



EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE FILE (EPF)

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Employee Performance File (EPF) Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is for the purpose of guiding supervisors on the maintenance, security, and retention period of documentation in EPFs. This SOP will also establish an EPF audit process in accordance with 5 CFR 293.402(b) and 293.404 (d).

2. SCOPE

This SOP applies to all ITA employees.

3. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The following are the general requirements in the EPFs: The rating official or designated management official must maintain an EPF for each employee containing performance-related records needed to manage performance. Performance appraisal ratings are used as a basis for most personnel actions, such as promotions, reassignments, within-grade increases, quality step increases, removals, reduction-in-grade, retention under reduction-in-force procedures, training and awards. Rating officials will be better able to implement the Agency's performance management system if they have EPF records to support actions.

4. EPF CONTENTS

Employee performance files (EPF) must contain performance plans and performance appraisals for the current year and the last four years. They should also contain forms and documents in support of performance actions that are based solely on performance, such as forms showing training to correct or improve performance, and removals or other actions based on performance. Additional items maintained in the EPF are Recommendation for Recognition (CD-326), Notification of Personnel Actions (SF-50) documenting awards, justification for non-monetary recognition; Letters of Commendation; and Individual Development Plans (IDP).

5. ACCESS

EPFs are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974 and must be protected from improper disclosure. The employee, his or her designated representative, or an agency official who has a need for the documents for official purposes, must be given access to the EPF. The files must be kept in a locked file cabinet.

6. RETENTION OF RECORDS

Performance related documents should be retained in the EPF for as long as necessary beyond the designated retention period when the documents are needed in connection with an on-going administrative, negotiated, quasi-judicial proceeding. An appraisal of unacceptable performance in which a notice of proposed demotion or removal is issued but not effected must be destroyed no later than 30 days after the employee has completed the 1-year of acceptable performance from the date of the advanced written notice of unacceptable performance. Material related to employees conduct and other items that are not performance related should not be included in the EPF.

6.1. Officials authorized to maintain EPFs are responsible for the annual review and purging of the EPFs. Records kept in an automated system are subject to the same requirements as outlined in this SOP.

7. DISPOSITION OF RECORDS

7.1. If a manager (rating official) leaves, the acting or new manager official will assume responsibility of the EPF(s) for that office.

7.2. When an employee leaves to go to another ITA office within the business unit or to another ITA business unit, the EPF must be transferred to the Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) of current office so that he/she can properly deliver the EPF to the DAS of the new office. Once delivered, the receiving DAS will ensure that the new rating official receives the EPF.

7.3. When an employee leaves ITA or leaves the Federal government, the rating official must forward the EPF to the Department of Commerce Human Resources Operations Center, Room 7412.

7.4. When an employee separates from the Federal government, Human Resources will forward all performance records to the Federal Records Center.

8. AUDITING

8.1. The Department will periodically audit EPFs to verify that they contain current and accurate performance documentation. The Department will use the EPF Audit Checklist (attached) to ensure that performance plans, mandatory mid-term progress review and summary performance appraisals, etc. were completed, and that the last four performance ratings are filed in the EPF.

Employee Performance File (EPF) AUDIT CHECKLIST

Employee Name: _____ **Business Unit:** _____

The EPF auditor will inspect the EPF to ensure that documents covering the **current plan** and the performance plans for **last four years** are included.

Current Performance Plan on file: Yes / No

Performance Plans for last 4-Years - (ensure the following actions take place):	20__	20__	20__	20__
Approving official, rating official, and employee signed Employee Performance Plans				
Approving official, rating official, and employee signed employee Mid Term Progress Review				
Approving official, rating official, and employee signed employee Summary Performance Rating.				
Final summary rating performance level indicated.				
Narrative supports summary rating assigned.				
(For Auditor Use Only) National Finance Center (NFC) ratings match ratings on file				

In addition to the required documents above, the following items are maintained in the EPF:

- ___ Supervisors’ notes justifying the performance appraisal rating and or awards
- ___ Individual Development Plans.
- ___ CD-326s (Recommendation for Recognition)
- ___ SF-50s (Notification of Personnel Action) documenting monetary or non-monetary awards
- ___ Non-monetary awards such as Time Off Awards, Bronze Medal Awards, etc.
- ___ Official Letters of Commendation
- ___ Forms showing training to correct performance
- ___ Removals or other actions based on performance

Signature of Auditor/Reviewer: _____ **Date of Audit:** _____