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CHAPTER 275. PROGRAM EVALUATION

1. PURPOSE

This Chapter sets out basic VA policies and the plan for human resources management (HRM) program evaluation, and outlines responsibilities for the conduct and review of such evaluations.

2. REFERENCES

- a. Executive Order 9830.
- b. President's memorandum of October 9, 1969, on personnel management in Government.
- c. Chapter 250, Federal Personnel Manual.
- d. Chapter 250, MP-5, Part 1.

3. OBJECTIVES AND POLICY

a. The objectives of human resources management evaluation in VA are to assure that (1) human resources management programs are responsive to management needs in carrying out the agency's mission; (2) the spirit and intent of Federal HRM programs including laws, Executive orders, rules and regulations, are being adhered to; (3) major human resources management objectives contained in MP-5, part 1, chapter 250 are being achieved; (4) management's goals and objectives that are established giving special emphasis to certain program activities are given sufficient attention; and (5) action plans are developed and implemented as necessary to improve programs.

b. To meet these objectives:

(1) The effectiveness of the agency wide human resources management program will be reviewed and evaluated on a continuing basis.

(2) Analysis and evaluation of human resources management will be accomplished at each management level with personnel management authority. Findings will be coordinated with appropriate line and staff officials at field stations and in Central Office.

(3) Meaningful reports on the status of human resources management programs will be provided to the Secretary and other top management officials on a regular basis so that the impact of findings can be taken into account in formulating management decisions.

(4) Human resources management self-evaluation will be conducted at each field station as an integral part of local management's systematic internal review system.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

a. The Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration is responsible for the design and operation of the VA human resources management evaluation system, and will:

(1) Identify basic human resources management objectives and develop a system to measure how well these objectives are being met. Objectives will be reexamined periodically and revised as necessary to meet changing conditions.

(2) Appraise agency personnel management activities through onsite surveys, assistance visits, review of records, and analysis of management information systems reports.

(3) Develop methods of utilizing evaluation information to improve and strengthen agency personnel management. Identify program activities that should be given additional attention department-wide, publicize these needs to all field stations and establish goals and objectives where needed.

(4) Establish appropriate procedures and provide followup action to overcome identified personnel management deficiencies and recommend needed improvements.

(5) Coordinate evaluation findings with appropriate management levels and provide necessary reports to top management officials.

(6) Coordinate human resources management evaluation activities with departments and staff office evaluating officials and with the Office of Personnel Management to broaden total program coverage and strive toward consistency in program assessment.

(7) Utilize, during onsite reviews, appropriate procedures to observe the rights of labor organizations.

b. Directors of field stations are responsible for establishing and implementing a program for human resources management self-evaluation and will; (1) assure that the objectives shown in paragraph 3a above are met; (2) observe the rights of labor organizations and the impact of negotiated agreements when taking action on personnel matters resulting from local reviews, reviews by the Office of Human Resources Management, other VA audits and outside evaluating agencies.

5. EVALUATION METHODS

a. Reviews by Central Office Officials

(1) Analysis of Information and Data. The Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management will conduct a continuing review of field station human resources personnel management programs through analysis of:

- (a) Office of Personnel Management evaluation reports.
- (b) VA management reviews (Office of Audit reports, department/staff office reviews, etc.).
- (c) Statistical and narrative personnel management reports.
- (d) Information resulting from ongoing communication with field stations.

b. Onsite Evaluations. Onsite evaluations will be scheduled on the basis of such factors as lapsed time since last visit and stations' need for assistance. They may involve a full review of all personnel management activities or a special review of programs of special emphasis or significance (e.g., Equal Employment Opportunity, Labor-Relations, Selective Placement of the Handicapped, Disabled Veteran, etc.). These surveys may involve a review of personnel management activities and service rendered to separate VA facilities for which the human resources management office provides support.

c. Assistance Visits. Onsite assistance visits will be made for the purpose of providing advice and help on human resources management programs. These visits may be scheduled by the Office of Human Resources Management, department or staff office. Office of Human Resources Management staff may be assigned to assist a team from a department or staff office.

d. Station Level Human Resources Management Self-Evaluation

(1) Station Directors will establish a system to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of human resources management at the station. Directors should integrate this program with the facility overall review system, rather than isolating it as a separate activity which is independently administered by the Human Resources Management Service/Division.

(2) Station level human resources management evaluation systems must meet the requirements established by FPM chapter 250, subchapter 2. The general guidelines set forth in appendix B to this chapter are provided for consideration in developing local evaluation systems.

(3) Normally, human resources management self-evaluation reviews are conducted annually. However, local management will determine the scope and frequency of formal reviews. In any case, the scope should be based on anticipated problems and indicated needs.

e. Standards

(1) The evaluation criterion contained in appendix A to this chapter provide broad performance standards and guidance in methodology for assessing program effectiveness and progress in meeting the basic objectives sought in human resources management.

