

# Permanent Status in Job Class

**MAP No. 10-2**

Supersedes MAP No. 10-2

Dated: December 1, 1999

## **State of Alaska**

**Department of Health & Social Services**

**Division of Public Assistance**

**FIELD SERVICES**

**MANAGEMENT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

Approved by:



Chief of Field Services

Date: 2/15/00

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## PURPOSE

*Clarify criteria and procedures for granting probationary employees permanent status, including early permanent status.*

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## BACKGROUND

There is some confusion about the criteria and process for granting employee's permanent status in the job class. There is also a need to remind supervisors of the ability to reward exceptional performance by granting early permanent status under specific circumstances. This may be an underutilized tool that we need to brush off and use more often to reward truly exceptional outstanding performance, consistent with our leadership development initiative.

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## Permanent Status

The standard probationary period for employees in ranges 5-13 is six months. The standard probationary period for employees in pay range 14 and higher is twelve months. Please refer to the GGU Bargaining Agreement, Article 11, Section 2 and the SU Bargaining Agreement, Article 18, Section 9.

Employees achieve permanent status in the job class automatically on the day following the completion of their designated probationary period unless an action is taken to terminate their employment or extend their probation. This date is exactly six or twelve months after the hire date; not to be confused with the anniversary date which is always on the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month.

The supervisor must prepare a performance evaluation that justifies an overall rating of at least low-acceptable.

### **Special Notes for Eligibility Technician I's and Workforce Development Specialist I's**

In order to be rated at least low-acceptable:

- An Eligibility Technician I must complete the Division's standard training program for new workers and demonstrate competence in the Food Stamp program and at least one other program, not including Temporary Assistance.
- Eligibility Technician I's in non-flex PCNs must complete training and demonstrate competence in one program, generally Medicaid.
- Workforce Development Specialist I's must complete "Fundamentals of Case Management" and the Division's standard training program for new workers and demonstrate competence in the Food Stamp, Medicaid, and Temporary Assistance Programs.

“Competence” in the program includes, but is not limited to the achievement of at least a low-acceptable CAR, PAR **and** (for Eligibility Technician’s) CPE, by the next to last month of the probationary period. These rates are compiled from supervisory case reviews and security key reports for that single month. They are not averaged from reviews cumulated over the period as they are for annual evaluations and Eligibility Technician II permanent status evaluations. At least 25 reviews must have been completed in that month in order to calculate the CAR and PAR. It is necessary to use the next to last month of the period to give the employee the most time possible to achieve competence. The evaluation should be prepared promptly at the beginning of the last month of probation in order to obtain all required approvals by the end of the probationary period.

#### **PROCEDURES:**

1. The immediate supervisor will prepare a performance evaluation recommending permanent status, allowing adequate time to obtain all required reviews and approvals.
2. The evaluation will cover the time period from the date of the last evaluation through the effective date of permanent status. It may be combined with an annual/merit anniversary evaluation if one is due within thirty days.
3. The Regional Manager will review the evaluation and recommendation, may require some revisions, and will sign approval. If the rating is “outstanding” it will be forwarded to Field Services and then to Central Office for Division approval.
4. The signed evaluation will be returned to the supervisor, who will then schedule a conference with the ET I to discuss the evaluation and recommendation.

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### **Failure to Achieve Permanent Status**

In the event an employee does not earn at least a low-acceptable performance evaluation, s/he will not be awarded permanent status in the job class. Action to terminate employment or extend probation must be taken prior to the end of the probationary period. The Division Director’s approval is required on the unacceptable evaluation and the letter informing the employee of non-retention. Refer to HSS Policy and Procedures Manual 240-1 and the appropriate bargaining union contract.

## PROCEDURES

If the employee does not meet the criteria for permanent status by the end of the probationary period, the following procedures will apply:

1. Prior to the end of the probationary period the immediate supervisor will prepare an evaluation documenting the employee's failure to meet the standards and established criteria for permanent status, and justifying an unacceptable rating.
2. Prior to the end of the probationary period the immediate supervisor must determine if an additional ninety days will likely be enough time for the employee to bring their performance up to acceptable standards.
  - A. If ninety days is expected to be enough time to bring his/her performance up to an acceptable level, the employee will be given the opportunity to extend probation. A ninety day performance improvement plan will be prepared to detail the steps that must be taken, goals that must be met, and time frames. Performance evaluations will be done every thirty days documenting the employee's progress.
  - B. If ninety days is not expected to be enough time for an employee to bring his/her performance up to an acceptable level, the employee will not be recommended for permanent status.
  - C. If the recommendation is non-retention in the job class, the Regional Manager will initial approval of the unacceptable evaluation, and draft for the Director a letter of non-retention for probationary employee, and forward both to COFS for review and signature on the evaluation. (See HSS P&P 240-1 for an example letter.) The Regional Manager and/or the COFS will brief the Director and send both documents for Director signature.

