

FFAS
HANDBOOK

Human Resources Management
Evaluation Program

For All FAS, FSA, and RMA Offices

SHORT REFERENCE

13-PM
(Revision 6)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

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**Human Resources Management
Evaluation Program
13-PM (Revision 6)**

Amendment 1

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Management



Amendment Transmittal

A Reasons for Revision

This handbook has been revised:

- for nomenclature
- to eliminate obsolete requirements
- to cover **all** FFAS offices.

B Labor Management Obligations

Where exclusive representation exists, bargaining may be requested to the extent allowed by applicable statutes. Where contract language already addresses these policies and procedures for bargaining unit employees, contract language prevails.

C Obsolete Material

13-PM (Rev. 5) is obsolete.

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Part 1 Basic Provisions

1 Overview

A Handbook Purpose

This handbook prescribes for all FFAS offices the FFAS Human Resources Management Evaluation Program:

- policies
- procedures
- principles
- standards.

B Responsibility

HRD is responsible for administering the FFAS HRME Program.

C In This Handbook

This handbook includes explanations of:

- human resources management within FFAS and the establishment of annual goals
- program policy and requirements for HRME's
- procedures and methodology for conducting HRME's.

1 Overview (Continued)

D HRME Program Objectives

The objectives of the FFAS HRME Program are to:

- determine the adequacy of the FFAS human resources programs and recommend policy and procedural changes that improve operations
- ensure that human resources policies and practices are aligned with FFAS goals
- determine whether human resources programs and responsibilities are known, understood, and carried out effectively by FFAS managers, supervisors, and employees
- identify best practices.

2 Authority and Related References

A Sources of Authority

Authority for performing HRME’s of FFAS operations is in USDA OHRM Personnel Bulletin No. 250-2.

B Related Handbooks

The following handbooks relate to the HRME Program.

IF the material concerns...	THEN see...
position classification	2-PM.
human resources operations	3-PM.
performance management system	5-PM.
employee development and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6-PM • 30-PM.
employee recognition programs	7-PM.
safety and health programs	8-PM.
employee relations and services	15-PM.
leave administration	17-PM.
EEO Program	19-PM.
pay administration	32-PM.

3 Human Resources Program

A Objectives

The objectives of the human resources program are to plan for, obtain, develop, and use human resources in:

- the most efficient and economical manner
- compliance with laws, regulations, and public policy.

B Responsibilities

The following are responsible for the human resources program.

Official or Office	Responsibility
Managers and supervisors	Primary responsibility for ensuring compliance with FFAS human resources management policies.
HRD and KCAO, PD	Provide advice and guidance to managers and supervisors on implementing human resources management policies and practices. Assess the human resources program using HRME's.

4-18 (Reserved)

Part 2 HRME Policy and Requirements

19 Overview

A Introduction

This part includes information about the policy and requirements for conducting HRME's.

B HRME Responsibilities

HRD shall plan, develop, and coordinate the HRME Program.

Evaluations shall be conducted by FFAS human resources offices as follows.

- HRD:
 - shall conduct evaluations of headquarters offices
 - may conduct evaluations of field and overseas offices.

- PD shall conduct evaluations of:
 - State and County Offices
 - KCAO
 - KC-ITSDO
 - KC-ITSTO
 - KC-KCFO
 - APFO
 - RMA offices located in Kansas City.

20 Types of Evaluations and Schedules

A Policy

All offices shall be reviewed through HRME’s on a schedule appropriate to ensure program delivery and according to available resources. These evaluations shall be conducted by HRD and/or PD human resources specialists.

B Types of Evaluations

This table explains the types of HRME’s.

Type of Evaluation	Functions Reviewed
General evaluations	General evaluations are conducted on site and cover the following functional areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • position classification • position management • staffing • employee relations • employee development • performance management • labor relations • employee recognition.
Special evaluations	Special evaluations may be conducted onsite or offsite and focus on selected human resources functions.

20 Types of Evaluations and Schedules (Continued)

C Other Evaluations

OPM and OHRM may conduct evaluations of FFAS headquarters and Field Offices. FFAS human resources offices shall provide assistance in coordinating OPM or OHRM-led evaluations of FFAS offices and activities.

D FFAS Participation in Reviews Conducted by OPM and OHRM

FFAS may provide a team member for OHRM and OPM reviews of FFAS offices. The Director, HRD shall approve selection of team members.

USDA agencies may be required to provide team members for OHRM-led evaluations on a rotational basis. OHRM shall notify HRD when FFAS participation is required in its HRME's.

FFAS participation in HRME's conducted by other USDA agencies is permitted upon approval by the Director, HRD.

21-31 (Reserved)

Part 3 HRME Methodology and Procedures

Section 1 Methodology

32 Overview

A Introduction

This section contains information about:

- the evaluation team
- requesting questionnaires before the onsite evaluation
- conducting interviews, desk audits, and position reviews during the evaluation
- reviewing records, reports, and statistical material during the evaluation.