(2) Such factors as the size of the station, primary mission, dispersal of work force and geographic location must be considered in applying the guidelines and development of more specific performance standards. Evaluating officials will adapt criteria and procedures to local conditions and circumstances. Station level evaluation systems should include more specific performance standards as discussed in appendix B of this chapter.

(3) Goals and objectives established to improve program effectiveness or to implement new or revised programs must also be monitored by the development and implementation of similar evaluation procedures.

6. EVALUATION REPORTS

a. Field stations. Stations will determine the contents of their human resources management self-evaluation reports. However, documentation should clearly indicate to local management and Central Officials the status of human resources management station-wide and in each service or division or separate organization for which human resources service support is rendered.

b. Central Office evaluation reports (prepared by VA Central Office) will show clearly those program strengths and weaknesses which form the basis for an objective appraisal of the status of the human resources management program. Such reports will be brief and to the point, highlighting how well program objectives are being met. Identification of problem areas, or functions in need of improvement, will be supplemented by suggestions, recommendations or other indications concerning action to be taken to correct inadequacies and strengthen programs. Action to implement needed corrective measures will be monitored through the submission of reports or follow-up site visits to the extent deemed necessary for completed action or to provide additional assistance.

APPENDIX A. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT EVALUATION STANDARDS

1. The standards in this appendix are organized to provide for an evaluation of "Human Resources Program Management" (pt. I) and separate evaluations of the four substantive areas (pt. II). Programs such as Performance Evaluation, Incentive Awards, and Program Evaluation, have been integrated with the major evaluation areas in parts I and II.

2. Three separate aspects of the evaluation process are indicated: (a) objectives; (b) standards; and (c) evaluation procedures. The objectives consist of statements setting forth separate and distinct goals in each program area. They define the end result or that which management is to achieve. The objectives are not concerned with activities but rather the product of the activity. The standards and evaluation procedures are directly related to the objectives. They provide reasonable performance criteria and methods to identify station needs and problem areas, and results accomplished.

3. In applying the standards, users should keep in mind that human resources management in VA is not static. Changes in concepts and emphases are constantly occurring to keep pace with the needs of our society, and particularly, those of veterans we serve. To meet these changing needs, special attention must be given to those programs of high national interest, e.g., employment of Vietnam era veterans, disabled veterans and other handicapped persons, upward mobility, training and employment of economically or educationally disadvantaged persons, and the recruitment and employment of minority groups, and women. No attempt has been made to establish separate or specific standards in these or other special program areas since the objectives and standards outlined in this appendix are sufficiently broad to measure and evaluate progress made toward their achievement.

4. The evaluation of "end results" as opposed to the procedural, administrative and technical aspects of program activities is not intended to minimize the importance of such work processes, but rather to place them in proper perspective for evaluation purposes. Since personnel programs are not ends in themselves but have meaning only in their contributions to effective management, it follows that primary evaluation efforts should be directed toward the appraisal of results achieved, and contributions which are responsive to management objectives. On the basis of this information the program activities can be reviewed with appropriate consideration to purpose and need rather than excessive reliance on the presence or absence of the usually accepted elements which comprise the human resources management program.

5. The evaluation procedures and standards provide for employee and supervisory interviews. No attempt has been made to establish norms or performance standards to measure and evaluate employee or supervisory responses. The evaluator should, in his/her best judgment, utilize this information as an indicator of areas which may deserve further attention. The evaluator should not be bound solely by such results but is required to explain his/her judgment in the face of unfavorable or unusual responses.

6. The standards are designed solely to facilitate the evaluation of human resources management effectiveness against known objectives and are not intended to prescribe policy, organizational structure, or functional distribution of program activities.

PART I-PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

OBJECTIVES

1. To achieve maximum use of station human resources through a sound organizational structure and appropriate delegations of authorities.
2. To assure that effective human resources management practices are carried out at all organizational levels.
3. To assure that human resources management objectives are being met.

NOTE: The management of the human resources management program in a VA medical facility includes the administration of a separate and distinct HRM system for physicians, dentists, nurses, and other personnel employed in the Veterans Health Administration under 38 U.S.C. ch. 73. Although the title 38 system is unique, many of the objectives, standards, and procedures outlined in this guide apply equally to these employees. The role of the HRM Officer is to provide leadership, advice, and assistance for the effective application of these standards as they relate to title 38 employees.

1. OBJECTIVE

To achieve maximum use of station human resources through a sound organizational structure and appropriate delegations of authorities.

STANDARD

a. Human resources management authority delegated and responsibility assigned are consistent with sound human resources management practices.

b. Within authorized employment, the human resources management office is organized, staffed, and trained to meet the human resources administration needs of the station efficiently and economically.

PROCEDURE

a. Review delegations of authorities, functional, and organization charts and position description (sampling) of line officials

Analyze the findings in the four substantive program areas.

Interview supervisors and employees.

b. Review HRM office organization, and staffing assignments, training and experience of staff.

Interview supervisors, employees, and top management staff.

