of an annual performance assessment period that generally covers 12 months and complies with guidance from the element's parent organization, if applicable. All employees shall receive an official Assessment of Record at least annually. Final Assessments of Record shall be completed as soon as practicable and no later than 90 calendar days after the end of the performance assessment period;

d. The establishment of a specified, minimum period of time, no less than 90 days, under a performance plan before an employee can receive an Assessment of Record;

e. The recognition of high performance and substandard performance. High performing employees (those who exceed required expectations) shall be recognized consistent with policies, procedures, and guidance of each IC element. This recognition shall be used to reinforce high performance. Poorly performing employees (those who cannot or will not improve their performance to meet required expectations) shall be subject to appropriate action consistent with the policies, procedures, and guidance of each IC element; and

f. The assessment of supervisors and managers on how effectively they manage the performance of employees under their supervision, in addition to other non-supervisory and managerial performance expectations.

7. The IC employee performance management cycle has three primary phases:

a. Phase 1 - Planning and setting performance expectations: This phase establishes the basis for assessing performance.

(1) All employees shall be provided individual or team performance expectations appropriate for their occupation, job, work level, grade, and/or pay band. Management officials shall develop performance expectations in consultation with their employees. However, final decisions regarding performance expectations are within the sole and exclusive discretion of management officials;

(2) Before or at the beginning of the performance assessment period, performance expectations, as defined in Annex A, shall be communicated formally, in either hardcopy or electronic format, and discussed with the employee;

(3) Management officials shall ensure that all performance objectives, as defined in Annex A, support and align with the strategic goals and objectives of the *National Intelligence Strategy*, as applicable to each IC element, as well as the strategic goals and objectives of each IC element;

(4) Supervisors and managers at all organizational levels are responsible for managing the performance of employees. Management officials set performance expectations; monitor the performance of their employees; foster and reinforce high performance; realistically and

rigorously assess that performance; address poor performance; provide ongoing (i.e., regular and timely) feedback to employees regarding their performance; encourage career development; and promote high standards of professionalism. Additional responsibilities for management officials may be added at the discretion of the IC elements;

(5) The Assistant Director of National Intelligence for Human Capital (ADNI/HC) shall identify, validate, promulgate, and revise, as necessary, core IC performance elements. These core performance elements, as set forth in Annex B, describe attributes and conduct expected of all IC employees in all occupations and at all grades and/or work levels covered by this Directive. At a minimum, all IC employees shall be assessed on these core performance elements; and

(6) IC elements may, at their discretion, establish additional performance elements, provided that they do not modify the core IC performance elements set forth in Annex B. In addition, IC elements may, at their discretion, establish performance standards (for example, by occupation or work level) for common IC and element-specific performance elements. All such additional elements and standards must be:

(a) Derived from job competencies that have been validated by the IC element in accordance with Federal Uniform Guidelines for Employee Selection Procedures and other applicable professional and technical standards; and

(b) Provided to the ADNI/HC for review prior to their effective date, so that they may be incorporated into the IC Competency Library.

b. Phase 2 - Providing ongoing performance feedback: Management officials shall provide ongoing feedback to employees on their performance. It is the responsibility of employees to receive and/or act on feedback as applicable, and to participate in the performance management cycle. In addition to regular, ongoing feedback, and assessments required at the end of the assessment cycle, the following written or electronic assessments are required:

(1) Interim Assessment: When the Assessor stops exercising duties related to monitoring, developing, and assessing employee performance prior to the end of the assessment cycle as the result of a job change or change of duties by either the Assessor or the employee, the Assessor shall complete a brief description of the employee's performance against expectations. At a minimum, these interim assessments are required for periods of at least 90 calendar days during which an employee has been performing under an approved performance plan, and are optional for shorter periods. Interim assessments shall be shared with employees. Any interim assessments shall be used to inform the final Assessment of Record;

(2) Midterm Assessment: Management officials shall meet with the employee and conduct at least one oral assessment of an employee's performance, approximately midway through the performance assessment period, to acknowledge achievements, suggest areas for improvement, address near-term professional development, discuss progress towards meeting performance expectations, and to adjust those expectations as appropriate. The employee shall be provided with written or electronic confirmation that the midterm assessment was conducted. The management official shall record the employee's receipt of the midterm assessment. The midterm assessment shall be used to inform the Assessment of Record; and

