



# The Chronicle

## Excellence in Action

If you have any topics, questions or comments for The Chronicle, send an e-mail to: [dha.bethesda.ncr-med.mbx.the-chronicle@mail.mil](mailto:dha.bethesda.ncr-med.mbx.the-chronicle@mail.mil)

DoD Instruction 1400.25 Vol. 431  
National Capital Region Medical Directorate

### DPMAP Lessons Learned

Many within the NCR MD have experienced problems trying to submit performance awards through AutoNoa. The reason for most of the problems is that the completed DPMAP appraisal had an incorrect effective date. The NCR MD had a very large number of completed appraisals with incorrect Appraisal Effective Dates. The NCR MD Servicing Component submitted a request to the programmers to correct all of the erroneous effective dates to June 1, 2018 on completed appraisals.

If the Appraisal Effective Date is still incorrect and has a future date, the appraisal will not be visible to the system because it is not effective. Please do not attempt to update the effective date on an appraisal that is in a "Pending Employee Acknowledgement" or "Completed" status. If this happens a CPOL Service Desk ticket will need to be submitted to have the Appraisal Effective Date corrected.

NCR MD MTFs/Center can re-submit a performance award through AutoNOA for any award that was rejected based on the fact the DPMAP could not locate a 2018 completed appraisal. If the problem persists and award recognition cannot be resolved in a timely matter, cash award requests can be submitted as a Special Act of Service and should not reject based on the fact that the 2018 appraisal could not be found.

#### This issue:

- DPMAP Lessons Learned
- Steps to Modify a DPMAP Performance Plan v.2
- The Art of Listening
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The award may also get rejected if no appraisal entry was created in the DCPDS database after the appraisal was acknowledged by the employee or the Rating Official acknowledged the appraisal on the employee's behalf. Please check the CPOL Portal to make sure an appraisal entry is showing for 2018. If there is no 2018 performance appraisal entry showing in the CPOL Portal but the appraisal is in a "Completed" status, it may be because one or more performance element ratings was rated "Not Rated" ("NR") on the appraisal. If this is the case, there is a known system problem where the appraisal entry could not automatically be created, and it will have to be done manually at CHRA.

Most of these will be fixed in an update to the DPMAP system late July 2018. If these issues are affecting your organization, please contact your Regional Super User to submit a CPOL Service Desk ticket stating an appraisal entry was not created due to having one or more "NR" ratings, and an entry will be created manually. The CPOL Service Desk ticket must include the employee's full name, employee number (this is NOT the SSN, do not put SSNs on tickets), and the appraisal ID on the ticket. An employee number is the six digit number associated with the appraisal ID. If more than one appraisal entry did not get created, please attach a spreadsheet to one ticket listing all employees who did not have an appraisal entry created by the system with the employee's full name, employee number, and appraisal ID. This information needs to be on every ticket submitted for MyPerformance problems no matter the reason.

#### Other Lessons to Share...

There is a known problem with modifying and re-approving a performance plan. Once the plan is re-approved the modifications will not appear on the

completed DD 2906 appraisal. For example, if the Higher Level Reviewer (HLR) approval was skipped when the plan was initiated, and the plan was modified to document the HLR approval, then re-approved, the completed appraisal DD 2906 is not showing the HLR approval on the plan since it was done on a modification. This has been reported to the programmers and they are working on a solution.

Lastly, there is a problem with the ratings and inputs not showing sometimes on the DD 2906 appraisal when the Rating Official (RO) acknowledges the appraisal on the employee's behalf, and chooses "Employee Declined" as the reason why. The programmers are working the issue.

