ongoing performance conversations

Process Guide

A comprehensive guide to understanding OPC, the County's performance process for management employees. Get answers, find resources, and accelerate your potential.

Learning & Organizational DEVELOPMENT

Last updated May 2025
https://bit.ly/PM-OPC

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Performance Management at the County of Orange

Performance management is a process to set expectations and align performance with critical business objectives. It is also a vehicle to provide feedback, recognition, and coaching throughout the year to best support employees' development and to ensure their work best contributes to our mission. When we engage in meaningful performance management, everyone benefits – the County, supervisors, employees, and our residents.

At the County of Orange, there are several performance management processes used to support supervisors and employees. Management employees all use a process called Ongoing Performance Conversations (OPC). Regardless of which process is used, it's important to fully engage in the process to achieve success.

Performance management is a core responsibility of all supervisors.

What is OPC?

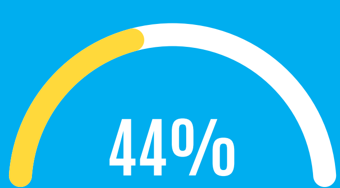
Ongoing Performance Conversations (OPC) is a collaborative performance management process for employees and supervisors to partner for success. Rooted in conversations, OPC ensures alignment with business goals and a focus on development in order to drive performance, retention, and engagement.

Ultimately, OPC helps the County continue to deliver exceptional public service.

Many people think the performance process is about the paperwork that occurs once per year. In reality, **performance management is a core aspect of the supervisor's day-to-day role**. It's important to stay connected throughout the year to ensure a shared understanding of expectations, continued alignment, and ongoing support for development.

Stay Connected with OPC

OPC begins with performance planning where supervisors and employees discuss what success looks like in each of the core competencies and concludes with a year-end evaluation. In between, supervisors and employees meet regularly throughout the year for 1-on-1 meetings and Quarterly Check-In Conversations to stay on track and support development. The OPC process milestones support your success by helping you stay connected to each other, the business, and our mission.



Organizations with continuous performance processes are 39% better at attracting top talent, and 44% better at retaining talent (BetterWorks, 2020).

OPC Milestones

Performance Planning

The supervisor and employee collaborate to review expectations in competency areas and discuss success criteria for the evaluation cycle.

Quarterly Check-In Conversation

Pause and expand the conversation beyond day-to-day projects or assignment progress. The first Quarterly Check-In occurs 3 months after the start of the performance cycle, followed by the second Quarterly Check-In 3 months later.

Year-End Evaluation

The cycle concludes with the final evaluation. You'll reflect on performance throughout the entire cycle during this performance step. The supervisor will meet with their direct report to discuss overall performance, impact, successes, strengths, and what's next. Each employee will receive an evaluation at the end of the performance cycle.

1-on-1 Check-Ins

What happens in between the performance milestones? Holding regular 1-on-1 meetings provides an opportunity for consistent coaching and feedback throughout the duration of the cycle. These conversations occur between process milestones and help you stay aligned in the ebb and flow of the day-to-day.

OPC, Powered by Eureka

Powered by Eureka, you will have access to all things performance in one convenient platform. The online convenience of Eureka makes the new process easy to use, administratively light, and provides helpful tools to facilitate meaningful performance management. With OPC, you'll spend less time filling out forms, and more time focusing on what matters most – our employees.

ongoing performance conversations STAY CONNECTED. + eureka!

NO MORE SHUFFLING PAPERS

Automated workflows help keep the process moving and make it easy to find what you need.

NEVER MISS ANOTHER DEADLINE

Automated reminders help you stay on track with performance milestones.

COACHING MADE EASY

Easily facilitate coaching and feedback conversations with your team using the Check-Ins tool. Packed with conversation templates, a central location for notes, and productivity features, OPC will help you accelerate your impact.

A USEFUL PROCESS FOR ALL

Eureka simplifies performance management, while OPC directs your focus toward meaningful performance conversations. OPC helps you focus on clear competency expectations and features conversation guides that enhance performance, engagement, and retention.

3 Core Tools

There are no paper forms to complete with OPC. Instead, OPC is powered by Eureka, which means that all your performance tasks are centrally located within the system. In addition to the benefits of OPC, Eureka will help you:

- Ensure the process is meaningful with templates that take the guesswork out of conversations
- Never miss another deadline with automated reminders
- Stay connected and aligned with ongoing conversations and streamlined tools

There are three (3) core tools within the system that you can use throughout the performance process.

Automated Milestone Workflows

- Email reminders ensure you never miss another deadline.
- Prompts help you stay consistent with process milestones.

Check-In Tool

- Templates take the guesswork out of what to discuss.
- All notes available in one convenient location
- Follow-up features help you remember action items.

Additional Resources

- The OPC Playlist features on-demand training and other resources.
- Resources are also linked within Eureka workflows.
- Snap Guides show step-by-step processes for navigating the system.

Technology helps make the process easier so that you can spend more time on what matters most - our employees.

Roles and Responsibilties

The performance management process is collaborative and involves three primary players - the employee, the supervisor, and the reviewer.

The Employee

- Maintain awareness of dates related to the performance cycle.
- Understand the core components of the process.
- Reflect on performance, and actively incorporate insights and feedback from others.
- Actively collaborate with the supervisor to identify performance plans and success measures, engage with feedback, and focus on development.

The Supervisor

- Be aware of performance cycle dates and proactively plan to meet deadlines.
- Partner with the employee to identify competency expectations to support the success of the employee, team, and organization.
- Actively engage in ongoing coaching conversations to support development.
- Ask the reviewer for resources and advocacy to support employee development.

The Reviewer

- Be aware of performance cycle dates and ensure deadlines are met.
- Ensure the supervisor is trained on the OPC process and coach them throughout the process.
- Share department strategy and goals to support alignment.
- Obtain Department Head approval for any overall ratings of 'Exceeds' or 'Exceptional.'

Everyone is responsible for:

- Following process timelines
- Understanding and fulfilling your role responsibilities
- Working collaboratively together
- Being open to receiving and giving feedback

Fulfilling your responsibilities ensures the process is meaningful, which **drives engagement up by 14%** and **performance up by 24%**.

OPC Competencies

OPC includes seven (7) core competencies which reflect important areas of performance and the attributes that are required for each County management employee to be successful. Together, these main components help you and the employee define what success looks like, support their development, and stay aligned for business and service outcomes.

Competencies are the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed by all County employees to be successful in their job.

The following competencies are specific to all management employees using the OPC process.

Collaboration	Develops, maintains, and strengthens relationships while working together to achieve outcomes. **How effectively does the employee collaborate with others to achieve outcomes?**
Communication	Listens, writes, and presents ideas, opinions, and information in diverse situations. **To what extent does the employee effectively communicate?**
Functional Expertise	Understands and appropriately applies knowledge and skills related to area of expertise. **To what extent does the employee demonstrate functional expertise in their role?**
Leadership	Leads self and/or people toward or participates in meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. **How effectively does the employee demonstrate self-leadership or lead others?**

OPC Competencies

Organizational Skills	Proactively plans and prioritizes work to meet commitments aligned with County/Dept. goals. **How effectively does the employee plan and prioritize work, and take action to meet established deadlines?**
Problem Solving	Responsively identifies optimal solutions by analyzing problems, calculating risks, and making decisions. **To what extent does the employee identify and implement effective solutions?**
Results-Oriented	Focuses on results and desired outcomes and how best to achieve them to get the job done. **To what extent did the employee achieve the expected results?**

Personalizing Competencies

Each competency is further defined within three levels:

- First Level Manager (Analyst and Administrator)
- Mid-Level Manager (Manager and Sr. Manager)
- Senior Level Manager (Assistant Deputy Director and Deputy Director)

Each level has specific descriptive statements to define expectations. During the Performance Planning process, supervisors and employees should collaborate to personalize these statements within the scope and context of the employee's role.

The full competency model can be viewed on the following pages.

