Article 21

Performance

Section 1. Introduction

The parties agree to the following performance appraisal system in order to provide quality public service and an assessment of employee performance. The purpose of the performance appraisal system is to provide a framework for honest feedback and open, two-way communication between an employee and their supervisor.

Section 2. Overview

A. The appraisal system uses a three-tier rating system for ratings on individual performance elements and for the summary appraisal rating.

Employees will be rated on four elements except new hires/trainees who will be rated on two elements. The appraisal system offers three summary appraisal rating of record levels with clear distinctions among those performance levels to differentiate between high performing employees (Level 5 – Outstanding Contribution), the more typical successful employees (Level 3 – Successful Contribution), and employees whose performance is clearly failing (Level 1 – Not Successful).

B. New hires and trainees may serve under special pass/fail performance plans during their initial appraisal period. This special provision for new hires and trainees recognizes that the first year of employment in their new SSA positions may be spent in formal classroom and on-the-job training and allows these employees additional time to demonstrate performance in all elements of their positions.

C. The appraisal system is used to make certain personnel decisions.

1. Within-Grade Increase - An employee who has attained an appraisal rating of “Successful” will be entitled to a within-grade increase, as long as current performance is consistent with the rating of record.
2. An appraisal rating of at least “Successful” is required in order to be considered for awards and/or promotions.
3. The performance appraisal will be considered in making determinations regarding reductions in force (RIF) in accordance with Article 14 of this agreement.

D. This system will be a positive building block in the foundation of a relationship based on shared interests and mutual objectives. The appraisal system will emphasize:

1. Employee Contribution
2. Employee Development
3. Administrative simplicity

Section 3. Appraisal System Definitions and Principles

1. Terms used in this article will have the same meaning as in government wide regulations.
2. Performance Elements are work assignments and responsibilities that are key to achieving the Agency’s mission and goals and reflect the Agency’s commitment to providing outstanding public service.
3. Critical element means a work assignment or responsibility of such importance that unacceptable performance on the element would result in a determination that an employee’s overall performance is unacceptable. All critical elements to be used for performance appraisals will be provided in writing to the employee at the beginning of the rating period or when elements change during the rating period.
   1. Performance standard means the management approved expression of the performance threshold(s), requirement(s), or expectation(s) that must be met to be appraised at a particular level of performance.
   2. A performance standard may include, but is not limited to, quality, quantity, timeliness, and manner of performance.

3. To the maximum extent feasible, the performance standards and critical elements will be consistent for standard or like positions.

1. If management changes any critical elements or standards, management will convene a focus group consisting of management, employees and the union to obtain input prior to implementation. If a focus group is convened, the parties will negotiate the parameters (composition, length, process, etc.) of the focus group at that time. When there are any changes to critical element or standards and there is a duty to bargain under 5USC71, notice and such opportunity to bargain will be provided to the Union by SSA consistent with the procedures in Article 4.
2. Performance plan means all of the written, or otherwise recorded, performance elements that set forth expected performance. A plan must include all critical and non-critical elements and their performance standards.
3. Alignment Statement is a standardized form that managers will provide to employees, normally at the beginning of the appraisal period, to facilitate discussion regarding how their work contributes to achievement of Agency goals and objectives. The statement may be supplemented with information about component goals and targets.

G. Rating of record means the performance rating prepared at the end of an appraisal period for performance of agency-assigned duties over the entire period and the assignment of a summary level within a pattern (as specified in Sec. 430.208(d) ), or in accordance with Sec. 531.404(a)(1) of this chapter (Code of Federal Regulations). There are three summary appraisal levels for this performance plan: Outstanding Contribution (Level 5); Successful Contribution (Level 3) and Not Successful (Level 1).

H. Progress review means communicating with the employees about performance compared to the performance standards of critical and non-critical elements.

I. New Hires – External hires who are new to the Social Security Administration.

J. Trainees – Employees, both external hires and employees promoted/transferred to a new position, who management determines need a structured period of training, including on-the-job training and mentoring, to perform the basic duties of the position.

K. Element Average – The average of the performance element ratings which is used in the merit promotion process and to determine eligibility for awards. It is a computation summary derived in the performance evaluation process. Each performance element in the employee’s appraisal is assigned a rating of 1, 3, or 5. The individual performance element ratings of 3 and 5 are added together and the total is divided by the number of performance elements and the resulting number is the Element Average.