Interview HRM staff.

STANDARD

c. Effective use is made of the human resources management office staff.

2. Objective

To assure that effective human resources management practices are carried out at all organizational levels.

STANDARD

a. (1) Top management provides positive direction, planning, and support.

(2) Division/service chiefs and supervisors understand, accept, and effectively carry out their assigned human resources management responsibilities.

b. Plans have been developed to meet staffing requirements and all management officials discharge their responsibilities in planning for, and utilizing, human resources.

c. (1) The HRM Officer and staff provide effective guidance and assistance to management.

(2) Management recognizes, accepts, and supports the full utilization of the HRM office in providing staff guidance and assistance in all areas of human resources management.

PROCEDURE

c. Review skills utilization of HRM office staff and efficiency of administrative systems.

PROCEDURE

a. Interview management officials

Review station policy issuances

Review top management staff minutes

Review management advisory committees minutes.

Interview supervisors and employees

Review findings in the four basic program areas.

b. Review action taken to identify present and future staffing requirements and steps being taken to make the most effective use of employee skills.

c. Review relationships that exist between the HRM Officer and management and supervisory officials.

Review:

Extent to which the HRM Officer participates in planning activities (organizational changes, planning for staffing needs, etc.).

STANDARD

PROCEDURE

d. Communications generally lend clear, consistent, and effective support to human resources management objectives.

e. Personnel transactions and records conform to statutory and regulatory requirements and provide basic information and control data to support Federal human resources management requirements and public policy.

f. (1) A positive program exists to provide equal opportunity for applicants and employees without regard to race, religion, color, national origin or sex, age, or nondisqualifying handicaps.

(2) Realistic affirmative action plans have been established covering the employment of minority group members and women, and disabled veterans and other handicapped persons.

(3) A plan for assessing progress in the programs has been established and is being followed.

Recommendations of HRM Officer and management's action or response.

Mutual exchange and use of human resources management information by staff and line officials.

d. Review all means of employee-management communication.

Interview supervisors and employees.

e. Review sample of personnel reports, files, and related records.

Review response to applicants for employment.

Review appeal files.

f. Refer to VA OPM/EEOC guidelines for evaluating equal employment opportunity for minority groups, women, handicapped persons, and disabled veterans.

Role of management (commitment, policy, communications, supervisory and employee recognition for achievements, assignment of responsibility, need for EEO Committee, community contacts, etc.).

Program implementation (development of recruitment sources, use of skills, job structuring, training and development, and performance evaluation of supervisors, employees, etc.).

STANDARD

PROCEDURE

Identification of problems and causes (grade distribution, assessment of attitudes, employee complaints, surveys of skills not being utilized, etc.).

Appointment of Federal women's and Hispanic program managers.

Affirmative action program for disabled veterans and other handicapped persons.

Station evaluation findings (status of program, problem areas, corrective action needed, etc.).

Plans of action (short and long range goals, assignment of responsibility, timetable for accomplishments, etc.).

g. Equal Employment Opportunity counselors designated are trained in their functions, are capable, are well publicized, have the confidence of employees, and have good rapport with supervisors.

g. Interview employees, supervisors and EEO counselors.

Examine bulletin boards and station publications.

h. Discrimination complaints are processed promptly, and management officials show a sincere desire to provide maximum opportunity to informally resolve complaints before stages are reached.

h. Review discrimination complaint records.

3. OBJECTIVE

To assure that human resources management objectives are being met.

STANDARD

PROCEDURE

a. Management has taken appropriate action to implement recommendations contained in surveys, audits, or inspections.

a. Review recommendations contained in reports and action taken by management.

STANDARD

b. (1) Planning reflects management direction, interest, and participation.

(2) The local self-evaluation system meets VA-OPM requirements and identifies objectives for program improvement.

(3) Reports reflect a reasonably accurate description of the status of the human resources management program.

PROCEDURE

b. Review station plan and procedures for, and results of, systematic self evaluation.

Interview service/division chiefs.

Review self-evaluation reports.

Review actions planned and taken to resolve identified deficiencies.

**PART II--CLASSIFICATION AND JOB GRADING,
POSITION MANAGEMENT AND PAY ADMINISTRATION**

OBJECTIVES

1. To assure the effective administration of the classification and job grading programs, and the Fair Labor Standards Act.
2. To make optimum use of human resources through effective position management.
3. To conduct the pay administration and hours of duty programs in compliance with appropriate laws, regulations and agency policy.

1. OBJECTIVE

To assure effective administration of the classification and job grading programs and the Fair Labor Standards Act.

STANDARD

a. (1) Positive management direction is given the classification and job grading programs.

(2) The FLSA provisions and local assignments and responsibilities have been formally communicated to all supervisors and employees.

(3) Adequate HRM Service/Division staff is assigned to the different programs and possess sufficient program expertise.

b. (1) HRM Service/Division is maintaining appropriate supportive records in the classification and job grading program.