Competency	First Level Manager: Analyst Administrator	Mid-Level Manager: Manager Sr. Manager	Senior Level Manager: Assistant Deputy Director Deputy Director
Collaboration Develops, maintains, and strengthens relationships while working together to achieve outcomes. *How effectively does the employee collaborate with others to achieve outcomes?*	• Establishes and maintains productive working relationships. • Freely shares specialized knowledge with others. • Listens and responds appropriately to other team members' ideas. • Recognizes and respects value of diversity and differing opinions.	• Partners with cross-functional teams in support of the organizational strategy. • Encourages collaboration through sharing information or expertise, working together to solve problems, and putting team success first. • Creates or contributes to a team environment in which team members freely contribute ideas, exchange feedback, and work together. • Engages teams to develop and leverage multiple capabilities and perspectives to enhance services and create an inclusive workplace.	• Develops networks and builds coalitions to achieve common goals. • Shares resources in support of larger organizational goals. • Identifies and takes action to remove obstacles to collaboration. • Develops and applies strategies to promote a culture that benefits from diverse strengths.
Communication Listens, writes, and presents ideas, opinions, and information in diverse situations. *To what extent does the employee effectively communicate?*	• Demonstrates active listening. • Presents ideas and complex materials in a clear, cohesive message. • Chooses the most effective and meaningful form to express ideas and information. • Adapts the message content, tone, style, and form to suit the needs of the audience. • Ensures audiences have a shared understanding of intended message.	• Models active listening in interactions with others. • Communicates effectively with both individuals and groups. • Makes appropriate use of formal and informal communication modes. • Flexes communication style to meet the needs of the audience. • Creates shared understanding of mission and strategy.	• Creates an environment that encourages and supports active listening and feedback throughout the organization. • Communicates effectively with both individuals and groups. • Recognizes potentially sensitive information and selects appropriate audiences. • Shares pertinent information across organizational lines. • Creates shared understanding of strategic direction.

Competency	First Level Manager: Analyst Administrator	Mid-Level Manager: Manager Sr. Manager	Senior Level Manager: Assistant Deputy Director Deputy Director
Organizational Skills Proactively plans and prioritizes work to meet commitments aligned with County/departmental goals. *How effectively does the employee plan and prioritize work, and take action to meet established deadlines?*	• Appropriately plans and prioritizes work. • Maintains focus on highest priorities instead of less critical work. • Effectively manages multiple projects/assignments simultaneously. • Escalates pertinent issues that could impede work progress or outcomes.	• Sets objectives to align with broader County/department goals. • Clearly defines project or goal tasks, team roles and responsibilities. • Accurately projects unit resource needs. • Evaluates and implements approaches to support continuous improvement.	• Anticipates risks and emerging opportunities and takes action. • Effectively formulates and executes strategies supporting operational goals. • Identifies and works to obtain necessary resources to accomplish business mission. • Consistently demonstrates effective conservation and application of public resources.
Problem Solving Responsively identifies optimal solutions by analyzing problems, calculating risks, and making decisions. *To what extent does the employee identify and implement effective solutions?*	• Identifies and analyzes problems. • Generates and evaluates alternative solutions. • Recognizes potential adverse consequences of actions. • Makes decisions based on sound logic. • Considers implications for stakeholders when formulating options.	• Effectively identifies the root issue. • Develops innovative, creative solutions to organizational challenges. • Strives to fully understand outcome of decisions/actions for all stakeholders. • Makes well-informed and timely decisions in the presence of risks or ambiguity. • Makes decisions and/or encourages decision making at the lowest possible level.	• Regularly demonstrates objectivity and the ability to evaluate complex situations. • Makes decisions consistent with department/County objectives and strategic goals. • Makes well-informed and timely decisions in the presence of risks or ambiguity. • Accepts responsibility for outcomes. • Ensures stakeholder perspectives are leveraged to form solutions.

Competency	First Level Manager: Analyst Administrator	Mid-Level Manager: Manager Sr. Manager	Senior Level Manager: Assistant Deputy Director Deputy Director
Functional Expertise Understands and appropriately applies knowledge and skills related to area of expertise. *To what extent does the employee demonstrate functional expertise in their role?*	• Possesses knowledge, skill, and functional expertise needed to meet demands of current job assignment. • Applies own expertise such that it adds value to the organization. • Provides high quality, technically sound recommendations.	• Possesses recognized expertise in functional specialty. • Identifies and coordinates operational connections between functional areas. • Accurately assesses and develops technical expertise and capabilities of staff/project team members.	• Possesses recognized expertise in functional specialty. • Identifies and coordinates strategic connections between functional areas. • Accurately assesses and develops technical expertise and capabilities of the organization.
Leadership Lead self and/or people toward or participates in meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. *How effectively does the employee demonstrate self-leadership or lead others?*	• Consistently applies high ethical standards of behavior to work assignments and decision-making. • Is calm and productive in times of ambiguity. • Shows personal commitment and takes action to continuously improve. • Gives and/or receives constructive feedback and recognition. • Contributes to a positive work environment where all staff are motivated to do their best. • Sets clear, meaningful, challenging, and attainable expectations and/or goals that are aligned with those of the organization.	• Consistently demonstrates support for a work environment that rewards high integrity. • Maintains a positive attitude and forward-thinking approach despite challenges or ambiguity. • Shows personal commitment and takes action to continuously improve. • Encourages and creates systems for feedback and recognition. • Creates or contributes to a positive work environment where all staff are motivated to do their best. • Sets clear, meaningful, challenging, and attainable expectations and/or goals that are aligned with those of the organization.	• Models behavior demonstrating high standards of honesty and personal integrity. • Maintains a positive attitude and forward-thinking approach despite challenges or ambiguity. • Shows personal commitment and takes action to continuously improve. • Creates a culture of feedback and recognition. • Creates a positive work environment where all staff are motivated to do their best. • Sets clear, meaningful, challenging, and attainable goals and expectations that are aligned with those of the organization.

Competency	First Level Manager: Analyst Administrator	Mid-Level Manager: Manager Sr. Manager	Senior Level Manager: Assistant Deputy Director Deputy Director
Results-Oriented Focuses on results and desired outcomes and how best to achieve them to get the job done. *To what extent did the employee achieve the expected results?*	• Achieves expected quality and quantity of results. • Focuses on outcomes while balancing short- and long-term needs. • Anticipates and meets the needs of internal and/or external customers. • Demonstrates appropriate sense of urgency.	• Ensures the goals of the functional areas of responsibility are accomplished with appropriate level of quality. • Manages for outcomes while balancing short- and long-term needs. • Identifies customer needs and monitors how well those needs are being met. • Ensures work is aligned to organization's strategic goals.	• Formulates objectives and priorities and implements plans consistent with the long-term interests of the County. • Effectively coordinates efforts between stakeholders to achieve desired outcomes and results. • Navigates complex political environments to achieve goals despite barriers or difficulties. • Involved in department-wide or countywide strategic efforts.

Competency Ratings

Each competency has specific descriptive statements to define expectations. During the year-end evaluation, supervisors will rate each statement on a 4-point scale. The average of those ratings will result in the overall competency rating. Ratings are based on overall performance throughout the cycle. The overall evaluation rating is an average of the seven (7) competency ratings.

Average of 7 competencies = Overall Performance Rating

Rating	Description
Needs Improvement (1)	• Performance improvement and/or skill development needed to increase effectiveness and meet competency expectations. • Requires closer supervision than is necessary for the job.
Meets Performance Objectives (2)	• Performance normally meets and sometimes exceeds competency expectations for the position. • Proficient in the performance of responsibilities expected for the position.
Exceeds Performance Objectives (3)	• Performance frequently rises above competency expectations for the position. • Is often a model or mentor for others in the competency area.
Demonstrates Exceptional Performance (4)	• Performance is consistently, substantially above competency expectations for the position. • Is a model or mentor for others in the competency area.

Rating Approvals

An overall evaluation rating of 'Exceeds' or 'Exceptional' requires Department Head approval. Reviewers may approve overall evaluation ratings of 'Meets.' Supervisors should collaborate with Human Resources for any overall evaluation ratings of 'Needs Improvement' prior to meeting with the employee.

Merit Increases

Overall Rating	Merit Increase
Needs Improvement (1)	• No merit increase. • Reviewer approval required. • Consult with Human Resources.
Meets Performance Objectives (2)	• **3%** merit increase, not to exceed Advertised Maximum. • Reviewer approval required.
Exceeds Performance Objectives (3)	• **6%** merit increase, not to exceed Advertised Maximum. • Reviewer *and* Department Head* approval required.
Demonstrates Exceptional Performance (4)	• **9%** merit increase, not to exceed the Exceptional Performance Maximum. • Reviewer *and* Department Head* approval required.

***Department Head approval is required for overall ratings of Exceeds or Exceptional.**

Reminders

- Supervisors are required to meet with staff at the beginning of the cycle (as part of the Performance Planning step) to discuss the performance competencies and what success looks like within their role. This is the opportunity to personalize the competencies to the scope and nuances of the employee's role.
- **There are no rating quotas.**
- There are only two requirements that need to be met in order to sign off on an evaluation: (1) The County rating criteria must be followed, and (2) The assessment must be accurate and reflect performance from the entire cycle.