Section 4. Length of Appraisal Period

A. The appraisal period is one year. The appraisal period is normally from October 01 through September 30. A rating of record will be prepared at the end of the appraisal period and issued to the employee within 30 days of the completed appraisal period.

B. The minimum appraisal period for employees is 120 days. Employees must be under a performance plan for a minimum of 120 days to be eligible for an annual performance appraisal at the end of their appraisal period. Employees serving in a probationary period will not receive a rating of record until after completion of their probationary period.

C. Employees who have been under their performance plan for less than 30 days and are approved for an extended absence in excess of 150 days will begin a new minimum appraisal period upon their return to duty. This does not preclude the appraising official from considering the employee’s performance during the period the employee was under the performance plan for less than 30 days.

1. Annual Performance Appraisal

Supervisors will schedule time for a one-on-one meeting with the employee to issue his/her rating of record within 30 days of the end of the employees’ appraisal period. However, if there is more than one management official at the meeting to issue the rating of record, the employee may request to have a union representative attend the discussion (in person or telephonically) provided no delay occurs.

If employees have not served under their performance plans for the minimum appraisal period, their annual performance appraisal will be postponed until the 120 day appraisal period has been completed.

Annual performance appraisals for new employees who are not covered by the New Hires and Trainees (NHT) procedures will be postponed until one of the following conditions are met:

1. the probationary period is completed, or
2. the trial period for term appointment is completed, or
3. the initial excepted service appointment not limited to 1 year or less is completed.

Section 5 –Issuing Performance Plans and Conducting Expectation Discussions

1. Supervisors will issue performance plans containing the Level 3 and 5 standards for each element to employees no later than 30 days from the beginning of their appraisal periods.

Each employee’s supervisor will meet with the employee one-on-one to discuss the employee’s performance plan at the time it is issued. However, if there is more than one management official at this discussion, the employee may request to have a union representative attend the discussion (in person or telephonically) provided no delay occurs.

The appraising official and the employee will also discuss the performance expectations so as to attempt to arrive at a full and complete understanding of what is required to achieve the successful contribution performance level described in the plan. The discussion will also include some examples for Level 5 performance in an attempt to arrive at a general understanding of the outstanding contribution performance level. The discussion will also clarify any questions that the employees have concerning their performance plan.

1. Expectation discussions provide meaningful context to performance standards and provide a means to align employee contributions to Agency goals and objectives.
2. The discussion will also include an explanation of the performance plan terminology, the method(s) to be used to determine the level of performance in each Element, the nature and type of work product or other result to be counted, reviewed, or otherwise monitored. The discussion shall attempt to avoid subsequent misunderstandings about the performance expectations and their application to the employee’s performance.

In the context of this discussion, supervisors will:

1. discuss the Alignment Statement with employees and review its content.
2. discuss employee performance elements, standards and expectations that will be used to evaluate the employee.
3. discuss data sources and numeric data, e.g. indicators of quality, quantity, timeliness, that may be considered in measuring employee performance, and upon request explain how the data source may be used in assessing employee performance.
4. discuss employee development needs and opportunities and the relationship between employee performance and employee recognition.

D. If there are numeric performance standards, they will clearly be identified in the employee’s performance plan.

E. The appraising official will document the expectations discussed with the employee. Standard expectations may be developed for standard positions. This documentation will be filed in the employee’s SSA-7B Extension File, or electronic equivalent as part of the appraisal system and a copy will be given to the employee. The employee may also place his/her comments in the SSA -7B Extension File.

Employees and their supervisors will sign the performance plan to acknowledge that the performance plan has been issued and the initial performance discussion has been held. A copy of the signed performance plan will be given to the employee and the original will also be placed in the SSA-7B Extension File. Managers may meet with employees collectively, in addition to individual performance discussions, to convey information that is general for all employees, such as agency goals and objectives.

F. Subsequent expectation discussions should be held when there is a change in the work situation such as:

1. a change in the rating official/supervisor of record,

1. a detail,
2. a change in component goals or objectives, or
3. a return to duty from an extended absence of ninety (90) days or more.
4. Any change in work assignment or process that would significantly affect the employee performance plan.
5. A change in performance expectations contained in the employee performance plan.

If any of the above have a significant effect on employee performance, it will be considered a factor in appraising the employee’s performance.