Please contact the NCR MD DPMAP MyPerformance Tool primary or alternate POC:

Ms. Lisa Wilson at email address:  
[Lisa.S.Wilson.civ@mail.mil](mailto:Lisa.S.Wilson.civ@mail.mil)

or

Ms. Georgianna "Sandy" Lehman at email address:  
[Georgianna.L.Lehman.civ@mail.mil](mailto:Georgianna.L.Lehman.civ@mail.mil)

*"Developing a good work ethic is key. Apply yourself at whatever you do, whether you're a janitor or taking your first summer job, because that work ethic will be reflected in everything you do in life." Tyler Perry*

## Steps to Modify a DPMAP Performance Plan

1. Check in the CPOL Portal if the employee's position is coded as Covered under New Beginnings, under Employee Data, Position Info, General tab.

2. Check the self-service hierarchy in the CPOL Portal to see if the employee is coded as reporting to the correct supervisor.

3. When you aren't sure what has been done with the plan/appraisal, or what stage it is in, contact your Super User. Search for the employee's plan that is having a problem; choose "Track Progress" on the drop down menu under "Choose an Action" and click the <Go> button. This will show you who has done what, what stage the plan/appraisal is in, and list the names of who did what. You can click on the <Print> button and print this out also!

4. Always check to see what status the plan/appraisal is in since this affects what can be done and how. If the Plan is in an "Approved" status, the employee cannot edit the performance elements, only the Rating Official (RO). The RO can make changes to the performance elements and narratives, but they will have to re-approve the plan. Only the RO can change the Appraisal Period Start, End, and Effective dates.

5. Check who the "Current Owner" of the plan/appraisal is. In order to make changes to the plan/appraisal, you must be the current owner.

6. If performance elements were modified or are in a "Pending" status for any reason (check the Step 3: Performance Elements and Standards tab), or if the plan is in a "Pending" or "Modified" status, even though it was once in an "Approved" status, the plan must be re-approved on the Step 5: Re-approvals tab in the Plan.

7. Plans that have been "Approved" can only be closed if the employee has acknowledged it, not deleted. If the plan is "Approved" but the employee has not acknowledged it yet, it can still be deleted. Plans that have not yet been approved yet can be deleted.

8. If a RO or Higher Level Reviewer (HLR) leaves, the Super User or other certifier must change the RO and/or HLR name on employee's existing performance plans or when the employee chooses "Transfer to Rating Official" it will automatically be sent to whomever is listed as the RO on the plan, even if the self-service hierarchy has been updated.

**IMPORTANT 2018/19 DPMAP DATES:**  
**Performance Plans – April 1, 2018**  
**Progress Review – November 30, 2018**  
**Annual Appraisal – March 31, 2019**  
**Effective date of Appraisal – June 1, 2019**

\*New employees arriving prior to December 31, 2018 are eligible for an 2019 appraisal. Contact your Regional DPMAP Administrator for new employees arriving after January 1, 2019.

## The Art of Listening

Hearing is a physical ability, whereas listening is a talent. Listening allows an individual to understand what another person is saying. In other words, listening skills allow people to understand what someone is talking about-the meaning behind the words.

Effective listening skills allow employees to be more productive. The ability to listen carefully allows employees to better understand the jobs they are given. They are able to understand what is expected of them by their leaders.

The ability to listen and to comprehend also allows employees to build a strong rapport with co-workers, managers, and customers. Employers and managers have trust in workers that can listen to directions and then do what is expected with minimal follow-up. Good listeners also have a better record resolving problems with customers.

Employees who listen are inclined to perform better on a team. Their completed tasks will be accepted by other team members, producing better results. Those who were able to listen well and perform accordingly will find their work results fit better than those who misunderstood.

Not everyone instinctively knows how to listen well. The following tips can help:

- Maintain eye contact with the speaker. This will demonstrate to the speaker that you are paying attention.
- Do not interrupt the speaker. Wait until he or she is completely finished, then ask questions.
- Control body language. As much as possible, sit still while listening. This implies that the listener is paying full attention to the speaker.
- A good listener knows that being attentive to what the speaker doesn't say is as important as being attentive to what he does say.

Be careful of the following factors that may get in the way of listening:

- Bias or prejudice against the idea or the person.
- Do not let worry, fear, or anger get in the way.
- Understand that some people are resistant to change.
- Those with a lack of attention span can have trouble listening. Make sure this is not related to the fact that it is someone else's idea being listened to.