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PERFORMANCE PLANNING

Performance Planning

Perhaps one of the most basic of employee needs in the workplace is knowing what success on the job looks like. This is why the OPC performance cycle begins with Performance Planning.

The Performance Planning conversation is an opportunity to communicate clear expectations, providing the employee with a roadmap for success. It is intended to empower employees to collaboratively determine priorities, providing them with an active role in determining what their success looks like. Through performance planning, supervisors can help staff support the County's mission.

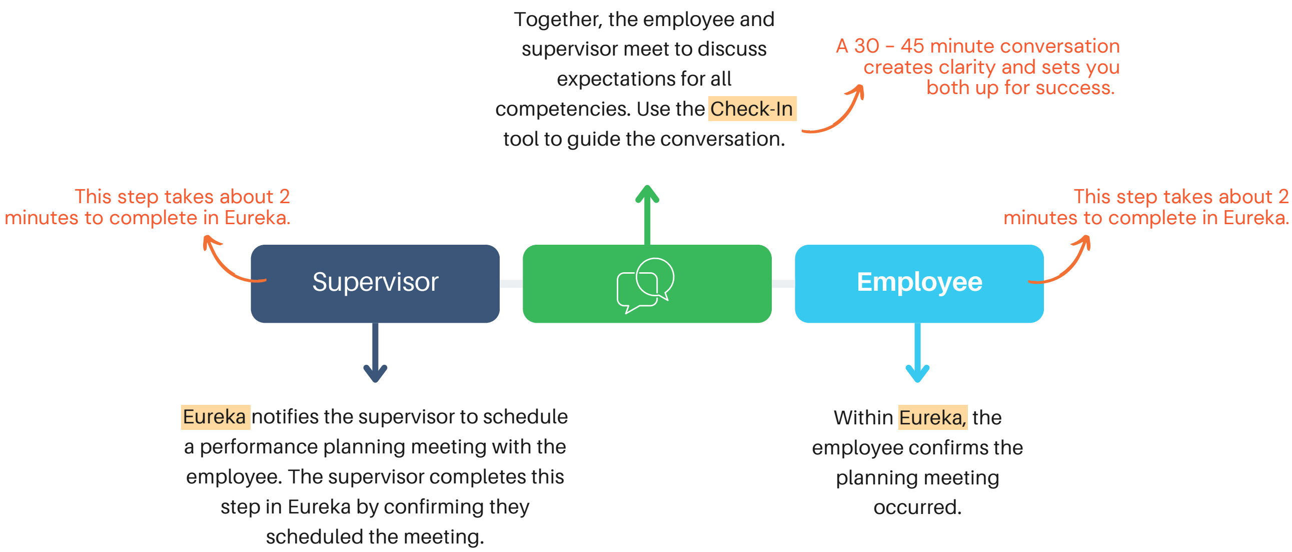
Three Core Tools

There are three core tools to help you through the Performance Planning process.

Automated Milestone Workflow	Check-In Templates	Reference Resources
You'll receive system emails when a task is assigned to you, helping you stay on track with deadlines.	The Performance Planning Check-In template takes the guesswork out of what to discuss.	On-demand eLearning courses and Snap Guides help you quickly learn the basics of Performance Planning.

The Workflow

Performance planning occurs at the beginning of the cycle and should be completed within 30 days of the start of the cycle. The image below highlights the Performance Planning workflow.



The Conversation

We recommend using the **Check-In template** to guide your conversation and take notes. During the performance planning conversation, you'll discuss:

- Expectations for each of the seven (7) competency areas
- How to build on past successes from the prior cycle
- Growth opportunities and areas for development

Learn more about Check-Ins beginning on page 35.

Additional Resources

There are a variety of resources available to help you learn about OPC and the Performance Planning milestone. We recommend starting with the on-demand eLearning and Snap Guides. All resources are available in Eureka. Follow the OPC playlist for easy access to these resources, and more!

Perhaps the most basic of employee needs in the workplace is knowing what success on the job looks like.

Tips for Holding the Performance Planning Conversation

5 Steps to Prepare for Effective Performance Planning

STEP 1: SCHEDULE A MEETING WITH THE EMPLOYEE

- Schedule a 1-hour meeting to meet with your direct report. The meeting should be in a private setting, such as your office, conference room, or virtual meeting.
- We highly recommend using the Check-In tool to guide your performance conversation.

STEP 2: PREPARE FOR YOUR CONVERSATION

- Review your notes:
  - You may want to review previous evaluations, notes from your performance conversations and the employee's job description.
  - Reviewing these documents can help you determine how the employee can contribute to achieving the overall mission of the County.

STEP 3: REVIEW THE CORE COMPETENCIES

- The seven (7) competencies were defined by the County of Orange as critical to success for management employees.
- Each competency is comprised of descriptive statements. These statements assist in providing clear definitions that ensure all County management employees are evaluated consistently.

STEP 4: REVIEW THE COMPETENCY RATING CRITERIA

- During the year-end evaluation, supervisors will rate each descriptive statement on a 4-point scale. The average of those ratings will result in the overall competency rating.
- Ratings are based on overall performance throughout the cycle.

STEP 5: REVIEW THE CHECK-IN TOOL TEMPLATE

- Ahead of your conversation, review the Check-In tool template for performance planning.
  - This tool serves as a guide, focusing your conversation on high-impact topics.

Performance Planning Conversation Starters

Questions to Support High Impact Performance Conversations

You'll discuss expectations for each of the seven competency areas, build on past successes from the prior cycle and identify growth opportunities and areas for development. Unsure of how to guide the conversation? Use these conversation starters to help kick things off. Choose a few questions from each category to guide your conversation. We recommend using the Performance Planning Check-In template to stay on track and take notes.

REFLECT ON YOUR DIRECT REPORT'S ROLE AND YOUR TEAM.	**5 Reflection Questions for You (the Supervisor!)** • What are the team's priorities? • What are the individual's strengths? • How can they best contribute to the priorities? • What does success look like for the role? • How can you support learning and growth for your team?

REFLECT ON YOUR ROLE.	**5 Reflection Questions for You (the Employee!)** • What would it look like if you were wildly successful in the coming year? • How does that potential compare with what you are focused on today? • What would help you bridge the gap between that future and today?

ENGAGE IN MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE ABOUT PERFORMANCE AND SUCCESS IN THE ROLE.	**Choose a question based on what you know about your employee:** • Given our priorities and mandates, where do you think you should focus your work this cycle? • Imagine it's one year from now. What would you like to say you've accomplished? What will you have learned? • What support do you need from me? What's working? What do you want more of? What could I do differently?

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QUARTERLY CHECK-IN

Quarterly Check-In Conversation

Since the planning conversation, you've been engaged in ongoing conversations (1-on-1 Check-Ins) with your employees. Quarterly Check-In Conversations provide the opportunity to focus on the big picture and overall performance. This milestone is focused on maintaining alignment and supporting success.

There are two Quarterly Check-In (QCI) Conversations in the OPC process.

- QCI #1 occurs 3 months after Performance Planning
- QCI #2 occurs 3 months after the first Quarterly Check-In.

Three Core Tools

There are three core tools to help you through the Quarterly Check-In Conversation.