If there is more than one management official at a performance expectation discussion, the employee may request to have a union representative attend the discussion (in person or telephonically) provided no delay occurs.

Section 6 Monitoring Performance and Communications

1. Ongoing two-way communication between the manager and the employee is an effective tool for successful performance. Discussions should be a candid, forthright dialogue between the manager and the employee aimed at improving performance, the work process, or product. These discussions will provide the employee the opportunity to seek further guidance and understanding of his/her work performance, to surface needs, or to participate in a dialogue about his/her contribution. Discussions may be initiated by the manager or by the employee. If an employee requests a discussion with his/her rating official to discuss his/her performance, it will normally be scheduled within five workdays.
2. Supervisory conclusions based upon observations of an employee by management will be timely communicated to the employee during informal discussions and/or the progress review. If the employee disagrees with the supervisory conclusions on individual cases or overall performance to date, he/she may provide management with written rebuttals that will be placed in the SSA-7B Extension File or electronic equivalent.
3. An employee may inform his/her appraising official in writing, which includes Email, of factors beyond his/her control that have affected his/her performance. The appraising official will consider such factors when evaluating performance for the appraisal period. The written documentation will be placed in the employee’s SSA-7B Extension File or electronic equivalent.

D. Formal Performance Discussion

At least once during the appraisal period, approximately midway through the appraisal period, management will have a documented performance discussion with each employee regarding the employee’s performance. During the discussion, management should discuss the employee’s performance and results achieved within each performance element, reinforce expectations, and identify needs for performance improvement. If there is more than one management official at a performance discussion, the employee may request to have a union representative attend the discussion (in person or telephonically) provided no delay occurs.

To ensure that all performance related activities are identified and documented, employees should provide feedback about their performance to their rating official.

E. Supervisors should document the content of performance discussions.

F. Employees and supervisors will sign the performance plan to acknowledge that the formal discussion was held. The documentation will be placed in the SSA-7B Extension File or electronic equivalent and a copy given to the employee.

G. Optional Employee Self-Assessment

Employees will be provided the option of completing an end-of-cycle self-assessment, highlighting their accomplishments relating to the performance plan. Employees, who wish to submit a self-assessment, must do so no later than 10 days after the end of their appraisal period. A reasonable amount of time will be provided for this activity. Self-assessments should be maintained in the SSA-7B Extension File or electronic equivalent. Management will inform employees of the above self-assessment option fifteen (15) days prior to the end of the appraisal period.

H. Feedback from Workgroup/Special Projects/Details

Rating officials are responsible for obtaining feedback regarding an employee’s performance on workgroups, special projects, or details outside the normal work unit. In determining whether to solicit feedback, consideration should be given to the activity, duration of the activity, and the amount of time the employee spent on the activity.

Feedback should be obtained in writing from the supervisor responsible for the workgroup, project or detail. The assignment supervisor may include feedback obtained from a non-supervisory project leader, technical expert or team leader. Employees should be given a copy of the feedback and provided an opportunity to include comments. Feedback information should be maintained in the SSA-7B Extension File or electronic equivalent.

I. Considerations In Assessing Performance

1. The Agency, when assessing performance, will consider factors which affect performance that are beyond the control of the employee.
2. When numerical goals, guidelines, and indicators are factors in appraising an employee in a given critical element, management will consider the employee’s other job assignments and the actual amount of time available to perform the job function being appraised under that critical element.
3. The Agency has determined that only time spent performing work related to an employee’s critical job elements and standards will be considered in performance appraisals. Authorized time spent performing EEO representational duties and Union representational functions will not be considered as a negative factor when evaluating any critical job elements.
4. In the performance of and accounting for Agency work, statistical measures and their application will be reliable.
5. The procedures that are used to gather information in order to evaluate employee performance must reasonably ensure the accurate evaluation of performance. Reviews and/or sampling to assess performance will, to the extent practical, accurately reflect the employee’s work.
6. Management will timely disclose to each employee all records that relate to his/her performance appraisal. Employees have the right to respond to performance data that is used to assess his/her performance.
7. The Agency will not establish arbitrary limitations, such as caps, curves or forced distributions, on appraisal ratings.
8. Each employee’s performance will be evaluated solely against his/her performance standards.
9. Special skills and contributions, such as translation and interpretive activities done as part of, or in addition to, regular job duties.
10. An employee shall not be rated on a performance standard that was not disclosed to him/her as part of a written performance appraisal plan.