PROCEDURE

a. Review local policy issuance, and local communication media for adequate and clear delegation of authority and assignment of responsibility for the classification, job grading, and FLSA activities.

Review human resources management staff assignments in comparison with overall program timeliness and quality.

Review HRM staff background and training records.

b. Review classification records to determine:

Correlation between organization charts and position descriptions.

STANDARD

PROCEDURE

(2) The local classification plan includes a schedule for position description maintenance reviews and for certifying classification accuracy and addressing position management problems at least every 3 years.

Classification maintenance reviews are conducted.

(3) FLSA determinations are properly documented.

At least 10 percent of base positions are audited in each organization.

FLSA status is documented on position descriptions and the basis for the determination is recorded as an attachment to official position description.

c. (1) Supervisors are adequately prepared and are assuming their classification, job grading program responsibilities.

c. Interview supervisors and employees and check records to determine:

Supervisors receive assistance and training needed and understand policy issuances.

(2) Supervisors understand and carry out their FLSA responsibilities.

Standards are available.

Supervisors understand their responsibility in certifying positions accuracy.

Review overall findings against accuracy of positions descriptions prepared by supervisors.

Employees have been given copies of their position description and their assigned duties and responsibilities have been explained.

Service/division records are current.

Check work areas to determine that employees are working within authorized tours.

d. (1) Employees understand and generally accept the principles and purposes of position classification, job grading, and FLSA.

d. Interview employees and supervisor to determine:

STANDARD

PROCEDURES

(2) Employees are aware of their appeal rights.

Employee awareness of appeal rights and classification and job grading standards.

Employee awareness that advice and counseling is available from supervisor and the personnel office.

Supervisors and the HRM staff are making an effort to promote understanding and acceptance of the program.

Review recent classification and job grading appeals.

e. (1) Position descriptions are reasonably current and meet the standard of adequacy for classification or grading action and for FLSA determinations.

e. Audit a representative sample of positions with employees and supervisors.

Review position descriptions and position evaluation reports for title, series and grade support and FLSA determinations.

(2) Positions are properly classified or graded and proper FLSA determinations made.

Review position reports of mixed series jobs and positions which are classified or graded at a level which exceeds the classification standards or guides.

(3) Classification and grading actions are supported by position evaluation reports as appropriate.

f. New standards are applied within 6 months and exceptions are justified.

f. Review actions against receipt date of standards.

g. Classification and grading decisions are implemented within four pay periods and exceptions are justified.

g. Review sampling of classification decisions against personnel action effective dates.

h. Recommendations for changes in classification or job grading are acted upon by HRM Service within 30 to 60 calendar days of receipt. Action(s) exceeding to 30 to 60 days time will be justified and documented.

h. Review personnel action requests and submission dates from services/divisions against position description.

STANDARD

i. Locally identified classification or grading errors are promptly brought to the attention of line and top management; efforts are made to prevent adverse actions, and appropriate corrective action dates are planned. Extensions are justified.

PROCEDURE

i. Review records (evaluation reports, maintenance reviews, position management, etc.).

Review records of position audits on those positions with questionable classification

2. OBJECTIVE

To make optimum use of human resources through effective position management

STANDARD

a. Management has published a local policy on the operation of the position management program in accordance with VA Central Office directives.

b. The local position management program is functioning as prescribed.

c. Service/division chiefs, supervisors, and Position Management Committee Members/Coordinator are prepared to assume responsibilities.

d. Top management, Position Management Committee/Coordinator, HRM Service/Division, and supervisors are assuming responsibilities for identifying questionable areas in organization structure, employee utilization, job alignment, unwarranted grade escalation.

PROCEDURE

a. Review the local publications for compliance.

b. Review position management records.

c. Conduct interviews.

Review records of training.

d. Review and compare with overall program review findings:

Reports of management analysis.

Systematic reviews of service/division chiefs.

Classification and position management reviews.

STANDARD

e. Management is kept advised and is making reasonable progress to correct instances of job dilution, overlapping of duties and responsibilities, supervisory layering, grade escalation trends, and unwarranted positions.

f. Job structuring is appropriately used to facilitate optimum use of skills and training of available human resources.

PROCEDURE

e. Review records, reports, organization charts, grade trends, etc., as necessary, including VA Central Office evaluation reports.

f. Review appropriate records to determine job structuring associated with:

Hard to fill positions.

Skill inventory of employees.

FEORP, EEO and Upward Mobility Plans.

Corrective measures stemming from classification and job grading actions or position management needs.

3. OBJECTIVE

To conduct the pay administration and hours of duty program in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and agency policy.

STANDARD

a. Basic pay and hours of duty have been communicated to supervisors and employees.

b. Local policy and instructions concerning pay administration in determining rate of basic compensation.

PROCEDURE

a. Review local policy issuances.

b. Review local policy.

Review a sampling of appointment actions and pay determinations.

Interview supervisors and affected employees for understanding.

