

Probationary and Trial Evaluation Policy

1.0 Policy Statement

The City of Mount Pearl will have a probationary and/or trial period for all employees especially new hires but also for recently promoted or employees who transfer to a new position.

2.0 Background

The City of Mount Pearl recognizes the hiring of an employee is a lengthy process, but it still requires time to evaluate a new employee to ensure they are a good fit for the City and the position.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to all City employees, employed in permanent, temporary, permanent part-time, seasonal, part-time temporary or casual positions, as well as current employees who transfer to a new position.

4.0 Purpose

The purpose of a probationary/trial review is to conduct a standardized assessment of a new or existing employee's overall performance so that the supervisor will know before the end of the probationary/trial period whether the employee's status will be continued upon completion.

5.0 Assessment

The assessment is based on the employee's performance and overall suitability during the probationary/trial period. The assessment also provides an opportunity for facilitating constructive feedback in a two-way communication between the employee and their supervisor regarding work expectations, progress, and required job performance improvement. Ultimately, the supervisor will be able to determine if the new employee is suitable for continued employment.

6.0 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- a) **Probationary Period:** a defined period where a new or existing employee receives coaching, supervision and evaluation either for a new job or to make performance improvements in a current job.

- b) **Trial Period:** a defined period where a new or existing employee receives coaching, supervision and evaluation either for a new job or to make performance improvements in a current job.

7.0 Process and Procedure

Employees are advised of their probation or trial period in the Letter of Offer or Employment Contract. All new employees serve a probationary period. Continued employment is subject to the employee demonstrating satisfactory performance of the duties of the job.

All existing employees who transfer to another position serve a trial period. Continued employment in the position is subject to the employee demonstrating satisfactory performance of the duties of the job.

During the probationary/trial period there will be an ongoing review of performance of the probationary employee by the employee's immediate supervisor. The results of the evaluation will determine if the employee will either assume regular employment status, or the probationary/trial period will be extended, or the employee will return to their previous position, or the employee will be terminated.

An employee's probationary/trial period may be extended by mutual agreement. Extension of an employee's probationary/trial period must be agreed upon prior to the conclusion of the original probationary/trial period, and will require the written, mutual agreement of the employee, by the union as required, and the respective Director, as well as the approval of the Chief Administrative Officer.

A probationary employee may be terminated for reasons of unsuitability at any time during the probationary period.

There will be at least three formal performance evaluations during the probationary period; intervals are determined based on the length of the probationary/trial period. The final evaluation will occur two weeks prior to the end of the probationary/trial period.

A. Progress Evaluation (1st and Consecutive Reviews)

- This assessment should be recorded on the Probationary Review Form and reviewed in person with the new employee. The form is to be completed prior to meeting with the employee and presented and discussed at the Performance Review Meeting.
- The immediate supervisor will:
 - a. Schedule the meeting with at least one week notice.
 - b. Provide a copy of the Probationary Review Form to the employee to complete the “Self-Assessment” portion of the Competencies and Skills section.
 - c. Identify positive areas of performance recognized and reinforced by feedback.
 - d. Discuss performance gaps or areas of concern and any further training needs.
 - e. Meet with the probationary employee and complete and sign 1st Review of the Probationary Review Form.
- The performance review meetings with the employee will address the following:
 - a. Positive performance results;
 - b. If required, corrective action (training, policy development, role clarification, or other steps) to help meet objectives;
 - c. Identified training needs;
 - d. If required any attitudinal problems or issues;
 - e. Any issues or questions from the probationary or trial period employee.

B. Prior to the end of the Probationary or Trial Review (Final Review)

This process should be repeated, two weeks prior to the end of the Probationary or Trial Period.

- This assessment should be recorded on the Probationary Review Form and reviewed in person with the new employee. The form is to be completed prior to meeting with the employee and discussed at the Performance Review Meeting.
- The immediate supervisor will:
 - a. Schedule the meeting with at least one week notice.
 - b. Provide a copy of the Probationary Review Form to the probationary period employee to complete the “Self-Assessment” portion of the Competencies and Skills section
- Identify positive areas of performance that is recognized and reinforced by feedback.
- Discuss performance gaps or areas of concern and any further training needs.
- Meet with the probationary employee and complete and review of the Probationary Review Form.
- The performance review meetings with the employee will address the following:

- a. Positive performance results;
- b. If required; corrective action (training, policy development, role clarification, or other steps) to help meet objectives;
- c. Identified training needs;
- d. If required any attitudinal problems or issues;
- e. Any issues or questions from the probationary or trial period employee.

The supervisor writes a summary of the probationary/trial review after each review, listing any specified action or follow-up agreed to, with specific dates for each follow-up step. The summary is then reviewed by the employee and signed by both the supervisor and the employee. The employee's signature indicates that he/she has read and understood the document.

At the end of the probation or trial period, the supervisor recommends to the Manager and Director in writing, one of three options based on the employee's performance:

- continued employment without probation;
- continued employment with extended probation;
- termination of employment.

The summary is sent to the Manager and the Director for final review and approval and sent to Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's personnel file.

Employees required to serve an extended probation period will be advised, in writing, as to the length, the reasons and the conditions of the extension. Probationary employees may resign or be terminated before the end of the probationary period without notice or pay in lieu of notice being given.

8.0 Responsibilities

The employee is responsible for:

- Participating in the performance feedback interviews and signing each review;
- Discussing any concerns regarding the performance review with the Manager;
- Preparing a one-year work plan upon successful completion of probation;
- Follow the City's Employee Code of Conduct Policy and all other related policies, standards and procedures;
- Ask questions and seek any information required to perform their role;
- Actively participate in any training.

The Supervisor is responsible for:

- Scheduling formal reviews in his/her calendar for halfway through and two weeks before the end of the probationary/trial period.
- Making time to talk to new employees on a regular basis.
- Discussing any issues of concern for the employee on a timely basis and, if any remedial action is needed, take it as soon as possible.

- Addressing performance issues as they arise, and not let them wait until a review is scheduled.

By discussing performance as it is observed and providing feedback – both positive and constructive in nature – the Probationary/Trial Evaluation Process should not contain any surprises for the employee or the Supervisor.


The Supervisor has the authority to;

- Ensure the completion of the Probationary/Trial Review Form to ensure that employees who are not suitable in the positions do not progress beyond their review period or receive an extension of the probationary/trial review period.
- Ensure, that potential suitability issues and concerns are discussed and addressed on a timely basis and documented on the Probationary/Trial Review Form.
- Address potential suitability issues and concerns and document them on the Probationary/Trial Review Form.
- Conduct job performance reviews with the employee, per guidelines, explaining the results to the employee, and completing a written summary.
- Recommending one of three options based on the reviews.
- In consultation with the Director, approve or deny all probationary recommendations for staff below the Supervisor level.
- Providing the employee, the final decision in writing.

Human Resources is responsible for:

- maintaining and overseeing the process;
- providing training and coaching in the application of the process;
- providing advice and guidance to departments regarding the application of the process in specific instances;
- establishing reminders for Directors/supervisors each month to complete the reviews, and at other intervals if an extension is approved;
- receiving completed forms and following up as required;
- issuing a follow-up letter to the employee advising of their employment status or extension of the review period.

9.0 Approvals



Steve Kent, Chief Administrative Officer
October 16, 2018

Date