J. Documentation of Annual Performance Appraisal

Standard forms will be used to document the employees’ performance. Rating supervisors will sign and date the annual performance appraisals and make copies of them. Employees will sign and date the copy of their annual performance appraisals to indicate receipt. Employees will receive the original signed appraisals. Copies of appraisals will be maintained in the SSA-7B Extension File or electronic equivalent and recorded on the Agency’s automated management information system. Appraisals will be maintained in accordance with SSA’s policies and procedures.

K. Element Average

In order to differentiate degrees of above average performance to determine eligibility for awards, the Element Average will be computed based on the rating of each individual element. An Element Average is not computed for those employees with a Level 1 rating because they are not eligible for awards.

1. Only performance element ratings of 3 and 5 will be used.
2. All elements are given equal weight in computing the element average.
3. An Element Average is not computed on NHT appraisals. Those new hires and trainees covered by NHT will be rated on two elements and will be rated “Pass” or “Fail”. For purposes of awards, “Pass” corresponds to an average of 3.0 and “Fail” corresponds to a rating of 1.0.

Section 7. Procedures for ~~Marginal and Failing~~ Performance **Below the Successful Contribution Level**

The procedures for dealing with ~~marginal and failing~~ performance **below the Successful Contribution Level** only apply to employees who are entitled to the procedural and appeal rights described in 5 CFR 432 ~~or 5 CFR 752~~.

~~A. Performance Assistance~~

~~When an employee’s performance is identified as marginal or failing, the manager should conduct a performance discussion with the employee to determine the reason(s) for the poor performance. The manager should discuss with the employee:~~

1. ~~the expectations for improving performance;~~
2. ~~the employee’s responsibilities; and,~~
3. ~~what assistance may be needed to perform at the Successful Contribution Level, which may include training, or mentoring, or other appropriate support.~~

~~An employee will be allowed 30 calendar days to successfully improve his/her performance. The manager may extend the period if the employee is demonstrating significant progress toward successful performance.~~

~~The manager should summarize the discussion in writing. This will be initialed by the employee and placed in their SSA-7B Extension File or electronic equivalent, along with copies of training schedules and documentation of any other assistance provided. The employee will be given copies.~~

~~Employees are considered to be performing at the Successful Contribution Level (Level 3) for purposes of any performance related personnel actions during a period of performance assistance. If a rating of record becomes due during a period of performance assistance, the employee will be rated no lower than the Successful Contribution Level (Level 3). Employees will be eligible for WIGIs and awards during an assistance period. Employees in career ladder positions will also be eligible for career ladder promotions, provided that the other requirements for promotion are met. If after successful completion of a Performance Assistance Plan an employee develops another performance related problem, they are entitled to another period of Performance Assistance.~~

~~The purpose of the Perfermance Assistance is to help the employee improve.~~

~~B.~~ Opportunity to Perform Successfully (OPS)

If ~~following the Performance Assistance period,~~ performance is below the Successful Contribution Level, the manager should initiate a performance improvement plan, the OPS Plan. The OPS represents a formal process for performance improvement developed by the manager with consideration of employee input. The employee may request to have a union representative present during the initial discussion of the OPS.

To institute an OPS Plan, the manager must provide written notice to the employee that includes:

1. the critical element(s) for which performance is unacceptable;
2. the performance requirement(s) or standard(s) that must be attained in each critical element at issue in order to demonstrate acceptable performance;
3. a statement that the employee may have any WIGI or career ladder promotion withheld for the duration of the plan;
4. a summary of assistance already provided, along with the results;
5. a statement of the plan for providing additional assistance to the employee (e.g., targeted training, mentoring, etc.). The parties agree that placing an employee solely on 100% review does not equate to appropriate assistance.
6. a statement that unless the employee’s performance in the critical element(s) improves to and is sustained at an acceptable level, the employee may be reassigned, reduced in grade, or terminated.

OPS Plans will be instituted for a period of ~~120~~ **30** calendar days. Managers may terminate the plan if successful performance is demonstrated and sustained before the end of the ~~120~~ **30** days. ~~Managers may extend the period if the employee is demonstrating significant progress toward the Successful Contribution Level of performance.~~

A copy of the written OPS notice will be placed into the employee’s SSA-7B Extension File or electronic equivalent.  
  