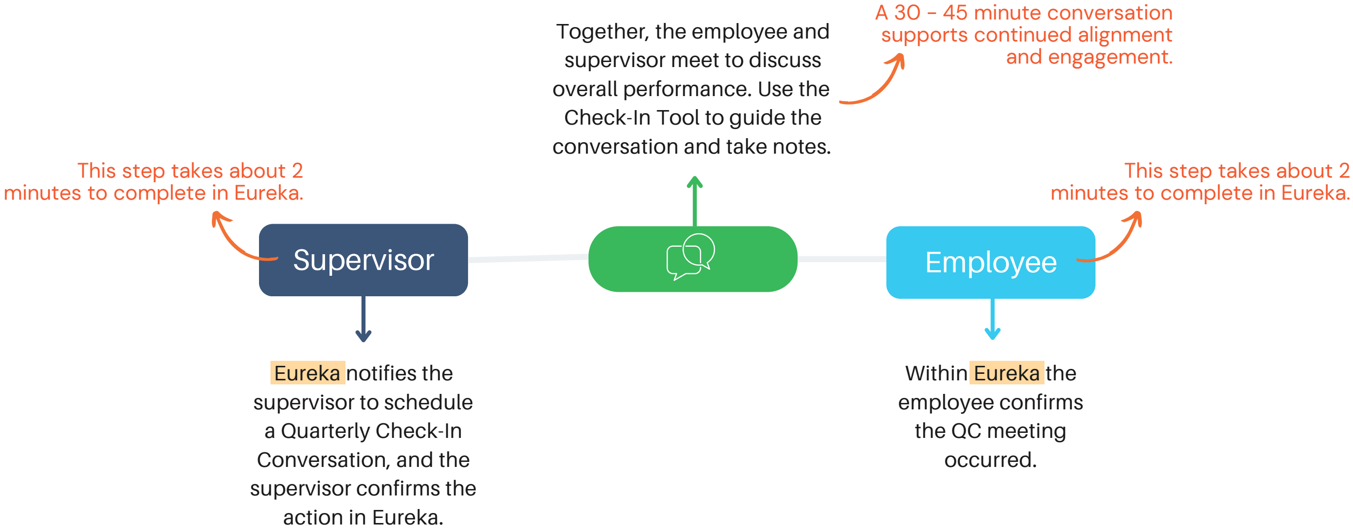
Automated Milestone Workflow
You'll receive system emails when a task is assigned to you, helping you stay on track with deadlines.

Check-In Templates
The Check-In template takes the guesswork out of what to discuss and ensures continuity.

Reference Resources
On-demand eLearning courses and Snap Guides help you quickly learn the basics of the Quarterly Check-In.

The Workflow

The workflow for the Quarterly Check-In milestone is similar to Performance Planning. The task will follow the workflow, beginning with the supervisor and ending with the employee. The image below highlights the Quarterly Check-In workflow.



The Conversation

We recommend using the **Check-In template** to guide your conversation and take notes. During the Quarterly Check-In conversation, you'll discuss:

- Performance so far this quarter within each of the seven (7) competency areas, including key accomplishments, strengths, and development areas
- Overall progress ('progressing well' or 'not progressing well') for the current evaluation cycle

Learn more about Check-Ins beginning on page 35.

Additional Resources

There are a variety of resources available to help you learn about OPC and the Quarterly Check-In milestone. We recommend starting with the on-demand eLearning and Snap Guides. All resources are available in Eureka. Follow the OPC playlist for easy access to these resources, and more!

You can't move forward if you don't know where you are located on the path.

Tips for Holding the Quarterly Check-In Conversation

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3 Steps to Prepare for Effective Quarterly Check-Ins

STEP 1: REVIEW YOUR NOTES.

- Review your Performance Planning Check-In for the notes you and your employee added at the start of the evaluation cycle.

- Review your 1-on-1 Check-In for notes you've collected throughout the evaluation cycle. The Check-In tool helps employees and supervisors have ongoing conversations and drive alignment, coaching, and continuous performance development.

STEP 2: REFLECT ON THEMES FROM THIS QUARTER.

- Your conversation will focus on the following topics:
  - Performance in competency areas, including strengths and opportunities for continued development
  - Key accomplishments
  - Overall progress toward meeting expectations in competency areas

- Reflect on the topics above in preparation for your conversation. What themes have emerged?

STEP 3: PREPARE TO SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK.

- When giving feedback, focus on the impact of behaviors on the department, strategy, and work efficiency, rather than simply expressing likes or dislikes. Emphasizing the impact provides the 'so what' of the feedback and clarifies why taking action matters.

- Ensure that you identify specific examples for each of your responses. While you have likely shared these throughout the evaluation cycle already, this is a great opportunity for reinforcement. Examples provide helpful context for understanding the situation and clarifying behaviors to continue or change.

Quarterly Check-In Conversation Starters

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Questions to Support High Impact Performance Conversations

You'll discuss strengths, areas for development, and accomplishments during the Quarterly Check-In. Unsure of how to guide the conversation? Use these conversation starters to help kick things off. Choose a few questions from each category to guide your conversation. We recommend using the Quarterly Check-In template to stay on track and take notes.

WHAT'S WORKED?

Use these questions to learn about successes from the last three months.

- What was your biggest accomplishment during this quarter?
- What do you believe your strengths are? How have you been able to leverage them so far during this evaluation cycle?
- What do you enjoy the most about your work? Which parts of your current job bring you the most satisfaction or greatest sense of accomplishment?

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

Use these questions to understand the employee's progress, discuss performance in competency areas, and explore lessons learned and areas of growth.

- What experiences have you challenged yourself with this cycle?
- What were your biggest lessons learned this cycle?
- What one or two areas, if worked on, would have the most impact on your performance and success?
- How do you think we are doing as a team?
- Where does our team excel?
- What one thing I could do differently to have the biggest impact on our team's effectiveness?

WHAT'S NEXT?

Use these questions to discuss future goals and how you can continue to support them.

- What are your most important goals for the next quarter?
- Where do you want to focus your efforts for continued development?
- How can I support you?

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YEAR-END EVALUATION

Year-End Evaluation

The final evaluation should not be a surprise; it is a summary of all feedback conversations that have occurred throughout the cycle. It's also an opportunity to reflect on performance throughout the whole of the cycle and discuss steps for building upon past successes and integrating lessons learned. While this final step is documented, the heart of it is truly the conversation that occurs. The following will provide you with information for successfully completing this process, as well as guidance for holding an impactful conversation.

Three Core Tools

There are three core tools to help you through the Year-End Evaluation process.

Automated Milestone Workflow

You'll receive system emails when a task is assigned to you, helping you stay on track with deadlines.

Check-In Templates

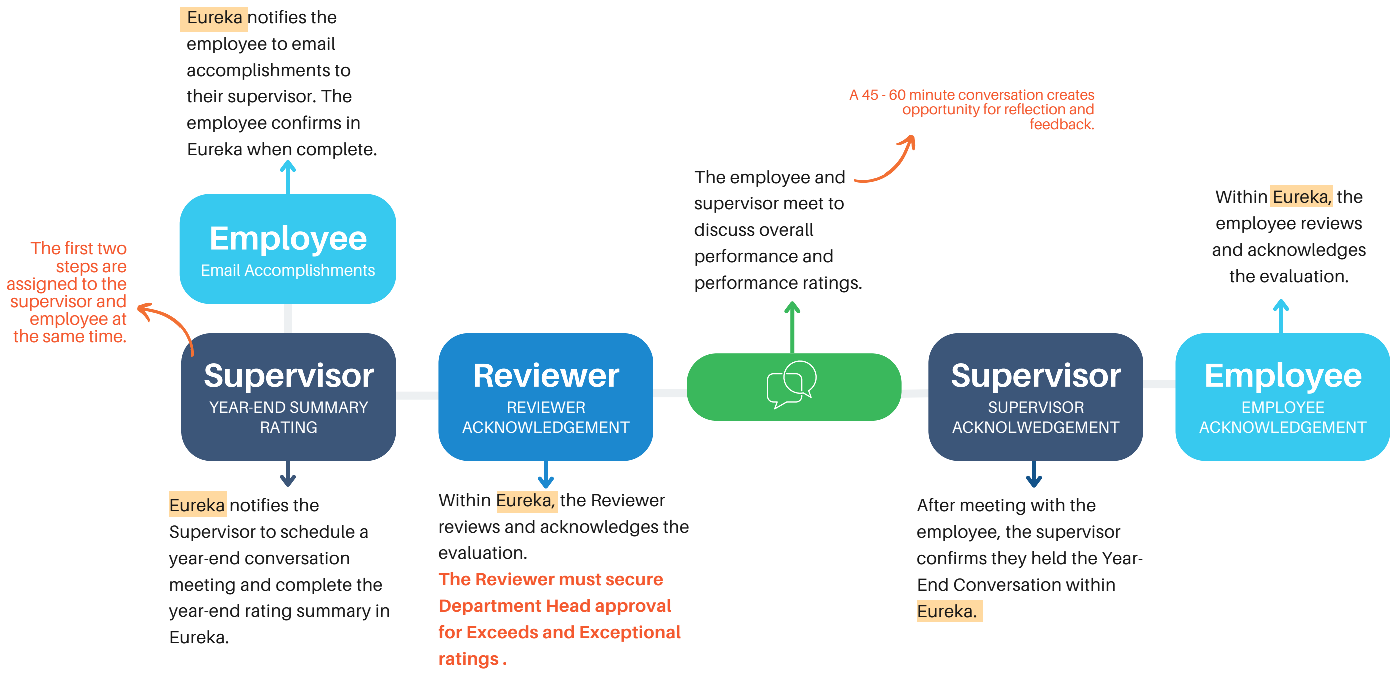
Reference past Check-Ins to easily see the year at-a-glance.

