

# Performance Bonus Awards

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**Purpose** A Performance Bonus Award is monetary recognition given to individuals who have performed well during a rating cycle.

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**Employee Eligibility** All ratable employees are eligible to receive Performance Bonus Awards, except SES non-career employees. Performance Bonus Awards are given to individuals, not to groups.

To receive a Performance Bonus Award, an employee's annual rating of record must be at least "Fully Successful."

Performance Bonus Awards do not apply to employees of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

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**Contributions** Performing well throughout a rating cycle can be demonstrated in many ways, such as:

- Regularly contributing high work output
  - Consistently completing work products of high quality
  - Providing exceptionally prompt and courteous service to customers, clients and coworkers
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**Award Amounts** Performance Bonus Awards are lump sum cash payments which cannot exceed 10% of the employee's annual salary.

Employees may receive only one Performance Bonus Award per performance cycle.

For help in determining award amounts, refer to the recognition scales in the USDA Guide for Employee Recognition.

The award amount recommended on the AD-287-2 is the gross amount of the award. Taxes will be withheld and the employee will receive the net amount.

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**Effective Dates** Performance Bonus Awards will be made effective the beginning of the pay period after receipt in the Human Resources Division (HRD).

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**Payment** Performance Bonus Awards will be processed via the payroll/personnel system. Award payment is received through direct deposit.

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**Procedures** Performance Bonus Awards should be given within 60-90 days of the end of a rating cycle.

An AD-287-2 must be prepared for performance awards. For AFM, CSREES, and ERS awards, Sherrill Murray, Performance and Awards Staff, will assign a case number to each AD-287-2 when the forms are received in HRD. Case numbers for all other ARS performance awards will be assigned by the area or location administrative representative before the award forms are forwarded to HRD.

Completed AD-287-2 forms for AFM, CSREES, and ERS should be sent directly to Sherrill Murray. Completed AD-287-2 forms for all other ARS employees should be sent directly to the servicing Personnel Clerk in the Human Resources Division for processing.

Performance Bonus Awards in excess of \$500, require a written justification be submitted with the AD-287-2. As a written justification is also required for any employee given an outstanding performance rating, it is not necessary to provide additional justification for a performance award. The justification provided to support the outstanding performance rating will be sufficient to support the performance award. An accurate report of end of the performance year accomplishments may be submitted in lieu of a written justification.

A copy of the AD-435P, Performance Appraisal Form, must accompany the AD-287-2 and the written justification to HRD.

Table (1) below gives block-by-block instructions on how to prepare an AD-287-2 for a Performance Bonus Award.

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**Completing A Performance Bonus Award AD-287-2** Table (1) provides specific instruction on how to complete the required blocks of an AD-287-2 for a Performance Bonus Award. Please ensure that the following blocks are complete and accurate.

Block	Item	Instruction
1	Agency	Provide code or name of awarding agency.
2	Name of Employee	Provide the official name of employee.
3	Social Security Number	Provide the social security number.
4	Position Title	Provide the official position title.
5	Pay Plan/Series/Grade/Step	Provide pay plan, series, grade, and step.
6	Organization and Location	Provide the organization and location.
7	Period Covered for Award	Provide the period covered. The period covered must end earlier than the signature dates.
8	Accounting Code	Provide the accounting code. The recommending or approving official must have the authority to obligate funds on the account specified.
11	Citation	Provide the citation. <b>It must be 25 words or less</b> and must state the basis for the award.
16	Type of Recognition	Indicate "Performance Bonus Award"
19	Amount Recommended	Provide the total award amount. Amount may not be more than 10% of the employee's annual salary.
20	Recommending Individual/Date	Enter the title of the recommending individual. Obtain signature and date.
21	Reviewing Official/Date	Not always necessary. Depends on each organization's award delegations. If required by the organization, enter the title of the reviewing official, and obtain signature and date.
22	Approving Official/Date	Enter the title of the approving official. Obtain signature and date.