During the OPS, the manager will conduct ongoing discussions with the employee about progress toward improvement. The manager will document these discussions and work reviews in the employee’s SSA-7B Extension File or electronic equivalent. The employee will be given copies of discussions and work reviews placed in his/her Extension File.   
  
At the end of the OPS period if performance has not improved to the Successful Contribution Level, a Level 1 rating of record will be issued. If performance has improved to the Successful Contribution Level, the employee will be notified in writing of his/her successful completion of the OPS and a copy of the notice will be placed in his/her SSA-7B Extension File or electronic equivalent. If a rating of record is due, the rating will be Level 3.

Employees are considered to be performing at the Not Successful level (Level 1) while under an OPS Plan. If a rating of record becomes due while an employee is under an OPS Plan, the rating of record will be delayed until the plan is completed. If a WIGI becomes due while an employee is under an OPS Plan, a Not Successful rating of record will be prepared and the WIGI will be denied.

Section 8. Performance-Based Actions

A. Managers will initiate a performance-based action if, despite the additional assistance provided in accordance with the OPS Plan, the employee’s performance has not improved to the Successful Contribution Level by the end of the OPS period. This will result in the employee’s reassignment to another position; (e.g., the prior position), or reduction in grade, or termination.

B. Demotions or removals for performance-based reasons must be accomplished in accordance with the applicable law and government-wide regulations ~~governing the employees covered and the procedures to be followed (i.e., 5 CFR Part 432 or 5 CFR Part 752)~~.

C. An employee receiving a proposed action based on unacceptable performance is entitled to:

1. 30 day advance written notice of the proposed action that identifies both the specific instances of unacceptable performance by the employee on which the proposed action is based and the critical element(s) of the employee’s position involved in each instance of unacceptable performance;
2. to be represented by the Union, an attorney or other representative;
3. time to respond to the notice of proposed action orally and in writing;
4. a final written decision within 30 days after the expiration of the advance notice period.

D. The employee may appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board in accordance with applicable law~~, or the Union on behalf of the employee may timely file a written request to invoke arbitration under the terms of this Agreement. The choice of appeal forum is irrevocable. An employee shall be deemed to have exercised the appellate option at such time as the employee timely initiates an appeal under the statutory procedure, or the Union on behalf of the employee timely files a written request to invoke arbitration, whichever occurs first. Arbitration must be invoked no later than thirty (30) days after the effective date of the action unless EEO counseling is initiated pursuant to Article 24 Section 8.~~

E. The Not Successful (Level 1) rating of record for an employee who has been demoted or reassigned for performance-based reasons in accordance with this Section will continue in effect until completion of the employee’s appraisal period for his/her current position. However, if the employee is eligible for a WIGI prior to the completion of this appraisal period, a rating of record will be issued when the employee has demonstrated successful performance for at least 120 days.

Section 9. Special Performance Appraisal Provisions for New Hires and Trainees (NHT)

A. Overview

New hires and trainees may be issued a pass/fail NHT performance plan. The NHT provisions recognize that many new hires and trainees require a lengthy period of formal classroom training and/or on-the-job training before they can perform the full range of their job duties. The NHT provisions provide these employees with additional time to demonstrate successful performance before they are rated under the normal performance plan.

B. Employees Covered

1. New Hire/Trainees

Employees newly hired into SSA positions for the first time, or following a break in SSA employment, may be covered by the special provisions for new hires and trainees (NHT). Since new hires for some positions would be expected to perform the full range of job duties without extensive training/mentoring, additional time would not be needed to evaluate performance.

1. Current SSA Employee Trainees

Current SSA employees who move, without a change in appointment or a break in service, into new positions that require a lengthy training period may also be covered by special NHT provisions during the training period.

C. Length of Appraisal Period

1. New Hire/Trainees

The initial appraisal period for the new hires covered under NHT provisions begins with their entrance on duty into the new position and ends one year from that date. They are issued a limited performance plan consisting of two elements: Engages in Learning and Interpersonal Skills. Probationary employees are not appraised during their first year.