33 Gathering Information for General Evaluations

A Evaluation Team

All general evaluations shall be conducted onsite by teams of human resources specialists or employees in related fields.

- One member shall be designated team leader and be responsible for planning and organizing the evaluation.
- The number of team members may vary depending on resources available and size of organization being reviewed.
- OCR may participate in HRME's, when appropriate and/or possible.

B Questionnaires

Questionnaires may be requested from employees in the organization under review before onsite activities.

C Interviews

Interviews shall be conducted onsite to obtain facts and opinions relating to human resources areas under review. Interviews shall include:

- an appropriate percentage of employees in organization to capture the information pertinent to the review
- both supervisory and nonsupervisory personnel.

33 Gathering Information for General Evaluations (Continued)**D Desk Audits and Position Reviews**

Desk audits and position reviews may be conducted to determine accuracy of job descriptions and proper classification of positions. Position descriptions for all positions not audited should be:

- discussed with first-line supervisors
- recertified for accuracy on AD-332, item 21A
- designated for revision if inaccurate.

E Records, Reports, and Statistical Materials

Records, reports, and statistical materials shall be reviewed to determine regulatory compliance and identify potential problem areas.

- Review may take place before, during, or instead of onsite activities.
- Records should include:
 - position descriptions and evaluation statements
 - organizational charts
 - staffing plans
 - promotion cases
 - official personnel folders
 - award documentation
 - training authorizations.

34-53 (Reserved)

Section 2 Onsite Evaluation Procedures

54 Overview

A Introduction

This section contains information about:

- evaluation procedures for general evaluations
- routing and distributing the final HRME report
- recordkeeping requirements.

55 Pre-Onsite Activities**A General Notification**

Send general notification to the organization under review at least 30 calendar days before HRME is scheduled. This notification should include:

- dates of HRME
- purpose and type of review according to subparagraph 20 B
- explanation of scheduled activities
- names of team leader and team members.

B Interview and Desk Audit Notification

Provide interview and desk audit notification to the organization under review at least 1 week before HRME. This notification should include:

- names of employees selected for interviews and/or desk audits
- proposed dates and times of interviews and audits
- explanation of preparation needed.

C Distributing Questionnaires

If planned as part of a particular review, questionnaires may be distributed with general notification or by separate memoranda to employees at least 3 weeks before HRME. Separate self-addressed envelopes will be provided to each employee for return of completed questionnaire.

D Pre-Onsite Review

Before onsite evaluation begins, team members should identify potential problem areas and/or best practices by:

- reviewing pertinent personnel records maintained in their offices
- coordinating processing of questionnaires
- analyzing questionnaire results.

56 Onsite Activities

A Opening Conference

Team members shall meet with the organization's manager and, if desired, other supervisory personnel. The opening conference should:

- be led by the team leader
- outline scheduled activities
- discuss highlights of questionnaire and other research results
- include question and answer period.

B Factfinding

Team members shall:

- conduct desk audits and interviews
- review personnel records maintained onsite
- meet frequently with each other during the review to discuss problems identified, their causes, and proposed corrective action
- meet frequently with each other during the review to discuss best practices identified, supporting factors, and applicability to other organizational units.

56 Onsite Activities (Continued)

C Closing Conference

The closing conference shall be used to present review findings, best practices, potential problems, and corrective actions.

- Participants should include the same managers and supervisors who attended the opening conference.
- The conference shall take place, at the evaluation team's discretion, on either of the following days:
 - the final onsite evaluation day
 - no later than 10 workdays after the last scheduled activity, when the evaluation is conducted locally.

D EEO Findings

Findings or concerns on EEO issues will be addressed in a separate meeting with the organization's manager before the closing conference. OCR will be advised accordingly.

57 Post-Evaluation Activities

A Final Written Report for General Evaluations

All team members shall participate in writing and reviewing the final written report for onsite evaluations. The HRME team leader shall ensure the following is included.

Section	What to Include
Title page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of organization reviewed. • Dates of review. • Title of reviewing office.
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of team leader and members. • HRME objectives. • Records reviewed and number of audits and interviews conducted. • Number and occupational groupings of positions reviewed.
Summary	Highlights of human resources management strengths and weaknesses.
Body of Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of findings subdivided by human resources functional areas. • Discussion of specific findings, best practices, and problems. • Recommended/required action for each problem identified. • Commendation for best practices identified. <p style="text-align: center;">Note: Action is required when findings indicate that policy or procedure prescribed in OPM, OHRM, or FFAS guidelines has not been followed. Omit names of employees.</p>
Case Listings	<p>Problems relating to individual employees or their positions by specific functional areas. Names may be included.</p> <p>Case listings shall be shown as appendices to the report.</p>
Other Information	Statistical charts, questionnaire analysis, and other supplemental materials shall be included as appendices to the report.
Response Instructions	<p>Instructional information concerning an organization’s response to report findings may be included in either of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the transmittal memorandum • a separate statement at the beginning of the report.

