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# Performance Evaluations

## 1001.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the Town of Cheektowaga Police Department performance evaluation system.

## 1001.2 POLICY

The Town of Cheektowaga Police Department shall use a performance evaluation system to measure, document, and recognize work performance. The performance evaluation will serve as an objective guide for the recognition of good work and the development of a process for improvement.

The Department evaluates employees in a non-discriminatory manner based upon job-related factors specific to the employee's position, without regard to actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and any other classification or status protected by law.

This policy is not applicable to the probation period of recruit officers or officers during their field training as required for Municipal Police Training Council (MPTC) certification and by Cheektowaga.

## 1001.3 TYPES OF EVALUATIONS

The Department shall use the following types of evaluations:

**Regular** - An evaluation completed annually by the employee's immediate supervisor.

When an employee transfers to a different assignment or is promoted, in the middle of an evaluation period and less than six months has transpired since the transfer, the evaluation should be completed by the current supervisor with input from the previous supervisor.

**Special** - An evaluation can be conducted at anytime the supervisor, Captain or the authorized designee identifies that an evaluation is necessary to address less than standard performance. The evaluation may include a plan for follow-up action (e.g., performance improvement plan (PIP), remedial training, retraining).

### 1001.3.1 RATINGS

When completing an evaluation, the supervisor will identify the rating category that best describes the employee's performance. The definition of each rating category is as follows:

**Exceptionable** - Performance is well beyond that required for the position. It is exceptional performance, definitely superior or extraordinary.

**Exceeds Standards** - Performance is better than demonstrated by a competent employee. It is performance superior to what is required, but is not of such nature to warrant a rating of outstanding.

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**Meets Standards** - Performance of a competent employee. It is satisfactory performance that meets the standards required of the position.

**Needs Improvement** - Performance is less than the standards required of the position. A needs improvement rating shall be thoroughly discussed with the employee.

**Unacceptable** - Performance is inferior to the standards required of the position. It is inadequate or undesirable performance that cannot be allowed to continue.

Supervisor comments may be included in the evaluation to document the employee's strengths, weaknesses and requirements for improvement. Any job dimension rating marked as unsatisfactory or outstanding shall be substantiated with supervisor comments.

#### 1001.3.2 PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Employees who receive an unsatisfactory rating may be subject to a PIP. The PIP shall delineate areas that need improvement, any improvement measures and a timetable in which to demonstrate improvement. The issuing supervisor shall meet with the employee to review his/her performance and the status of the PIP at least monthly.

#### 1001.4 EVALUATION PROCESS

Supervisors should meet with the employees they supervise at the beginning of the evaluation period to discuss expectations and establish performance standards. Each supervisor should discuss the tasks of the position, standards of expected performance, and the evaluation criteria with each employee.

Performance evaluations cover a specific period and should be based upon documented performance dimensions that are applicable to the duties and authorities granted to the employee during that period. The criteria upon which employees are evaluated are listed in the appendix to this policy. Evaluations should be completed by each employee's immediate supervisor. Other supervisors directly familiar with the employee's performance during the rating period should be consulted by the evaluating supervisor for input.

Assessment of an employee's job performance is an ongoing process. Continued coaching and feedback provides supervisors and employees with opportunities to correct performance issues as they arise and to acknowledge good work. Periodic discussions with the employee during the course of the evaluation period are encouraged. Supervisors should document all discussions in the prescribed manner.

Non-probationary employees demonstrating substandard performance shall be notified in writing as soon as possible in order to have an opportunity to remediate the issues. Such notification should occur at the earliest opportunity, with the goal being a minimum of 90 days written notice prior to the end of the evaluation period.

All supervisors shall receive instruction in rating procedures and rater responsibilities as a precondition of involvement with the performance evaluation system.

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### **1001.5 EVALUATION FREQUENCY**

Supervisors shall ensure that all employees they supervise are evaluated on an annual basis and will be completed by the following March of the rating period.

Those employees, including entry-level officers who are required to successfully complete a probationary period should be evaluated semiannually, in April and October, until completion of three (3) years. These members will then be placed on the annual evaluation cycle.

In addition to the biannual evaluations, probationary officers will also be required to successfully pass weapon qualification evaluations for department issued handgun, department issued shotgun, and department issued rifle every six months or biannually.

Probationary officers who repeatedly fail to meet minimum standards may be removed from field assignment and may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **1001.6 EVALUATION INTERVIEW**

When the supervisor has completed his/her evaluation, a private discussion of the evaluation should be scheduled with the employee. The supervisor should discuss the evaluation ratings and respond to any questions the employee may have. The supervisor should provide relevant counseling regarding advancement, specialty positions and training opportunities. Any performance areas in need of improvement and goals for reaching the expected level of performance should be identified and discussed. If the employee has reasonable objections to any of the ratings, the supervisor may make appropriate adjustments to the evaluation. The reason for such adjustments shall be documented.

Employees may write comments in an identified section of the evaluation. The supervisor and employee will sign and date the evaluation.

#### **1001.6.1 DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT FORM**

At the time of each employee's annual evaluation, the supervisor shall provide access to and require the employee to read the Town harassment and discrimination policies and the Town of Cheektowaga Police Department Discriminatory Harassment Policy. The supervisor shall give the employee a form to be completed and returned that acknowledges the following:

- (a) The employee understands the harassment and discrimination policies.
- (b) The employee has had all questions regarding the policies sufficiently addressed.
- (c) The employee knows how to report alleged harassment and discrimination policy violations.
- (d) Whether the employee has been the subject of, or witness to, any unreported conduct that may violate the discrimination or harassment policies.