(3) **Assessment of Poor Performance:** If at any time during the performance assessment period the Assessor determines that an employee's performance requires improvement, the Assessor shall take timely, appropriate action to address the deficiency, pursuant to the procedures, policies, and guidance of each IC element.

c. **Phase 3 - Creating the Assessment of Record:** At the end of the performance assessment period, the Assessor shall prepare an evaluation for the employee. Employees shall be given the opportunity to provide the Assessor with a description of their accomplishments and progress towards meeting their performance expectations. Progress towards performance expectations is a critical factor in evaluating an employee's performance. The communication of the Assessment of Record to the employee should include discussions on the employee's career development, training opportunities, future assignments, and promotion potential, as appropriate.

8. The assessment of all IC employees' performance who are serving on an IC JDR shall be in accordance with ICD 660, Intelligence Community Civilian Joint Duty Program and IC Policy Guidance 660.1, Intelligence Community Civilian Joint Duty Program Implementation Guidance, or successor policies.

9. Performance management programs established or modified to implement this Directive shall be coordinated in advance with the ADNI/HC who serves as the DNI's designee for IC employee performance management.

10. For those executive departments that have IC civilian employees covered by Title 5 of the United States Code and related Office of Personnel Management implementing regulations, the DNI or the ADNI/HC, who serves as the DNI's designee for IC Human Capital, and the heads of those departments, or their designees, may enter into separate agreements that will set forth a mutually acceptable implementation plan that meets the program requirements of both parties.

## **E. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The ADNI/HC shall:

- a. Serve as the DNI's designee for IC employee performance management and Human Capital;
- b. Establish common guiding principles and core performance elements to be incorporated into the performance management processes established and administered by IC elements;
- c. Conduct oversight of performance management policies and processes established in accordance with this Directive;
- d. Ensure that performance management policies and processes effectively meet the requirements of this Directive; and
- e. Ensure implementation of this policy by IC elements.

2. Heads of IC elements shall:

a. Establish performance management processes for their IC civilian workforce in coordination with the ODNI and ensure that they conform to the framework established by this Directive; and

b. Ensure their management officials and employees receive initial and ongoing training in the implementation and operation of those processes.

3. Ensure employees are responsible for actively participating in the performance management process, to include achieving or exceeding performance expectations, accepting feedback, and maintaining high standards of professionalism.

**F. EFFECTIVE DATE:** This Directive becomes effective on the date of signature.



Acting Director of National Intelligence



Date

## Annex A DEFINITIONS

1. **Competencies:** The measurable or observable knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics needed to perform a type of work or function.
2. **Assessment of Record:** The final, official performance assessment of an employee prepared at the end of the performance assessment period.
3. **Interim Assessment:** A brief narrative description of the employee's performance against performance objectives. The Assessor completes an Interim Assessment when either the Assessor or the employee changes position, in which case the Assessor no longer assesses the employee. This is distinct from the midterm assessment described below.
4. **Midterm Assessment:** An oral assessment of an employee's performance, conducted approximately midway through the performance assessment period.
5. **Performance Elements:** The IC-wide and element-specific behaviors that describe the manner in which work is to be performed. Performance elements are based on job competencies that have been validated in accordance with accepted professional and technical standards. This ICD establishes "core" performance elements that are applicable to all IC employees covered by this Directive.
6. **Performance Assessment:** The formal assessment of an employee's performance against performance objectives and performance elements, resulting in an Assessment of Record.
7. **Performance Assessment Period:** The period of time established under a performance management policy for reviewing employee performance.
8. **Performance Expectations:** The aggregate view of what each employee is expected to accomplish in any given performance assessment period. Expectations consist of performance objectives and performance elements as specifically defined in this section.
9. **Performance Management:** The process of planning, setting, aligning, and communicating individual and organizational performance expectations to employees; monitoring and measuring their performance; providing feedback; taking appropriate steps to improve employee performance; addressing poor performance; and assessing and rewarding employee performance to reflect the accomplishment of individual and organizational goals and objectives.
10. **Performance Management Framework:** The IC performance management framework includes common guiding principles, the IC employee performance management cycle, and the core performance elements.
11. **Performance Objectives:** The major results required by, or associated with, each employee's position and assignment, as communicated to that employee by a management official. The contributions and demonstrated achievements of each employee are assessed against those objectives as the basis for an individual's Assessment of Record.