57 Post-Evaluation Activities (Continued)

B Internal Report

The evaluation team shall:

- assess whether the review demonstrated that human resources policies, practices, and procedures are aligned with and support FFAS program delivery
- develop an internal report addressing those issues
- forward copies of the report to the:
 - Chief, PD
 - Director, HRD.

C Final Written Report for Other Reviews

Report requirements for other reviews will be determined by HRD.

58 Routing and Distributing Reports for General Evaluations

A Policy

The final HRME written report for onsite reviews must be forwarded to the Director, HRD, for review and approval before release to the organization under review.

B Timeframe

Reports prepared by:

- HRD human resources specialists shall be forwarded to the Director, HRD, within 30 calendar days of the last day of HRME
- PD shall be forwarded to the Director, HRD, within 45 calendar days of the last day of HRME.

C Additional Information

Proposed position descriptions and evaluation statements, if available, shall be included for any position requiring changes in pay plan, series, or grade, unless change involves noncompetitive career promotion.

D HRD Responsibility

HRD will notify the originating office of approval or disapproval of the report within 10 calendar days of receipt in HRD.

58 Routing and Distributing Reports for General Evaluations (Continued)

E Originating Office Responsibility

The originating office is responsible for distribution of final reports. All reports shall be distributed concurrently as follows.

- Send 1 copy to the manager of the reviewed organization.
- PD shall send an additional copy:
 - to the Director, HRD
 - of State Office reports to DAFO.

F Response to Report

The organization under review shall respond in writing to all required and recommended actions. The servicing human resources office shall assist the organization in completing action within prescribed deadlines.

Type of Action	Deadline
Required	Begin required actions within 30 calendar days after receiving the report. Exception: Complete required classification actions within 60 calendar days.
Recommended	Submit responses to recommended action within 60 calendar days after receiving the report. Responses may included contemplated action or alternative plans.

58 Routing and Distributing Reports for General Evaluations (Continued)

G Followup and Closeout Process

The human resources office conducting HRME shall maintain a followup system to ensure actions are completed effectively and within deadlines.

- All significant communications between the review team and the reviewed organization shall be in writing.
- The conducting human resources office shall send copies of any correspondence concerning actions that have known or potential nationwide impact to HRD.
- HRD shall send copies of any correspondence concerning actions that have known or potential USDA-wide impact to OHRM.
- The conducting human resources office shall take the following closeout action.

Step	Action
1	Close out the review when all actions are completed satisfactorily.
2	Notify the organization of the closeout in writing.
3	Prepare an analysis of the effectiveness of the review, and include it in the HRME file.

58 Routing and Distributing Reports for General Evaluations (Continued)

H Freedom of Information Act Requirements

These records are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552, including any exemptions that may apply. Pursuant to FOIA, releasability will be determined after review of the documents by the records holding office.

59 Recordkeeping Requirements

A HRME Records

Records of evaluations must be maintained by the reviewing office for 5 years.

B What to Include

As a minimum, records must include:

- name of:
 - organization reviewed
 - organization head
 - reviewing office
 - team leader
- dates of onsite activities
- human resources functions covered
- date of final report
- list of recipients of reports
- date compliance was completed.

Reports, Forms, Abbreviations, and Redelegations of Authority

Reports

None.

Forms

This table lists all forms referenced in this handbook.

Number	Title	Display Reference	Reference
AD-332	Position Description Cover Sheet		33

Abbreviations Not Listed in 1-CM

The following abbreviations are not listed in 1-CM.

Approved Abbreviations	Term	Reference
PD	Personnel Division, KCAO	Text
HRME	human resources management evaluation	Text

Re delegations of Authority

None

Definitions of Terms Used in This Handbook

Desk Audit

A desk audit is an interview held by a classification or human resources specialist with an employee to discuss the employee's major duties and responsibilities. The purpose of the desk audit is to determine the appropriate grade, series, and title of a position.

General Evaluation

A general evaluation is a type of onsite HRME that covers all, or substantially all, of the following human resources functions:

- position classification
- position management
- staffing
- employee relations
- employee development
- performance management
- labor relations
- employee recognition.

HRME

HRME is a review of organizations conducted by human resources specialists or others in related fields to assess human resources policies, practices, and operations.

Human Resources Management

Human resources management is the attraction, selection, motivation, and use of employees in accomplishing the mission of an organization.

Definitions of Terms Used in This Handbook (Continued)

Position Description

A position description is a written statement of a position's major duties and responsibilities.

Position Review

A position review is an evaluation of the position description or discussion with the supervisor to determine the grade, series, and title of a position.

Special Evaluations

A special evaluation is a type of HRME that covers only selected human resources functions.