1. If the employee’s training period ends before the end of the probationary period, he/she is issued a rating of record at the end of the probationary period based on these two elements. The employee is then issued a full performance plan for the next rating period.
2. If the employee’s training period does not end before the end of the probationary period, he/she is issued a rating of record at the end of the probationary period based on the two elements. The employee is then reissued a limited performance plan with the two elements until training is completed.

At the completion of training, the employee is given the full performance plan. A rating of record is issued if a rating is due and the employee has been under the NHT plan for at least 120 days.

The above applies to covered employees serving under a trial period for term appointments and to covered employees in the first year of employment under excepted service appointments that are not limited to 1 year or less.

Upon issuance of a full performance plan, employees will be given a minimum appraisal period of 120 days. If a rating of record is due before completion of this 120 days period, the rating will be delayed until the end of the first 120 days under the full performance plan. Thereafter, all employees will be covered under the normal performance appraisl provisions and the appraisal period will end on the applicable date described in Section 4.

2. Current SSA Employee Trainees

The initial appraisal period for SSA employees who move, without a change in appointment or a break in service, into new positions that require a lengthy training period begins with the date they enter the trainee position.

Trainee as used here is not meant to include the length of time needed to reach the journeyman level of a career ladder position.

If the employee’s training period has not ended by the end of his/her appraisal period, issue a NHT appraisal if the employee has been covered by a performance plan for at least 120 days. The employee will then be issued another NHT performance plan.

If the employee’s training period has not ended by the end of his/her appraisal period, and the employee has not been covered by a performance plan for at least 120 days, management will defer issuing a NHT appraisal until the employee has been covered for 120 days. The employee will then be issued another NHT performance plan.

If the training period is completed by the end of his/her appraisal period, a NHT appraisal will be issued. A regular performance plan will then be issued.

Upon issuance of a full performance plan, employees will be given a minimum appraisal period of 120 days. If a rating of record is due before completion of this 120 days period, the rating will be delayed until the end of the first 120 days under the full performance plan. Thereafter, all employees will be covered under the normal performance appraisal provisions and the appraisal period will end on the applicable date described in Section 4.

D. NHT Performance Plans

Supervisors will issue NHT performance plans to new employees and trainees no later than 30 days from their entrance on duty into their new positions.

Supervisors will meet with new employees and trainees to discuss their performance plans at the time they are issued. Initial Performance Plan discussions will be conducted and documented in accordance with Section 5.

E. Monitoring Performance

Supervisors will monitor the performance of new hires and trainees and conduct formal progress reviews in accordance with the provisions in Section 6.

F. Annual NHT Performance Appraisal

Annual NHT performance appraisals must be completed at the end of employees’ initial appraisal periods. Supervisors will provide employees with their ratings of record within 30 days of the end of their appraisal periods.  
  
If employees have not served under their NHT performance plans for the minimum appraisal period (i.e., 120 days), their annual performance appraisal for the initial appraisal period will be postponed until the minimum appraisal period has been completed.

Supervisors will consider feedback from other sources, including mentors and training instructors, to ensure a fair, complete and ongoing appraisal of employees’ work/learning activities during the rating period. Feedback should be obtained, maintained and considered in accordance with the provisions in Section 6.

NHT annual performance appraisals will be documented and maintained in accordance with the provisions in Section 6.

1. Procedures for NHT ~~Marginal and Failing~~ Performance **Below the Successful Contribution Level**

1. New Hires and Trainees with Appeal Rights

The procedures for dealing with ~~marginal and failing~~ performance **below the Successful Contribution Level** in Section 7 will also apply to new hires and trainees serving under NHT performance plans who are entitled to the procedural and appeal rights described in ~~5 CFR 752 or~~ 5 CFR 432.

2. New Hires and Trainees without Appeal Rights

The procedures for dealing with ~~marginal and failing~~ performance **below the Successful Contribution Level** in Section 7 do not apply to new hires and trainees serving under NHT performance plans if they are not entitled to the procedural and appeal rights described in ~~5 CFR 752 or~~ 5 CFR 432 or if they have waived those rights. In these situations, new hires and trainees who demonstrate ~~marginal or failing~~ performance **below the Successful Contribution Level** may be terminated for performance reasons with appropriate written notice.

Section 10.

The Agency will provide a yearly report, no later than January of each year, to the Union of the distribution of appraisal levels by position and grade level within each component. The Agency will also provide a report of the distribution of appraisal levels by EEO protected class within each component.