Reference Resources

On-demand eLearning courses and Snap Guides help you quickly learn the basics of the year-end evaluation process.

The Workflow

Like other performance tasks, the Year-End Evaluation workflow begins with an email to the manager and ends with the employee. The image below highlights the Year-End Evaluation workflow. You'll notice this workflow includes ratings, documenting feedback, and active engagement with the Reviewer.



The Conversation

During the Year-End Evaluation conversation, you'll discuss:

- Overall performance in the (7) competency areas
- Key accomplishments, including examples of notable performance
- Feedback on strengths and development areas

Review tips for completing the year-end evaluation beginning on page 30.

Additional Resources

There are a variety of resources available to help you learn about OPC and the year-end evaluation milestone. We recommend starting with the on-demand eLearning and Snap Guides. All resources are available in Eureka. Follow the OPC playlist for easy access to these resources, and more!

Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.

John F. Kennedy

Supervisor’s At-A-Glance Guide to the Completing Year-End Evaluation

Below is an overview of the supervisor’s responsibility for the Year-End Evaluation. Access additional resources listed below for more detailed information.

STEP 1: SCHEDULE YOUR YEAR-END CONVERSATION.

- Schedule a 1-hour meeting with your employee in a private setting such as your office.
- The evaluation must be approved by the Reviewer (and Department Head, if necessary) prior to holding the meeting with the employee. Ensure you schedule the meeting far enough into the future to allow sufficient time to secure necessary approvals.
- Log into Eureka and complete the performance step by confirming you've scheduled the meeting. Completing this step will unlock the rating portion of the evaluation.

STEP 2: REFLECT ON YEAR-LONG THEMES.

- Review notes from your Check-Ins, including 1-on-1s, Performance Planning, and Quarterly Check-Ins. Consider the following when reflecting:
  - What worked really well for the employee?
  - What are the employee's strengths?
  - What are one or two areas, if worked on, that would have the most impact on the employee's performance and success?
- Solicit input from the employee.
- Solicit input from your supervisoranager or peers if your employee works directly or interacts with them. Review 'kudos' emails or those indicating a concern about performance.

> The employee also receives an email at the same time you do. Their email prompts them to email a list of accomplishments for consideration when completing ratings.

Supervisor's At-a-Glance Guide to Completing the Year-End Evaluation

STEP 3: COMPLETE THE YEAR-END RATINGS SUMMARY IN EUREKA.

- Log into Eureka and complete the Year-End Ratings Summary, which includes:
  - Core Competency ratings
  - Focused Feedback (only required for overall ratings of Needs Improvement)
  - Probation Status

The workflow will route to the reviewer (your supervisor) after you complete this step. Wait until the reviewer approves the evaluation before holding your conversation with the employee.

STEP 4: HOLD YOUR YEAR-END CONVERSATION.

- Once the Reviewer acknowledges the evaluation, it's time to meet with your Employee for the Year-End Conversation. You will discuss overall performance, including strengths and development areas, key accomplishments, and performance ratings. View the Conversation Starters for a suggested framework for this conversation.

STEP 5: APPLY YOUR E-SIGNATURE IN EUREKA.

- Back in Eureka, conclude your steps by acknowledging the evaluation with your e-signature.
- The workflow will then route to the employee to acknowledge the evaluation. The evaluation is not considered complete until the employee completes this step.

Overall ratings of Exceeds or Exceptional require approval from the Reviewer and Department Head.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Looking for more detailed information? Additional resources are available in Eureka, including:

- OPC Process Guide
- eLearning modules
- Snap Guides

Contact your HR team with any additional questions.

Conversation Starters for the Year-End Evaluation

Questions to Support High Impact Performance Conversations

ongoing performance conversations
STAY CONNECTED.

Use this conversation starters below as a framework to guide your year-end conversation. These questions are designed to facilitate reflection about what worked this evaluation period and use that as a springboard for the future.

START WITH THE SUCCESSES

Starting the conversation on a positive note will create momentum for a productive conversation.

- What are you **proudest** of having accomplished this year?
- Where did you **grow** the most this year?
- How were you able to leverage your **strengths**?

REFLECT ON PERFORMANCE IN COMPETENCY AREAS

The competencies were defined by the County of Orange as critical to success for Management Employees.

You should have provided your employee with feedback throughout the evaluation cycle. In this conversation, you can summarize your feedback. Make sure to include examples of **specific, behaviorally-based observations** of the employee's performance.

Like the other conversations, let your employee lead by asking key questions to solicit their perspectives on where they excelled, lessons learned/growth, and where they should focus efforts going forward.

STAY FUTURE-FOCUSED

Find out what goals the employee has for their career.

Talk about the skills and experience needed for the employee to accomplish their career goals. How can they use insights and lessons learned from this cycle going forward? You may consider asking one of the following:

- What one or two areas would have the most **impact** on your performance if you focused on developing them?
- What do you see as the **next** step in your career?
- How do you see your personal goals **aligning** with team goals and the organization's mission?

OFFER YOUR SUPPORT

Be intentional in how you word your questions so that you make it safe for your employee to provide feedback.

Mix up the questions you use to ask for feedback during these milestone conversations and 1-on-1s to promote critical thinking, reflection, and avoid rote responses. Here are two alternatives to the conversation starters we highlighted in the midcycle checkpoint:

- What's working?
- What do you want more of?

Reviewer's Guide to the Year-End Evaluation

Below is an overview of the Reviewer's responsibility for the Year-End Evaluation. Access additional resources listed below for more detailed information.

Your Role During the Year-End Evaluation:

- Ensure timely completion of the process.
- Ensure evaluations adhere to the County's performance rating criteria, and are an accurate representation of performance throughout the cycle.

Eureka Navigation:

- You will receive an email when the workflow advances and is ready for your review.
- Regardless of the overall rating, confirm the following criteria are met:
    - Ratings are an accurate reflection of the employee's performance
    - Ratings are applied consistent with the County definitions.
- Additionally, complete the following steps for the following overall ratings:
    - Needs Improvement: Confirm a narrative is included in the Focused Feedback section. Consult with HR prior to issuing an evaluation with this rating.
    - Exceeds and Exceptional: Department Head approval is required.

If changes are needed, you may reopen the step to send it back to the supervisor. Meet to discuss needed changes or questions.

Department Head Approval:

- If required, obtain Department Head Approval. Do not sign off on evaluations with overall ratings of 'Exceeds' or 'Exceptional' until you receive Department Head approval.

E-Signature in Eureka:

- Back in Eureka, conclude your steps by acknowledging the evaluation with your e-signature.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Looking for more detailed information? Additional resources are available in Eureka, including:

- OPC Process Guide
- eLearning modules
- Snap Guides

Contact your HR team with any additional questions.

Employee's Guide to the Year-End Evaluation

Below is an overview of the Employee's responsibility for the year-end evaluation. Access additional resources listed below for more detailed information.

Prepare for your Year-End Conversation

- Get ready for the Year-End Evaluation by emailing your supervisor a list of your accomplishments from the current evaluation cycle. It's your time to shine!

Eureka Navigation:

- Log into Eureka and complete the performance step by confirming you emailed accomplishments to your supervisor.

Having a hard time getting started with your reflection? Start with the Reflection Worksheet, now available on the OPC playlist.

The Year-End Conversation:

- Your supervisor will schedule a meeting to reflect on performance throughout the cycle and review your evaluation, overall ratings, and any potential performance-based merit increases.
- Use your conversation as an opportunity to celebrate success, reflect on growth, and focus where to continue your development efforts.

E-Signature in Eureka:

- Log into Eureka after your meeting to acknowledge the evaluation with your e-signature.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Looking for more detailed information? Additional resources are available in Eureka, including:

- OPC Process Guide
- eLearning modules
- Snap Guides

Contact your HR team with any additional questions.

ongoing
performance
conversations
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CHECK-IN TOOL

The Check-In Tool

Check-Ins make it easy to stay connected.

Templates

Conversation guides help you have high impact conversations.

Virtual Collaboration

A single location for notes increases collaboration and clarity.

Follow-Up Tools

Follow-Up features make it easy to follow through on action items.

Your View

Summary views create seamless access to all of your notes.