STANDARD

c. (1) Sufficient resources are assigned to carry out Federal Wage System survey activities.

(2) Representative assigned to survey activities are properly prepared.

(3) Complete survey activities on a timely basis.

PROCEDURE

c. Compare records against survey standards and request from survey leader.

Interview participants.

Review timetable tables and results.

Review VA Central Office records.

PART II--RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide an adequate supply of qualified persons to fill current and anticipated vacancies.
2. To assure selection from among the best qualified candidates for each position vacancy.
3. To maintain an appropriately stabilized work force and to achieve maximum utilization of individual employee skills.
4. To conduct the staffing program in accordance with the spirit and letter of Federal Law and VA-OPM/EEOC regulations and policy.

NOTE: The VA, because of the nature of its mission, has a vital interest in the employment of returning ex-servicemen and ex-servicewomen who can effectively relate to patients, and to beneficiaries and their dependents. In assessing recruitment and placement programs, therefore, consideration will be given to the positive efforts made by station officials to recruit Vietnam era veterans and make best use of the skills and abilities they can offer to veterans served by the VA.

1. OBJECTIVE

To provide an adequate supply of qualified persons to fill current and anticipated vacancies.

STANDARD

- a. Applicants recruited are among the best qualified available in the recruitment area.
- b. Vacancies are committed on a timely basis (usually within 2 weeks after qualified candidates are available) except in some instances for shortage category jobs and otherwise when vacancy could not be anticipated or other unusual circumstances exist.
- c. Staffing has been reasonably close to the authorized strength.

PROCEDURE

- a. Interview supervisors - review placement followup records and general turnover data.
- b. Review current and past vacancies and recruitment efforts being made.
- c. Review staffing records for past year

STANDARD

d. In addition to normal recruitment sources, positive steps have been taken to solicit and consider prospective employees from such population segments as: discharged veterans; minority racial and ethnic groups; women; physically and mentally handicapped, and educationally or economically disadvantaged persons.

e. Positive steps have been taken to publicize staffing needs, and to recruit for the VA as a whole as well as the station.

PROCEDURE

d. Review placement actions; use of special appointment authorities; extent of advertisement in, or press release to Black, Hispanic, or other minority news media; portrayal of minorities, women and handicapped in locally developed pamphlets; contacts with organizations representing minorities, women, disabled veterans or other handicapped persons; and contacts or results of visits to schools with sizeable populations of these groups.

Review recruitment program for under-represented positions (FEORP).

e. Review the adequacy, frequency and effectiveness of total recruitment activities:

Advertisement and press releases (free and paid).

School visits (high schools, vocational schools, and colleges).

Recruitment literature and other material.

Extent of participation of program officials in planning for future needs.

Coordinated efforts of program and HRM officials in recruitment of professional staff.

Use of nonprofit placement services, USES, etc.

Career days, job fairs, etc.

2. OBJECTIVE

To assure selection from among the best qualified candidates for each position vacancy.

STANDARD

PROCEDURE

a. Management makes effective use of flexibilities permitted in selecting methods of filling vacancies, i.e., outside recruitment, internal placement, reinstatement, transfer, etc.

a. Review a sampling of placement actions, including placement followups and probationary period review actions.

(1) Areas of consideration are broad enough to provide a supply of the best qualified candidates available and afford fair consideration.

Review actions involving placements in positions identified as upward mobility positions.

(2) Selection criteria and evaluation and ranking techniques are appropriate to assure selection procedures are consistent with the requirements of Federal Policy (law, Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program and the Uniform Guidelines).

Review sampling of job analysis/rating guide development documentation files.

(3) Selections are made from among the best qualified candidates available.

Review records of placement action(s) which involves probationary new managers and supervisors.

b. Supervisors assume a major role in the selection process and are generally satisfied with the caliber of candidates referred.

b. Review records and interview supervisors.

c. Positive efforts have been made by management officials to gain employees' acceptance and understanding of station merit promotion plans and procedures.

c. Interview supervisors and employees, and review promotion grievances.

d. Management has fully implemented equal employment opportunity politics.

d. Review records and steps taken by management.

Refer to VA-OPM/EEOC guidelines for evaluating equal employment opportunity for minority groups, women, and disabled veterans and handicapped persons.

3. OBJECTIVE

To maintain an appropriately stabilized work force and to achieve maximum utilization of individual employee skills.

STANDARD

a. Action is taken to make maximum use of employee skills to the extent-feasible.

b. Supervisors participate in the identification of employee skills and, within the framework of their responsibilities, provide opportunities for career growth and development.

c. A reasonable effort is made to retain qualified and capable employees; losses because of ineffective or improper utilization seldom occur.

d. (1) Reasonable effort is made to assist employees in overcoming weak performance.

(2) Timely administrative action is taken to reassign or separate after failure of reasonable efforts.

e. Maximum effort is made to avoid RIF. When necessary, positive action is taken to minimize adverse effects upon employees and to assist them in locating other employment.

