

United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Directive 4315.1
3/10/94

PROBATIONARY PERIOD FOR NEW SUPERVISORS, MANAGERS,
AND CAREER EXECUTIVES

1. PURPOSE

This Directive implements Federal and Department regulations covering the probationary period for newly appointed supervisors, managers, and career senior executives.

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This Directive replaces APHIS Directive 410.4, Probationary Periods for New Supervisors and Managers, dated 5/17/83- The 1-year probationary period for career positions in the Senior Executive Service (SES) is included in this Directive. The probationary period for supervisors and managers is reduced from 18 months to 1 year to provide consistency among the positions.

3. POLICY

- a. Newly appointed supervisors, managers, and career senior executives will serve a 1-year probationary period, unless they are exempted by regulation or have previous creditable service as a supervisor, manager, or SES career executive. The probationary period will provide them an opportunity to develop the unique skills and abilities which cannot be taught or developed in other kinds of positions.
- b. During this probationary period, the Agency will provide appropriate training, support, and assistance to help them function quickly and properly as members of the management team.
- c. Developmental activities will be provided without regard to political, religious, or labor organization affiliation or nonaffiliation; marital status; race; color; sex; national origin; nondisqualifying physical or mental handicap; or age.
- d. Satisfactory completion of the probationary period is a prerequisite to retention in a supervisory, managerial, or SES career executive position.

4. BASIC REQUIREMENTS

- a. Positions covered by this Directive are:
- (1) Those supervisory and managerial positions in the competitive service in grades 15 and below, which are defined and officially classified under the office of Personnel Management's Classification Standards (or equivalent for positions in the Federal Wage System).
 - (2) Career Reserve or General positions in the SES. Appointments to these positions are based on a competitive SES merit staffing process and are made without time limitations.

NOTE: Positions in the Foreign Service and other positions that do not meet the above criteria are not covered by these probationary requirements.

- b. A full and separate probationary period is required for all persons appointed for the first time to:
- (1) A supervisory position, except when the employee previously completed a managerial probationary period;
 - (2) A managerial position, unless exclusion is justified in writing by the selecting official on the basis of previous satisfactory performance and experience as a supervisor;
 - (3) A position which includes both supervisory and managerial responsibilities; or
 - (4) A career senior executive position.
- c. The probationary period is required when a supervisory, managerial, or career senior executive position is filled on a permanent basis. It also is required when a supervisory or managerial position (but not an executive position) is filled on a temporary basis for 1 year or more when the possibility exists that the selection could be made permanent and this is made a matter of record.
- d. If a new probationary supervisor, manager, or executive is placed in another supervisory, managerial, or executive position before completing the probationary period, the service in the former position counts toward completion of the comparable probationary period in the new position.

- e. If an employee is required to serve the probationary period for a supervisory, managerial, or executive position and the initial probationary period for a new employee, the latter takes precedence and fulfills both requirements.
- f. If, after a full and fair trial, an evaluation of the employee reveals deficiencies in supervisory, managerial, or executive performance, the employee must be removed from the position (separated, returned, or reassigned to a nonsupervisory, nonmanagerial, non-SES position) in accordance with applicable regulations. Reduction-in-force procedures and grade/pay retention do not apply.
- g. Upon successful completion of a probationary period and in accordance with Federal regulations, the employee will not be required to serve the same kind of probationary period again regardless of the number of agencies, occupations, or positions in which he/she serves.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. The servicing Personnel office will:
 - (1) Provide advice and guidance on the requirements of the applicable probationary period; i.e., the need to serve the probationary period, exemptions, previous creditable service, etc ...
 - (2) Refer inquiries regarding appeals or grievances to the appropriate employee relations specialist.
 - (3) Notify the employee, the next higher level supervisor, and training officer of the applicable probationary period requirement.
 - (4) Ensure that appropriate documentation is contained in the employee's official Personnel Folder.
- b. Supervisors at the next higher level will:
 - (1) In consultation with the probationer, determine and document training and developmental needs for him/her on the Individual Development Plan. (See the Annual Catalog of Training and Development Activities.) Contact the appropriate training officer for guidance.

- (2) Ensure completion of Agency-initiated or other training recommended for the probationer.
- (3) Hold periodic, documented discussions of progress with the probationer, clearly outlining strengths and areas needing development in relation to the position's performance requirements.
- (4) Initiate timely action to remove the probationer from the position if his/her performance is not satisfactory for supervisory, managerial, or executive work. (Note: Executives will not be removed from the SES for 120 days after appointment of a new Agency head or noncareer supervisor.) Contact the appropriate employee relations specialist for guidance.
- (5) Ensure that performance standards and appraisals for the current year and previous-3 years (total of 5 years for SES) are maintained in the appropriate Employee Performance File.

6. INQUIRIES

Inquiries should be directed through administrative channels to the appropriate servicing personnel office.

/s/ Joseph J. Frick
Acting Deputy Administrator
for Management and Budget