The Check-In Tool makes it easy to stay connected to each other, the business, and our mission.

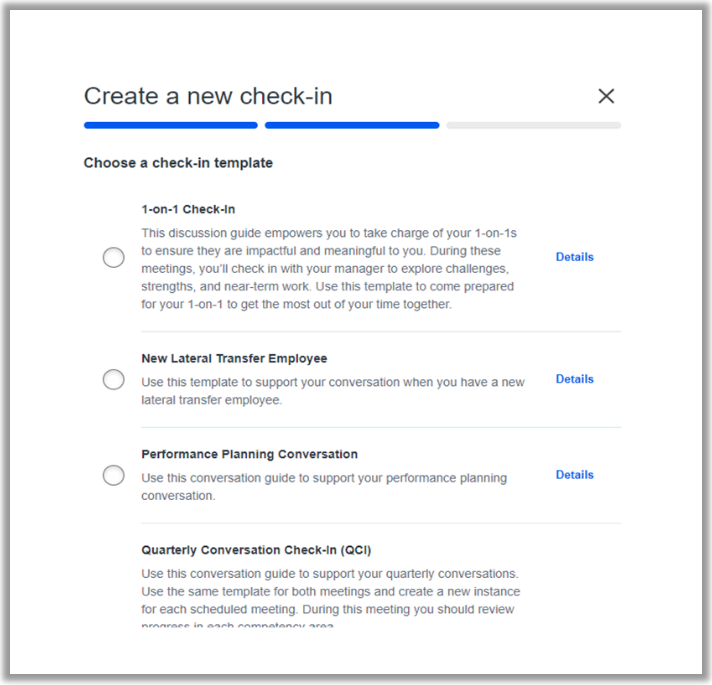
There's a template for that!

Eureka's check-In templates make it easy to drive alignment, coaching, and performance development. Using the templates means you always know what to discuss. Keeping notes in a shared space supports following through on action items, ensures shared understanding, and helps make it easy to spot trends so you know when to celebrate or provide additional support.

Check-In templates are available for the following scenarios:

- Performance Planning
- Quarterly Check-In Conversation
- 1-on-1 Check-Ins
- New Lateral Transfer Employee

Follow your department's documentation policy when determining if you will use this tool.



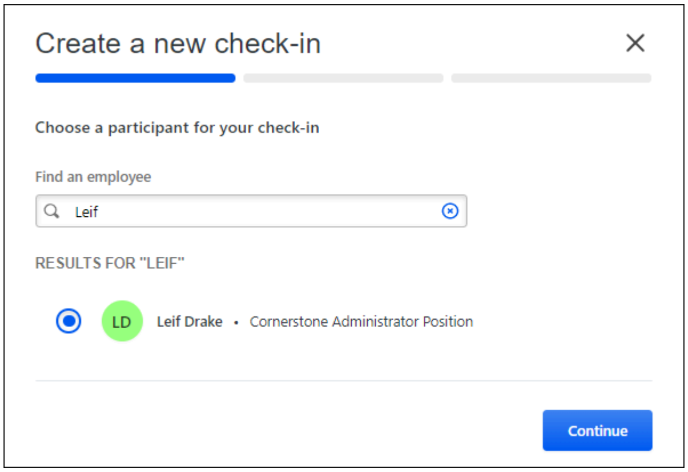
Check-In Tool Actions

The following pages feature common actions supervisors will take when using the Check-In Tool. Detailed step-by-step instructions are available in the Snap Guides.

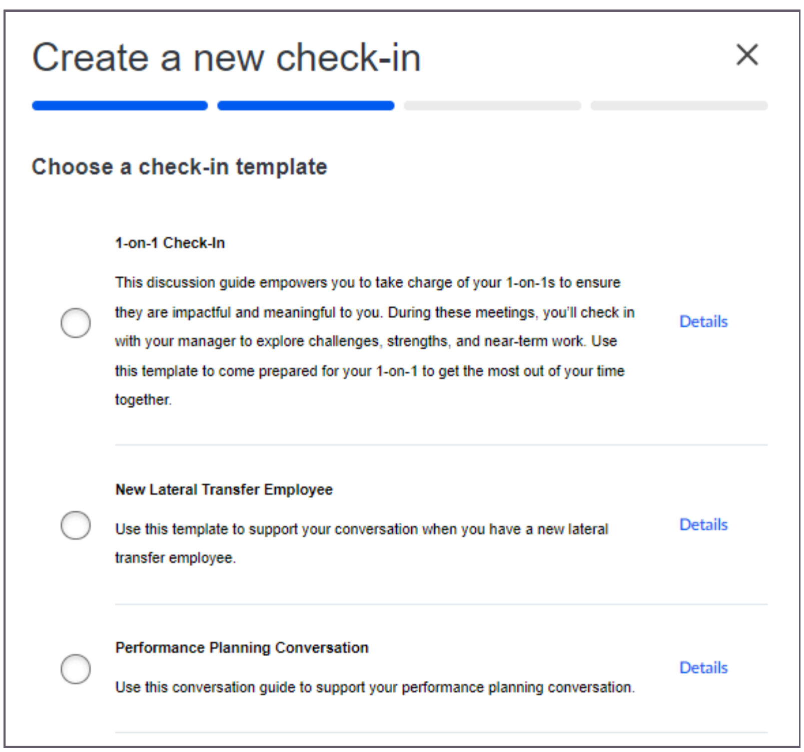
Action	Page	When to Use
Create a Check-In Series	39	• Use one time when creating a new series.
Delete a Meeting	41	• Meetings are automatically created in a series. Delete a meeting if the meeting was cancelled.
Delete a Check-In Series	41	• Delete a Check-In series that was created by mistake or not used.
Archive a Check-In Series	42	• Archive a Check-In series for staff no longer reporting to you.
Share a Check-In	42	• When transitioning supervisory assignments.
Note Visibility	43	• Understand where to write notes and who can see the content.
View Edit History	43	• View changes made to note fields.
Follow-Ups	44	• Manage action items, including assigning the task to a person and adding due dates.
Change Your Notes View	45	• Change the way you view Check-In notes. You can view meeting notes by topic or meeting date.
Mark a Check-In Complete	45	• Mark a Check-In complete after it occurs and you have added your notes.
Download a Check-In	46	• When using or sharing a physical copy of notes.

Create a Check-In Meeting

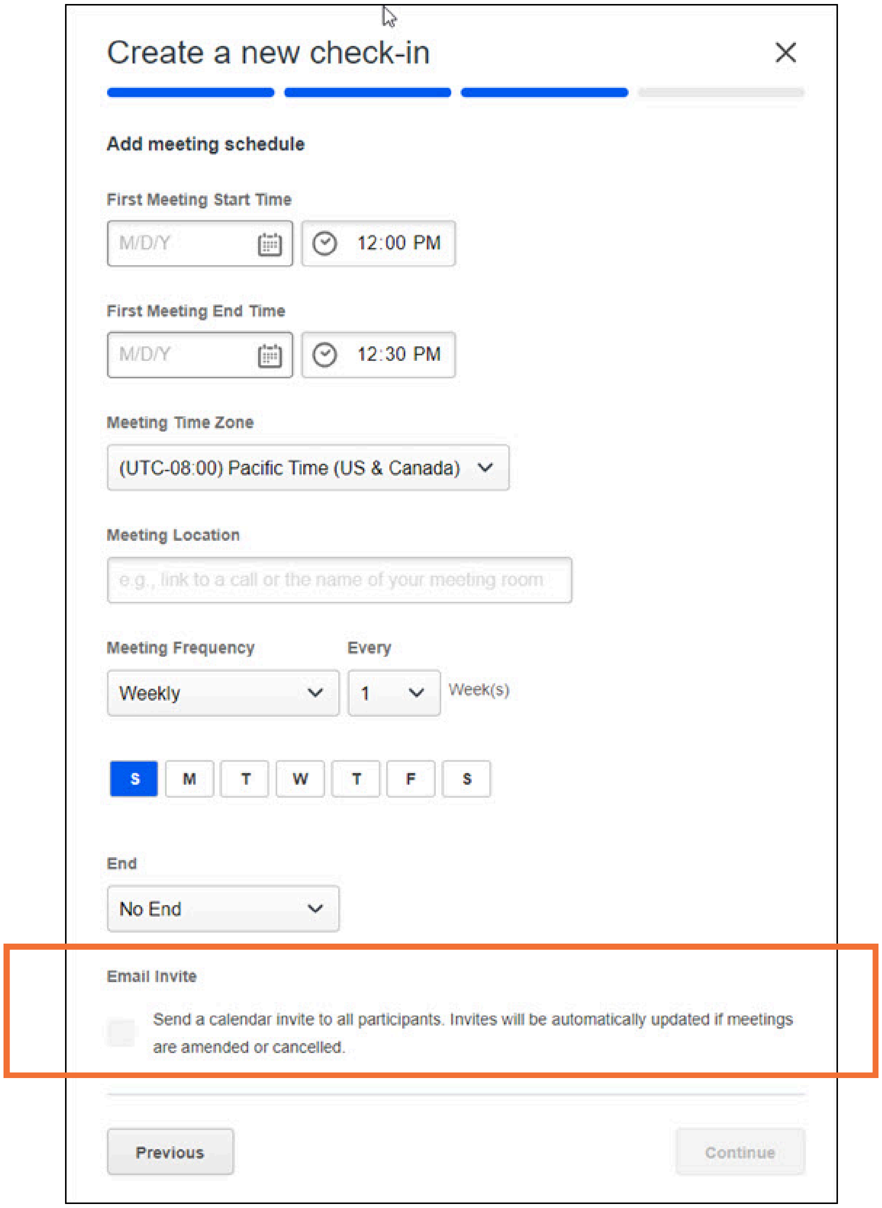
On the Create a new check-in page, search for and select the user you want to include in this meeting, and then select the **CONTINUE** button. You can only create a meeting with management employees within your department.