PROCEDURE

a. Review actions taken to improve utilization of employee skills (including effective use of details).

b. Review records and interview supervisors.

c. Review records to identify numbers and types of voluntary separations.

Review records of station's efforts to attract part-time candidates.

d. Review sampling of actions taken by management to separate employees for inefficiency or disqualification.

e. Review station policy issuance. Review appropriate RIF records (past 2 years).

4. OBJECTIVE

To conduct the staffing program in accordance with the spirit and letter of Federal personnel law and VA-OPM/EEOC regulations.

STANDARD

PROCEDURE

a. Top management provides positive direction and support.

a. Review local policy issuance concerning recruitment and placement activities. Determine adequacy of staff resources assigned.

b. Supervisors are sufficiently informed to carry out their responsibilities.

b. Interview supervisors and employees. Analyze program findings.

c. The HRM Officer and staff are providing guidance and orientation to promote understanding and acceptance.

c. Interview supervisors and employees. Review training records and communication media.

d. Staffing actions are consistent with legal and regulatory requirements.

d. Review a sample of all various placement actions taken during the past year.

e. A system for the collection and reporting of Racial and Ethnic Identification on applicants are consistent with OPM/VA regulations.

e. Review the system for the collection and reporting of Racial and Ethnic Identification on applicants

PART II--TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide employees with the training needed for efficient performance of assigned duties and for facilitating adjustment to change.

2. To assure the continuous replacement of essential skills through the development of personnel for assumption of greater responsibilities.

1. OBJECTIVE

To provide employees with the training needed for efficient performance of assigned duties and for facilitating adjustment to change.

STANDARD

a. Supervisors participate in the station training program by providing necessary on the job training for employees, appraising the need for further training and arranging for such additional training as is required.

b. Supervisors and employees have a good understanding of the organization and its mission and policies. They are aware of training opportunities and participate in identifying training needs and appraising training received.

c. Methods used to determine training needs:

(1) Provide for and identification of needs at least annually be organizational levels and occupational groups.

(2) Include an analysis of both organizational and individual requirements.

(3) Include supervisory and employee contact.

PROCEDURE

a. Interview supervisors.

Discuss training interests and needs with employees.

b. Interview supervisors and employees.

c. In addition to supervisory and employee interviews, interview members of Training and Development Committee and review committee records.

Review station procedures, reports of training surveys and other appropriate records.

STANDARD

PROCEDURE

(4) Utilize significant information contained in annual surveys, VA Central Office surveys, internal audits, OPM reports, etc.

d. Training plans are based on budget capability, with identifiable needs, priorities, and proper attention to special emphasis activities.

e. (1) Training was given according to plan; exceptions to and changes in plans were warranted.

f. Minority group employees, women, and those in other special emphasis categories are given equal opportunity for training and self development.

g. Required training of employees selected for first-level supervisory positions in the competitive service is being accomplished in accordance with VA and/or OPM requirements and documented. Reasons for any reduction in the required 80 hours of training are documented.

h. Supervisors in Excepted Service positions (physicians, dentists, and registered nurses, etc.) are included in training plans and are provided appropriate training.

d. Review training plans. Determine if priorities have been established, and reflect attention to activities with special emphasis.

e. Review records of training and inquire into effectiveness of training through end results achieved.

f. See a through e above. Refer to VA-OPM/EEOC guidelines for evaluating equal employment opportunity for minority groups and other special categories.

g. Review sampling of placement actions and related training records of employees appointed as first-level supervisors.

h. Interview supervisors and employees.

Analyze other program findings. Review training records.

2. OBJECTIVE

To assure the continuous replacement of essential skills through the development personnel for assumption of greater responsibilities.

STANDARD

a. Supervisors are aware of, and accept their responsibility for the need to develop employees under their supervision and to provide them with maximum opportunities for upward mobility and/or lateral movement out of "dead end" positions.

b. Employees are aware of, and generally understand, the development opportunities that exist for growth. There is general satisfaction with these opportunities.

c. (1) Development needs are identified and periodically appraised.

(2) Realistic development activities are established.

(3) Reasonable progress is being made to carry out planned activities.

d. Management encourages and facilitates executive and employee development programs using such local, or centrally funded resources as are available for this purpose.

PROCEDURE

a. Interview supervisors and employees, and review supervisory practices, including planning, directing and controlling job training.

Review local affirmative action program plans and reports.

Review career counseling activities.

b. Interview employees.

c. Review development activities.

d. Review such management practices as:

Rotational assignments.

Information and assistance to employees on development opportunities, both within and outside the VA.

Use of assistance offered or received from VA Central Office

Reasonable use of leave or authorized absence for development purposes.

STANDARD

PROCEDURE

e. Eligible employees are fully informed of their right to participate in the Centralized Staffing System.

f. Training and development assignments are consistent with legal and regulatory requirements and authorities.

Use the station facilities for after-hours development purposes.

