

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS NOTICE

48-19

12/3/19

PERFORMANCE AWARD DISTRIBUTION FOR NON-BARGAINING UNIT EMPLOYEES

I. PURPOSE

This notice provides instructions on how the Agency will distribute performance awards for all FSIS non-bargaining unit employees (including instructions regarding former FSIS employees) for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 performance rating cycle, which ended September 30, 2019.

II. BACKGROUND

A. FSIS administers awards in accordance with the principles set forth in:

1. [5 U.S.C. 2301](#), *Merit Systems Principles*;
2. [DR 4040-451-1](#), *USDA Employee Awards and Recognition Program*; and
3. [DR 4040-430](#), *Employee Performance Management*.

B. Each program area receives an allocation based on its percentage of base salaries to the Agency-wide total. This method is applied to ensure equity and fairness. The Agency utilizes the Performance and Award Manager (PAM) to calculate the individual award amounts for all eligible employees. Employees who receive Outstanding ratings receive pre-determined share values of their program pool unless they receive a Quality Step Increase (QSI). Employees who receive Superior ratings also receive pre-determined share values of their program pool.

C. Program areas receive an allocation of QSIs from the Office of the Administrator (OA), based on the total number of staff as of September 30, 2019. Program areas are given an opportunity to recommend employees who receive an Outstanding rating for consideration for a QSI. Any employee who receives a QSI is not eligible to receive a cash performance award.

III. DISTRIBUTION OF PERFORMANCE AWARDS FOR FY 2019

A. The Agency utilizes a share methodology to ensure fairness, meet the requirement that a performance award not exceed 5% of an employee's salary, and allow the Agency to stay within its awards cap.

B. A share methodology for performance awards applies Agency-wide. Program areas do not have discretion to develop their own practice for determining or distributing performance awards. Performance awards are based on a predetermined percentage of salary dollars. OA approves the share methodology to calculate the dollar amount for performance awards, per program area, based on salary and number of employees.

DISTRIBUTION: Electronic; All
Field Employees

NOTICE EXPIRES: 12/1/20

OPI: OPPD

C. Only employees rated Outstanding or Superior are eligible for performance awards. Each rating level will pay a designated percentage award amount with the higher rating receiving a higher percentage. Employees rated Fully Successful are not eligible for performance awards.

D. Employees who are not covered under performance standards for 90 days as outlined in [DR 4040-430](#) are not eligible for performance awards.

E. Performance awards cannot exceed \$5,500 without Departmental approval and cannot exceed 5 percent of an employee's total salary (including any locality pay or staffing supplement) without Departmental approval.

F. Each program area is provided with allocations for the number of QSIs that may be granted. The allocations vary annually based on program funds. A manager or supervisor reserves the discretion to grant a QSI. A QSI cannot be recommended for an employee who has received a performance cash award within a 52-week period.

G. An employee who has moved between the non-bargaining unit and bargaining unit at the end of the appraisal cycle, who brings with them an interim rating of Superior or Outstanding which will serve as their final rating of record, is eligible to receive a performance award. The following scenarios demonstrate the application of this condition:

1. An employee is promoted from a bargaining unit, GS-9 Consumer Safety Inspector (CSI) position to a non-bargaining unit, GS-10 Supervisory Consumer Safety Inspector (SCSI) position, effective August 19, 2019. The employee served under a CSI performance plan from October 1, 2018 to August 18, 2019 and received an interim rating of Superior for their time in the CSI position. Since the employee will be under new standards in their SCSI position with less than 90 days left in the rating cycle, their interim rating of Superior will serve as their final rating of record, and they will receive a non-bargaining unit performance award; or
2. An employee moves from a non-bargaining unit, GS-10 SCSI position to a bargaining unit, GS-9 CSI position effective September 2, 2019. The employee served under a SCSI performance plan from October 1, 2018 to September 1, 2019 and received an interim rating of Superior for their time in the SCSI position. Since the employee will be under a performance plan in their new CSI position with less than 90 days left in the rating cycle, their interim rating of Superior will serve as their final rating of record, and they will receive a performance award as set out in [FSIS Directive 4451.3](#), *Performance Awards Program for Bargaining Unit Employees*.

IV. PERFORMANCE AWARDS FOR FORMER EMPLOYEES

Former employees (e.g., retired, separated from FSIS), who were employed by FSIS through the end of the performance year on September 30 and received a rating of record of Superior or Outstanding, but left the Agency prior to performance awards being processed, will receive a performance award to be processed manually outside of PAM.

V. QUESTIONS

Refer questions regarding this notice to the Office of Human Resources (OHR), Human Resources Business Systems Division, Program Management and Information Systems Branch at PerformanceManagement@usda.gov.



Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy and Program Management