Select the button for the template you want to use in this meeting and click CONTINUE. Click DETAILS to view general information and topics for the template. You can only view and select templates to which you have access.

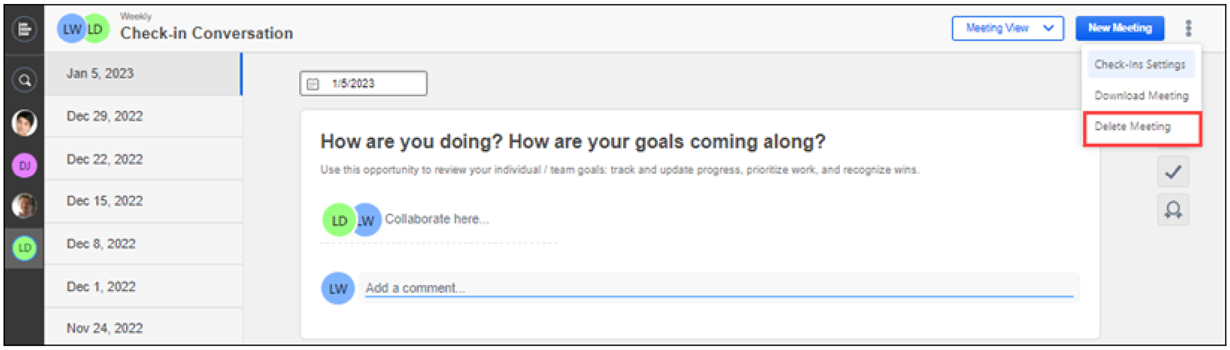


Complete the meeting schedule. Select the **EMAIL INVITE** checkbox to have an email invite automatically sent after pressing **CONTINUE**.



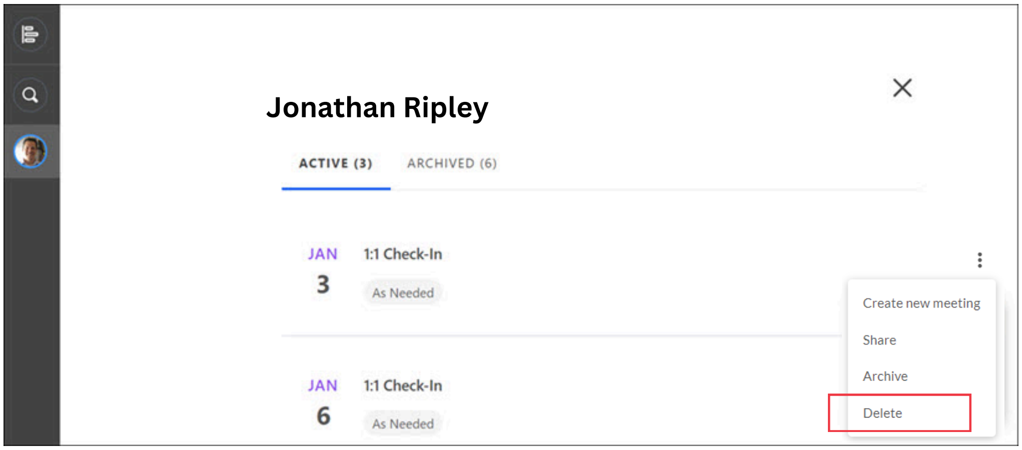
Delete a Meeting

Only the creator of a Check-In meeting or meeting series can delete it. If another user entered notes or follow-ups, the creator cannot delete the meetings, but can archive them. You cannot restore deleted meetings.



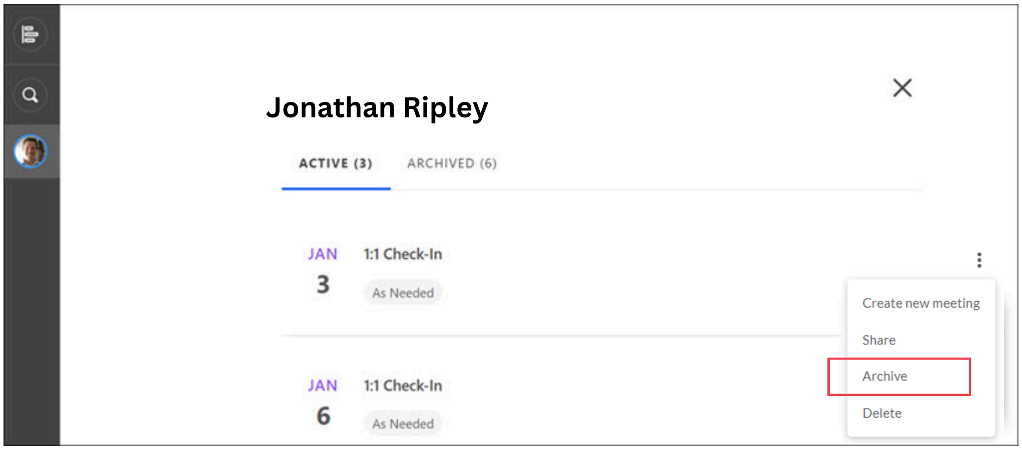
Delete a Check-In Series

To delete a check-in series, open the Check-Ins page by selecting your participant from the People Bar. Select the ellipsis for the meeting series you want to delete and select **DELETE CHECK-IN**. On the confirmation panel, select the **CONFIRM** button. If no other participants added notes or follow-ups to this meeting series, it will be deleted.



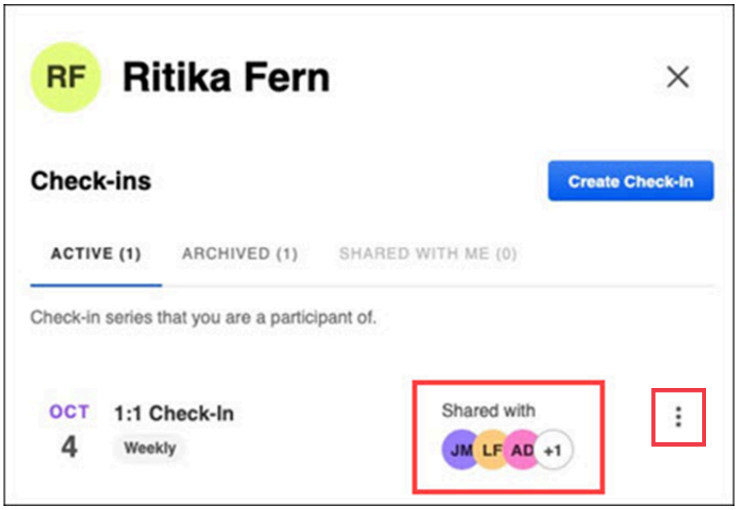
Archive a Check-In Series

To archive a check-in series, open the Check-Ins page by selecting your participant from the People Bar. Select the ellipsis for the meeting series you want to delete and select **ARCHIVE CHECK-IN**. On the confirmation panel, select the **CONFIRM** button.