Reasonable use of station funds to encourage development of employees, including those in the lower grades.

e. Review filled and vacant position report or other records maintained locally.

Interview employees and supervisors.

f. Review records to determine:

Competitive procedures are applied when appropriate

Continued service agreements are consummated when required.

Payment of funds is proper.

PART II--EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND SERVICES

OBJECTIVES:

1. To develop and maintain an efficient and cooperative work force through effective human resources management practices at all levels of supervision.
2. To demonstrate affirmative willingness to recognize bona fide labor organizations and deal fairly with them on matters of concern to employees they represent.
3. To provide suitable working conditions, services which meet management and employee needs, and benefits to which employees are entitled.

1. OBJECTIVE

To develop and maintain an efficient and cooperative work force through effective human resources management practices at all levels of supervision.

STANDARD

a. Facility has a generally informed work force who understand, accept and are satisfied with management principles and practices in areas of personal interest to employees.

PROCEDURE

- a. Interview employees.
Work rules and obligations.
System and effectiveness of communications.
Recognition of ideas and achievements.
Conduct and discipline.
Right of grievance and appeal.
Tours of duty and leave administration.
Equal opportunity in employment.
General supervisor-employee relationships.

STANDARD

b. Good management practices are being used in the impartial and uniform treatment of employee problems - appropriate action is taken to resolve those that do exist

c. Reasonable steps have been taken by management to keep turnover at a minimum

d. There is a reasonable distribution of recognition awards (organizationally and by types) and evidence that deserving employees are being recognized. Awards are properly documented and justified.

e. Employee performance evaluations are being used for correct deficiencies and help improve performance.

PROCEDURE

b. Review sampling of grievance, disciplinary and inefficiency actions.

c. Review reasons for resignations and determine if cases of questionable supervision or other factors contributing to turnover have been checked and corrective action taken as necessary.

d. Review numbers and types of employee recognition and sampling of case documentations.

e. Interview supervisors and employees-- review records:

Performance evaluations and counseling sessions.

Within-grade advancements.

Within-grade denials.

2. OBJECTIVE

To recognize and deal with lawful labor organizations on matters of concern to the employees they represent and to strive toward informal resolution of any difference or disputes at earliest stage possible.

STANDARD

a. Employees are aware of their rights in joining a labor organization.

b. Line management officials are trained and are effective in labor-management relations.

PROCEDURE

a. Interview employees.

b. Interview supervisors and records of training accomplished and planned.

STANDARD

PROCEDURE

(1) Top management appropriately meets and confers with the labor organization(s) on basic issues to prevent problems.

Review records of meetings with union officials.

Review labor relation program plans.

(2) Efforts are made to resolve disputes informally at the earliest stage possible.

Interview union officials.

c. Adequate HRM staff is assigned for effective support to management officials at all levels.

c. Interview management officials and various level of supervisors.

d. Adequate preparation has been made for negotiation of agreements.

d. Review appropriate training and labor-management records.

(1) The negotiating team(s) are well prepared.

Interview management officials at all levels.

(2) Supervisory input is solicited.

(3) Negotiating objectives and proposals are formulated.

e. Terms of the negotiated agreement(s) are observed.

e. Review records of grievances and unfair labor practice charges

3. OBJECTIVE

To provide suitable working conditions, services which meet management and employee needs, and benefits to which employees are entitled.

STANDARD

PROCEDURE

a. Work environment (space, facilities, climate control, light, furnishing, etc.) within the resources of management is conducive to the health and well being of employees.

a. Interview employees.

Review local policy statements.

STANDARD

b. Management has a good understanding of employee benefits and services and gives active support to their application within reasonable resources and employee needs.

c. Employees are provided counseling and assistance, as the need arises, on matters of personal concern to them (preretirement counseling; job connected injuries; health benefits; reemployment rights, etc.).

d. Management provides direction and support to activities for assisting employees having problems related to alcohol or drug usage.

PROCEDURE

b. Interview supervisors. Review records to determine scope of health services program and range of other services provided.

c. Interview employees and supervisors.

Review records and reports.

d. Review local policy, instructions, assignment of resources.

Interview supervisors, employees, and program officials.

APPENDIX B. GUIDELINES FOR STATION LEVEL SELF-EVALUATION

1. GENERAL

The VA's basic goals and objectives in human resources management have been established in FPM chapter 250, MP-5, Part I, chapter 250; and this chapter. Appendix A to this chapter provides broad performance standards for the basic program objectives and guidance in the methodology for measuring the attainment of these objectives. Field stations, in carrying out delegated authority and responsibility in human resources management, must assure that human resources are effectively utilized. They should also establish more specific and detailed performance objectives where appropriate to ensure that local needs are met while achieving the more basic goals and objectives of human resources management.

