



Manteca Police Department

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MEMORANDUM

TO: California Police Chief's Association

FROM: Captain Dave Bricker

DATE: August 22, 2007

SUBJECT: Use of Performance Improvement Plans for Sworn Personnel

I received 25 responses to my inquiry of Cal Chief's members regarding the use of Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) for sworn personnel. All of the responding agencies used the PIP process for non-sworn employees and 24 used it for sworn officers. The criteria for deciding on the implementation of a PIP, the format for the process, documentation, and the evaluation of the PIP's success or failure varied greatly. 15 agencies attached samples of their Department's policy or tracking documents. The most common factors in Performance Improvement Plans were as follows:

- A Performance Improvement Plan is not discipline. It is the last effort on the part of the Department to correct a performance deficiency without implementing negative discipline. It amounts to a structured training plan for a single individual to correct a very specific problem. As such, it cannot become part of the employee's personnel file. It should be maintained in the supervisor's evaluation file and returned to the employee or discarded after the terms of the PIP has been successfully completed. The PIP should contain no reference to future discipline if the employee is unsuccessful in completing the terms of the plan. (Otto v. LAUSD 89 Cal App. 4th 985)
- A Performance Improvement Plan should be used to address a measurable problem or deficiency, not a trait. Most of the agencies responding had identified specific deficiencies for which a PIP could be used. The success of the employee should be determined by objective measurable outcomes such as a pre-determined increase in productivity or a decrease in report errors.
- The goals of the Performance Improvement Plan should be clearly defined and realistic. The length of the term of the plan should be sufficient for the employee to achieve the goals.
- The plan should include benchmarks of other methods to be used by the supervisor to determine if the employee is progressing toward reaching the goals of the PIP. The employee's progress should be evaluated at regularly

established intervals throughout the PIP and the employee should be informed as to how they are progressing.

- All but one of the agencies responding had standardized the process for the implementation of a PIP and the documentation used to establish the plan and document the employee's progress. All of these agencies have established policy at the department or city wide level governing the PIP process.

I want to thank all of the agencies who responded to my request. The Manteca Police Department will be using the samples and the information provided by the other agencies to establish a standardized plan and Department policy regarding Performance Improvement Plans. Any agency wishing to receive copies of the sample policies or of Manteca's policy when completed, please contact me at dbricker@ci.manteca.ca.us.