### **REMEMBER:**

Additional time may be required for all unacceptable evaluations, as they require Field Services and the Director's signature. The supervisor should make every effort to submit these evaluations to the Regional Manager 30 days before the end of the period. Any evaluation prepared with less lead-time should be called to COFS attention via a phone call so it can be given top priority.

**EXCEPTIONS:** Consideration must always be given and additional time allowed for extenuating circumstances. The immediate supervisor will document those occasions when approved leave or other acceptable circumstances have prohibited the employee from meeting the prescribed criteria within required time frames.

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## Early Permanent Status

The Commissioner of Health and Social Services has delegated authority for approval of requests for early permanent status to the Division Directors. (Refer to the August 18, 1999 Standing Delegation Memo.) The Division Directors will ensure consistency in the process.

### PROCEDURES:

#### I. SUPERVISOR REQUEST:

The immediate supervisor will follow the procedures below when applying for early permanent status.

- A. Prepare an evaluation narrative that justifies an outstanding performance rating.
- B. Draft a written justification memorandum supporting the early permanent status recommendation. This memo must be submitted to the Division Director through the Human Resources Manager from the Regional Manager. The memorandum must cover:
  - The exceptional meritorious aspects of the employee's performance that merit consideration for the award. These aspects should be above and beyond what qualified the employee for an outstanding performance rating, as not every outstanding rating yields a request for early permanent status.
  - The benefits derived by the State as the result of such meritorious service.
- C. **NO** request for early permanent status should be submitted for approval unless at least one of the following criteria is met.

1. Rehires:

The employee was rehired into a position previously held in the division and/or department or into a closely related position with similar duties and responsibilities. An

example would be someone who had attained permanent status as a Public Assistance Analyst (PAA), left the position and was rehired as an Eligibility Quality Control Technician (EQCT) or vice versa. The employee who was rehired required minimal training due to prior experience and was able to perform full duties within a shorter time than the probationary period

2. Nonperms:

The employee worked as a nonpermanent employee in a specific job class and has now been appointed to a permanent full time or permanent part time position which is in the same or similar job class, same office and under the same supervisor. The employee demonstrated highly acceptable or outstanding performance during his/her nonpermanent employment and then continued or exceeded the high acceptable or continued the outstanding performance after reappointment.

3. New hires:

The employee has brought to the position extensive knowledge and/or experience in his/her field of work. Midway through the probationary period the employee has demonstrated outstanding performance. This includes those who were reclassified due to expanded job responsibilities.

- D. The evaluation will not include the intent to recommend early permanent status. This will be addressed in the memorandum.

**NOTE:**

***UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD AN EMPLOYEE BE MADE AWARE OF THE APPLICATION FOR EARLY PERMANENT STATUS PRIOR TO APPROVAL BY THE DIRECTOR.***

- E. The evaluation and all documentation requesting early permanent status should be submitted to Field Services timely, at least 30 days prior to the effective date of requested

action. The COFS should be notified of the impending request via phone call to ensure it is given top priority.

## **II. DIRECTOR'S ACTION**

If approved, a congratulatory letter will be prepared by the Director's office. The effective start date will be the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month following the Director's approval. Retroactive approval will not be allowed.

## **III. SUPERVISOR'S ACTION**

The supervisor will be notified of the decision. If approved, the supervisor will take the actions below.

- A. Upon receipt of the memorandum of recommendation, performance evaluation report and congratulatory letter, the supervisor will enter on the report "early permanent status granted" or "early permanent status granted and merit increase;" whichever is applicable.
- B. The supervisor will discuss the evaluation report with the employee and present the commendation documents.
- C. After the employee signs the evaluation, the supervisor will forward the evaluation report, a copy of the letter, and a Request for Personnel Action to the appropriate regional Human Resources office.

***NOTE:***

***AS A REMINDER, IT SHOULD NOT BE  
INFERRED THAT ALL OUTSTANDING  
PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEES DESERVE  
EARLY PERMANENT STATUS.***