The importance of effective listening for employees and managers cannot be overemphasized. Everything done in the workplace involves communication, speaking and listening. Communication is critical in the way it can impact efficiency and effectiveness. When all members of a team are able to listen as well as speak effectively, they are much more likely to perform well.



## Being a Professional

A professional has high ethical standards and displays integrity and excellence in performing his/her work and helps to advance the organization in which he/she is employed.

Becoming more professional at work begins with having a positive attitude toward your job. Aim to demonstrate hard work, dedication, and leadership. Find ways to network with others in the field and keep informed on new developments affecting your job. As you take steps to become more professional in the workplace, you may also find greater job satisfaction.

Have a professional attitude. Be supportive of your leader and co-workers. Don't gossip about them behind their backs. Demonstrate that you are dedicated to your agency by arriving at work promptly and staying until quitting time. Put in extra time when it is required without complaining. Be respectful of your leader and co-workers by not invading their work areas without consent and by not taking up their time unnecessarily. Cheerfully applaud others for their accomplishments.

Demonstrate professional reliability. Do your work with merit. Accept responsibility for your mistakes. If you have made an error, don't shift the blame to anyone or anything. Own up to the problem and offer to resolve it. Learn to anticipate problems before they arise so that you can avoid them. Avoid trivial squabbling. Don't discuss your personal matters at the office.

Dress professionally. Choose traditional clothing that reflects the more official end of the dress accepted at your workplace. In an office setting, for example, casual clothing may be acceptable, but a business suit or dress indicates that you are there to do business, not relax. Wear conventional dress shoes and walk with confidence.

Manage your time and work space professionally. Create a calendar on your desk or computer to note appointments and deadlines. Check the calendar regularly so that you stay on schedule with meetings and tasks. If you feel overwhelmed by the demands of phone and email messages, choose a time each morning and/or afternoon to review the messages and respond to them. Arrange your work area so that you can promptly find files or materials that you need.

Be a leader in your profession. Offer to make presentations, head up meetings, or become a liaison to a professional society. Stay current with changes in your profession through seminars and professional articles. Share the information you have learned with your co-workers. Take risks and demonstrate that you are a problem-solver by agreeing to take on difficult tasks.

Communicate in a professional manner. Maintain eye contact and practice a solid handshake. Articulate clearly. Listen attentively to others. Remain composed if others challenge your ideas. If you are uncomfortable speaking in public, join a Toastmasters chapter near you to gain practice.

### Examples of Suitable Workplace Attire



## Get Organized

As the summer winds down, call WorkLife4You today for support and tools that will help you get organized. We can connect you to reliable child care for back to school, refer yard services and home improvement professionals, match you with pet care tips and resources, offer cold weather guidance for your aging loved ones, locate local fall recreation programs, and much more.

Getting organized can seem like a real chore. However daunting it may seem, you can do it with these ten easy-to-follow strategies.

- 1. Get organized at the start and end of each day.** As you start your day, write down your three Most Important Tasks (MITs), along with a handful of other things you'd like to do that day. Clear your desk, get things in order. At the end of each day, tidy up, check off your list, and get things ready for tomorrow.
- 2. Deal with an email instead of putting it off.** When you open an email, try to deal with it immediately. Read it, reply, take action, or archive it. Or put it on your to-do list for later if it's a big task. Don't open emails without handling them in some way or another.
- 3. When you get up from your desk or leave a room, put one thing away.** Whenever you get up for a glass of water or to take a break, clear one item from your workspace or the room you're leaving.
- 4. When you're done eating, wash your dishes** instead of leaving them in the sink. If there are other dishes in the sink, wash a few of those too.
- 5. When you take off a piece of clothing, put it away.** Don't just drop them on the floor or on a piece of furniture, hang them up or put them in the hamper.
- 6. Keep flat surfaces clear.** Your tables, counters, desks, and floors – keep them all clear of clutter.
- 7. Put non-essential purchases on a 30-day list.** Create a 30-day list, and whenever you want to buy something that's not absolutely essential, put it on the list with the date you added it. To avoid adding to your clutter, don't allow yourself to buy anything until it's been on the list for 30 days.
- 8. Put your clothes in a different closet or box for a month,** and only take out what you need to wear. Afterward, you'll see what you actually wear regularly, and which items you can consider donating.
- 9. Declutter on Saturdays.** Every Saturday morning, spend an hour or two decluttering one area.
- 10. One in, one out.** When you bring something new in your life, get rid of one similar thing. For example, if you buy a pair of shoes, donate a pair. This will help you 1) think more about each thing you buy, and 2) slowly have fewer and fewer possessions.