The completed form should be returned to the supervisor (or other authorized individual if the employee is uncomfortable returning the form to the presenting supervisor) within one week. If the

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employee has expressed any questions or concerns, the receiving supervisor or other authorized individual shall ensure that appropriate follow-up action is taken.

#### **1001.7 APPEAL**

An employee who disagrees with his/her evaluation may provide a formal written response that will be attached to the evaluation, or may request an appeal.

To request an appeal, the employee shall forward a written memorandum within three days to the evaluating supervisor's Captain or the authorized designee. The memorandum shall identify the specific basis for the appeal and include any relevant information for the reviewer to consider.

##### **1001.7.1 APPEAL PROCESS**

Upon receipt of an appeal by a Captain, the Captain or the authorized designee will review the basis of the appeal and submit the findings to the Chief of Police for review. The decision of the Chief of Police shall be final.

#### **1001.8 CHAIN OF REVIEW**

The signed performance evaluation and any employee attachment should be forwarded to the evaluating supervisor's division commander, and he/she shall review the evaluation for fairness, impartiality, uniformity and consistency, and shall consider any written response or appeal made by the employee.

The Chief of Police will review and sign the evaluation of personnel in the police department.

#### **1001.9 RETENTION AND DISTRIBUTION**

The original performance evaluation and any original correspondence related to an appeal shall be maintained by the Department for a period of five (5) years, in the employee's personnel file.

A copy of the evaluation and any documentation of a related appeal shall be provided to the employee and also forwarded to the Cheektowaga Personnel Department.

#### **1001.10 ADDENDUM**

##### Instruction in Rating Procedures and Rater Responsibilities

Appropriate remarks should be made in all pertinent comment sections. Do not allow personal feelings to govern your evaluation. When the term standard is used, it is important that each supervisor realize that they set the standard for their subordinates.

The Supervisor will indicate overall satisfaction in the job performance of the employee.

If not previously stated in other comment sections this area should be used to state what the employee and the supervisor are going to do to improve the employees performance.

A scheduled date for a follow-up meeting or the next evaluation will be set. The follow-up meeting would be used to discuss the progress of an employee who is attempting to improve substandard areas of performance.

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The supervisor who wrote the evaluation must sign and date that evaluation. The date of the employee interview will also be recorded. Comments made by the employee as they pertain to the evaluation will be documented in the space provided and the employee will then sign and date the form.

The employee's signature is only verification that the evaluation has been discussed with the employee. It does not indicate that the employee agrees with the evaluation. If an employee refuses to sign the evaluation form the supervisor should note that refusal, and sign the form. It shall be pointed out to the employee that the employee has the option of disagreeing with the evaluation. The employee will, if necessary, be given time to formulate a written response indicating a disagreement. Employees may attach comments or other documentation to the evaluation.

The division commander reviews the evaluation for consistency, completeness and compliance with instructions. The division commander may ask for additional justification for a rating or comment. He may refuse to pass the evaluation on to the Chief of Police, until the additional justification is provided, but the division commander may not order one to alter an evaluation. Should the supervisor remain dissatisfied with an evaluation, the supervisor shall sign the evaluation and indicate that disagreement in the comment section provided. The employee will be advised of any changes or comments that are added to the evaluation from by the division commander.

The Chief of Police or his designee will sign and date the employee evaluations

#### **Rating Criteria**

##### **Job Knowledge**

Rates the employee on how well the requirements and the duties of the assigned job are understood. The evaluator should take into consideration the following:

Is the officer's knowledge equivalent to his/her length of time and experience as a police officer?

Does the officer keep current with new laws, procedures, policies, and equipment?

Is the officer self-motivated to learn new skills?

Is the officer able to draw on his/her knowledge and experience to solve problems in a variety of ways?

Is the officer able to use his/her knowledge to adapt a solution to a problem he or she is facing?

##### **Report Writing/Paperwork**

Appraises the overall quality of an employee's work:

Routine paperwork such as police reports, domestic incident reports, uniform traffic tickets, parking tags, court paperwork, property receipts, worksheets, etc.

##### **Job Performance**

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Rates the quantity of work or service that meets expectations. Include in this area both enforcement and community policing areas such as:

VTL uniform traffic tickets issued and/or arrests made

Parking tags issued

Warrant Service

Police Reports, Domestic Incident Reports, and Accident Reports completed

Calls for service answered

Penal Law and other arrests made

Checkpoints

Referrals: Building Inspector, Senior Services, etc.

Neighborhood involvement: problem solving, school liaison, interaction with businesspersons, park and walk, etc.

Community Service: Ride alongs, Do the right thing, Community Meetings, Station tours, DARE, interviews with the media

Involvement in various details: Bailiff, Tax office, etc.

Officer's practice of using good safety techniques

Officer's performance under stress conditions

#### **Dependability**

Ability to assume responsibility and carry out instructions in a reliable manner.

Does officer respond to calls for service in a reasonable manner?

#### **Driving Skills**

Does the officer operate the police vehicle in a safe manner?

Has the officer been involved in motor vehicle accidents during the rating period?

Has the officer been the subject of complaints concerning his operation of a motor vehicle?

#### **Courtesy**

Willingness to be courteous with the public, co-workers, and supervisors.

Acts in a professional manner when transmitting on the radio or other telecommunications device.

Acts in a professional manner when dealing with the public.

#### **Initiative**

Originates action beyond the scope of responsibilities.

Willingness to volunteer and participate in departmental activities and initiatives.

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