2. ESTABLISHING A SYSTEM FOR HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SELF-EVALUATION

a. The actual conduct of systematic reviews may appropriately vary from station to station, depending on the utilization and modification of the basic performance standards provided in Appendix A. However, the successful operation of the human resources management evaluation system relies on its establishment as a management program, integrated with the station's overall management review process, rather than being an isolated activity operated solely as an HRM Service/Division program.

b. The following guidelines are to assist stations to develop and implement a human resources management self-evaluation system which meets OPM-VA requirements.

(1) NEED. Establish the role of evaluation in the human resources management process and assign responsibility for conducting human resources management evaluations.

PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTING

(a) Issue a local policy statement that reflects management direction, assigns administrative and coordinative responsibility for evaluations to the HRM Officer, and provides for participation by service/division chiefs and other appropriate management staff.

(b) Integrate this review system with existing review programs, such as the classification review and the station's overall systematic internal review program.

(c) Establish the scope of the review process to include:

1. Appraisal in each service/division; and

2. Stationwide assessment and overall administration of the HRM program.

(d) Develop and include procedures in the local plan to describe:

1. Kinds of information needed to determine the status of the human resources management program;
2. Methods for gathering, analyzing and acting on such information; and
3. Appropriate reporting requirements and methods to bring about corrective action, when needed.

(2) NEED. Define methods for determining human resources management program objectives in each service/division, identifying accomplishments and deficiencies, and taking appropriate action.

PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTING

(a) Establish that each service/division, in conjunction with the HRM staff, will identify areas of concern (objectives) that will be concentrated on at the time of review. Identification could be based on:

1. Stationwide goals and objectives;
2. Activities that have demanded more than normal attention,
3. Complaints voiced by employees or results gleaned from questionnaires;
4. Data on human resources activities in the concerned service/division, i.e., recruitment problems, employee turnover, disciplinary actions, supervisory training deficiencies, incentive awards, classification problems;
5. Problems cited by VA Central Office or OPM evaluators;
6. Long and short range goals and objectives established by the service/division; and
7. Problems identified in past service/division reviews.

(b) Clarify that responsibility will be assigned to specific service/division staff and HRM staff to gather and analyze information.

(c) Clarify that the product of information and data gathering will not in itself represent conclusions. It will be used as a source for HRM, in conjunction with the service/division being reviewed, to jointly conduct further reviews to determine if corrective action is needed.

(d) Establish a method for documenting findings; for taking corrective action when it is within the authority of those conducting reviews; and for reporting actions and recommendations for

additional actions to the Director. It is also suggested that reports be the cosigned efforts of both HRM and the service/division, and that reports reflect agreed upon corrective actions with assigned responsibility for completing these corrective actions.

(e) Establish time frames for completing reviews and monitoring corrective action.

(3) NEED. Establish that internal HRM Service/Division administration and program leadership will be evaluated both as an integral part of individual service/division reviews and stationwide assessment of human resources management.

PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTING

(a) Identify the objectives that will be the focus of internal HRM Service/Division reviews. Identification could be based on an adaptation of the criteria used in subparagraph (2)(a) above and in addition should consider:

1. The Director's local Systemic Review Program; and
2. Analysis of local human resources management policies.

3. The process of determining achievements and deficiencies and taking corrective action could be based on criteria similar to that in subparagraph (2) above and should be formally established.

(4) NEED. Establish the basis for assessing the status of stationwide human resources management, identifying deficiencies and taking corrective action.

PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTING

(a) Determine station objectives to be pursued. Identification procedure should include results from reviews of service/divisions and internal review of HRM Service/Division that have stationwide implications. Objective identification should also consider:

1. Operational goals and objectives established by the station's Director or at the department or staff office level;
2. Program deficiencies surfaced by VA Central Office or OPM evaluators; and
3. Program activities and special goals and objectives being emphasized by VA Central Office or being pursued locally.

(b) Establish procedures for identifying achievements and deficiencies and for taking corrective action which considers the following:

1. The procedures utilized to determine objectives may be cycled to serve as tools for measuring results. As such, the process of evaluating human resources management in each service/division and evaluating the administration and management of the program should identify deficiencies that have statewide implications;

2. The process for bringing about corrective action in program activities should be coordinated with management officials through management direction; and

3. Implementation of program corrections should also involve input to appropriate staff committees and staff officials having assignments in such areas as position management, EEO, planning for human resources, management analysis, etc.

(5) NEED. Clarify that performance standards will be established as a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of human resources management. It should be noted that the performance standard is the basis for measuring effectiveness or progress and should be established in conjunction with identification of review objectives.

PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTING

(a) Establish performance standards for the various human resources activities reviewed in the individual service/division. Consideration should include:

1. The basic performance standards shown in MP-5, part I, chapter 275, appendix A;
2. Performance standards established by local management in any specific activities; and
3. Performance standards that reflect on the individual service/division and in coordination with past review findings.

(b) Establish performance standards for human resources activities reviewed during the statewide assessment and the internal review of the HRM Service/Division. Consideration should include:

1. The items shown in subparagraph (a) above; and
2. Items included in subparagraph (4)(a) above.