12. **Performance Standards:** The behavioral descriptions of expected performance at a particular assessment level. Such standards may vary by occupation, job, work level, grade, and/or band.

13. **Assessor:** The management official who assesses the performance of an employee and prepares the Assessment of Record.

14. **Reviewer:** The management official who reviews and approves Assessments of Record to ensure consistency between and among Assessors.

15. **Work Level:** General standards that define work in terms of increasing complexity, span of authority/responsibility, level of supervision (received or exercised), scope and impact of decisions, and work relationships, associated with a particular work category.

**Annex B**  
**Core IC Performance Elements**

All non-supervisors covered by this Directive shall be evaluated on performance elements 1-6 below. All supervisors and managers covered by this Directive shall be evaluated on performance elements 1-4, and 7-8 below.

1. **Accountability for Results:** IC employees are expected to take responsibility for their work, setting and/or meeting priorities, and organizing and utilizing time and resources efficiently and effectively to achieve the desired results, consistent with their organization's goals and objectives. In addition, IC supervisors are expected to use these same skills to accept responsibility for and achieve results through the actions and contributions of their subordinates and their organization as a whole.

2. **Communication:** IC employees are expected to effectively comprehend and convey information with and from others in writing, reading, listening, and verbal and non-verbal action. Employees are also expected to use a variety of media in communicating and making presentations appropriate to the audience. In addition, IC supervisors are expected to use effective communication skills to build cohesive work teams, develop individual skills, and improve performance.

3. **Critical Thinking:** IC employees are expected to use logic, analysis, synthesis, creativity, judgment, and systematic approaches to gather, evaluate, and use multiple sources of information to effectively inform decisions and outcomes. In addition, IC supervisors are expected to establish a work environment where employees feel free to engage in open, candid exchanges of information and diverse points of view.

4. **Engagement and Collaboration:** IC employees are expected to responsibly and proactively provide, discover, and request information and knowledge to achieve results, and in that regard are expected to recognize, value, build, and leverage diverse collaborative networks of coworkers, peers, customers, stakeholders, and teams, within an organization and/or across the IC. In addition, IC supervisors are expected to create an environment that promotes engagement, collaboration, integration, and the responsible sharing of information and knowledge.

5. **Personal Leadership and Integrity:** IC employees are expected to demonstrate personal initiative and innovation, as well as integrity, honesty, openness, and respect for diversity in their dealings with coworkers, peers, customers, stakeholders, teams, and collaborative networks across the IC. IC employees are also expected to demonstrate core organizational and IC values, including selfless service, a commitment to excellence, the courage and conviction to express their professional views and constructively address or seek assistance to properly address concerns related to the protection of classified information in accordance with EO 13526, *Classified National Security Information*.

6. **Technical Expertise:** IC employees are expected to acquire and apply knowledge, subject matter expertise, tradecraft, and/or technical competency necessary to achieve results. This includes the proper handling and protection of classified information in accordance with EO 13526.

7. **Leadership and Integrity:** IC supervisors and managers are expected to exhibit the same individual personal leadership behaviors as all IC employees. In their supervisory or managerial role, they are also expected to achieve organizational goals and objectives by creating shared vision and mission within their organization; establishing a work environment that promotes equal opportunity, integrity, diversity (of both persons and points of view), critical thinking, collaboration, protection of classified information in accordance with EO 13526, and information sharing; mobilizing employees, stakeholders, and networks in support of their objectives; and recognizing and rewarding individual and team excellence, enterprise focus, innovation, and collaboration.

8. **Management Proficiency:** IC supervisors and managers are expected to possess the technical proficiency in their mission area appropriate to their role as supervisor or manager. They are also expected to leverage that proficiency to plan for, acquire, organize, integrate, develop, and prioritize human, financial, material, information (including classified material), and other resources to accomplish their organization's mission and objectives. In so doing, all supervisors and managers are also expected to focus on the development and productivity of their subordinates by setting clear performance expectations, providing ongoing coaching and feedback, constructively addressing or seeking assistance to properly address concerns related to the protection of classified information in accordance with EO 13526, evaluating the contributions of individual employees to organizational results, and linking performance ratings and rewards to the accomplishment of those results.