One at a time, you'll find the rules that work for you. And one step at a time, your life will slowly become less cluttered and more organized. Call WorkLife4You today for expert guidance on getting and staying tidy.

**WorkLife4You** is a voluntary and confidential employee benefit available to federal employees and their family members at no cost. Contact a work/life expert today.  
Connect with us 24 HOURS A DAY  
**1-800-222-0364**  
**TTY: 1-888-262-7848**

## Safely Surviving the Dog Days of Summer

June 21st was the official first day of summer and temperatures have been rising around many areas of the country for weeks now. A record-setting heat wave in Arizona, California and Nevada even grounded airplanes in the region, and several weather-related deaths have already been reported.

Heat is the number one cause of weather-related direct fatalities, according to the National Weather Service, and more than 600 people die from complications related to extreme heat every year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports. People over the age of 65, those living alone, children left in cars and people with chronic medical conditions are particularly at risk.

### Heat exhaustion vs. heatstroke

Heat exhaustion, which occurs when the body overheats, is the precursor to heatstroke. Symptoms include muscle cramps, headaches, and nausea or vomiting. When heat exhaustion is not treated, the person becomes at risk for heatstroke, which, without emergency assistance, can lead to death.

Heatstroke occurs when your body temp rises to 104 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, which can cause damage to the brain, heart, kidneys and muscles. Symptoms include altered mental state and behavior, nausea and vomiting, flushed skin, rapid breathing and racing heart rate.

### Elevated risk factors

People with chronic medical conditions are at elevated risk for heat exhaustion, according to the CDC. They may be less likely to sense and respond to changes in temperature and could be taking medications that worsen the impact of extreme heat.

Outdoor workers or those in high-temperature indoor areas are also at increased risk. These include firefighters, bakery workers, farmers, construction workers, miners, boiler room workers and factory workers. At even greater risk are workers who are 65 or older, are overweight, have heart disease or high blood pressure, or take certain medications, according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

### Preventive steps to take 65 and Older:

- Don't rely solely on a fan to keep you cool during a heat wave, and stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible. (Contact your local health department or locate an air-conditioned shelter in your area.)
- Drink more water than usual, and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
- Check on friends and neighbors during heat waves, and have someone do the same for you.
- Don't use the stove or oven to cook — it will make you and your house hotter.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Take cool showers or baths.
- Check the local news for health and safety updates.
- Seek medical care immediately if you or someone you are caring for has symptoms of heat-related illness.

### Kids:

- Keep kids cool and hydrated
- Dress infants and children in loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Make sure they're drinking plenty of fluids. Stay away from really cold drinks or drinks with too much sugar.
- Never leave kids in a parked car.
- Even when it feels cool outside, cars can heat up to dangerous temperatures very quickly.
- Leaving a window open is not enough, temperatures inside the car can rise almost 20 degrees Fahrenheit within the first 10 minutes, even with a window cracked open.
- Children who are left unattended in parked cars are at greatest risk for heat stroke, and possibly death.
- To remind yourself that a child is in the car, keep a stuffed animal in the car seat. When the child is buckled in, place the stuffed animal in the front with the driver.
- When leaving your car, check to be sure everyone is out of the car. Do not overlook any children who have fallen asleep in the car.

### References:

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)