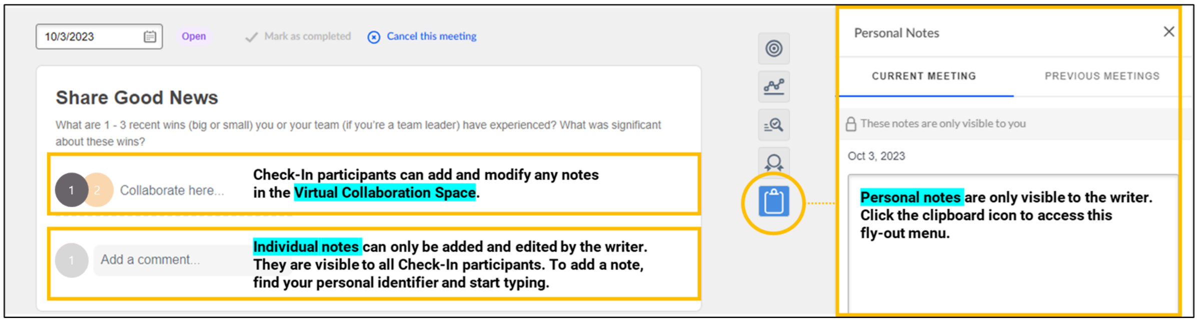
Share a Check-In

Check-Ins can be shared when supervisory changes occur. Navigate to the Check-In you have with an individual. Click on the **three dots** to the right of the Check-In series you would like to share. Select **SHARE** and then find the name of the person you would like to share the series with.



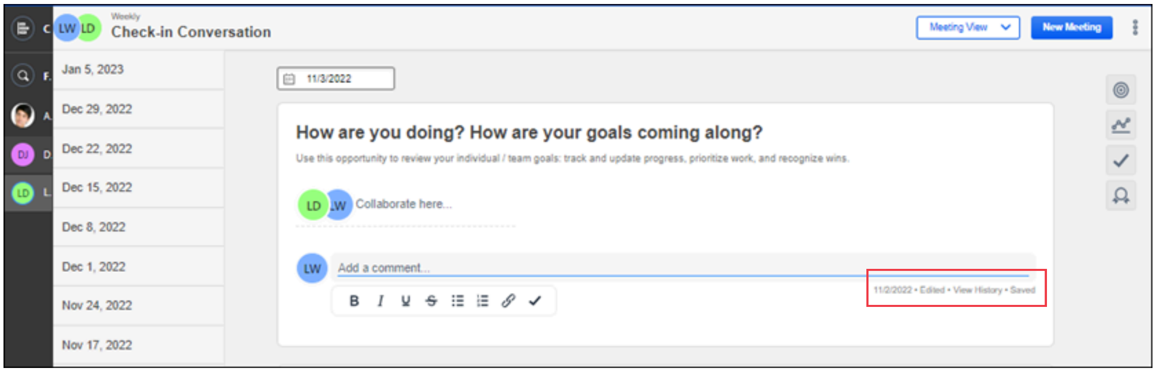
Note Visibility

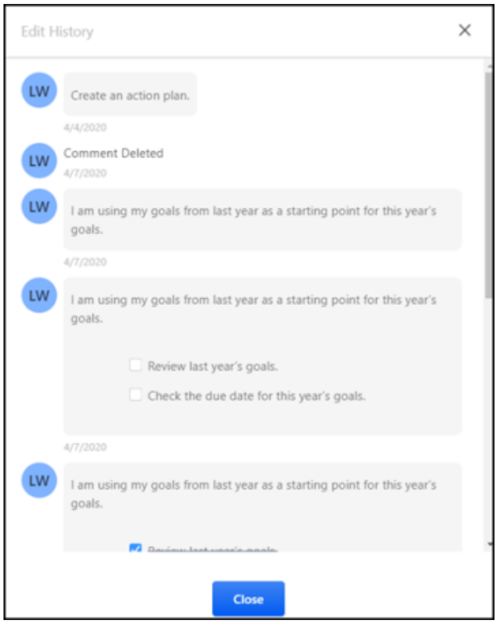
There are three areas to take notes. Each area has different visibility. We recommend using the Virtual Collaboration Space when creating Follow-Ups so that you can update the status.



View Edit History

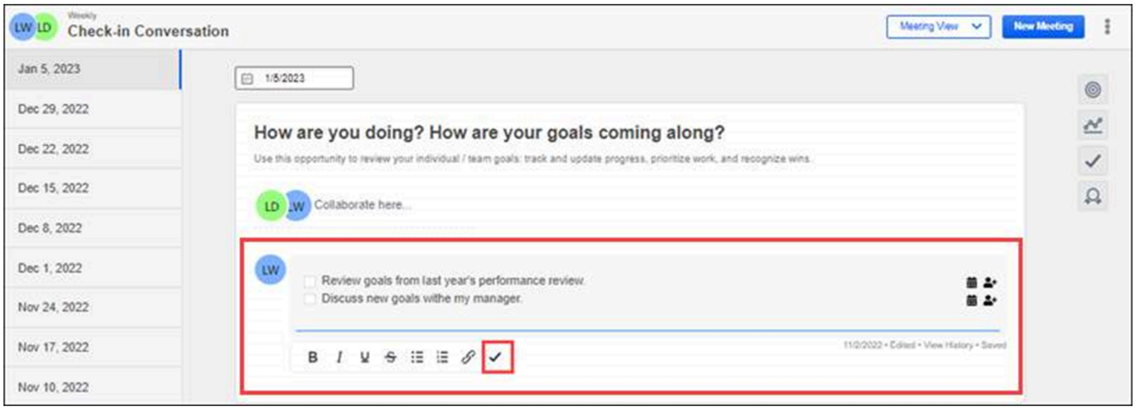
Edits are viewable once changes are made. The word 'edited' will appear once an edit has been made. Click **VIEW HISTORY** to see the log of edits.



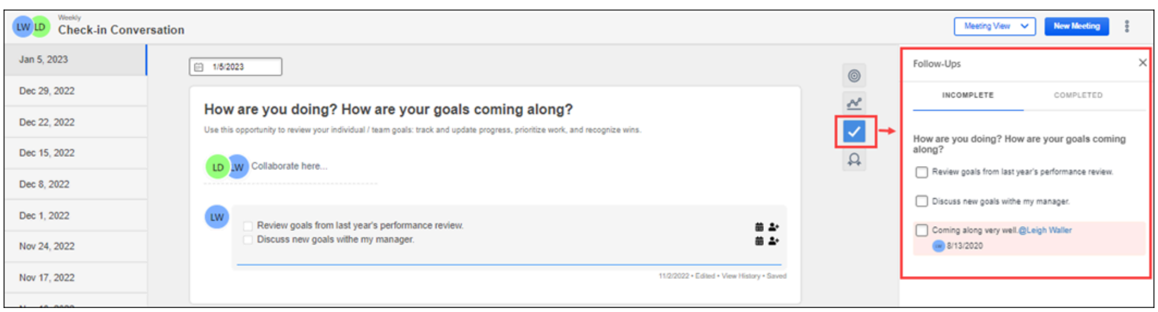


Easily Keep Track of Action Items with Follow-Ups

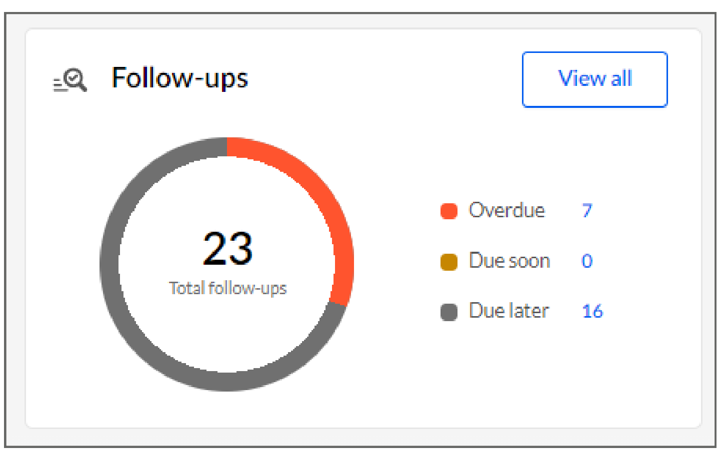
Type an action item and click the checkbox button to assign a due date and person. This allows you to easily keep track of action items - all in a single location! Remember to include follow-ups in the Collaboration note space so that you both can update the status.



Select the **CHECKMARK** to open the flyout window and view all follow-up tasks.

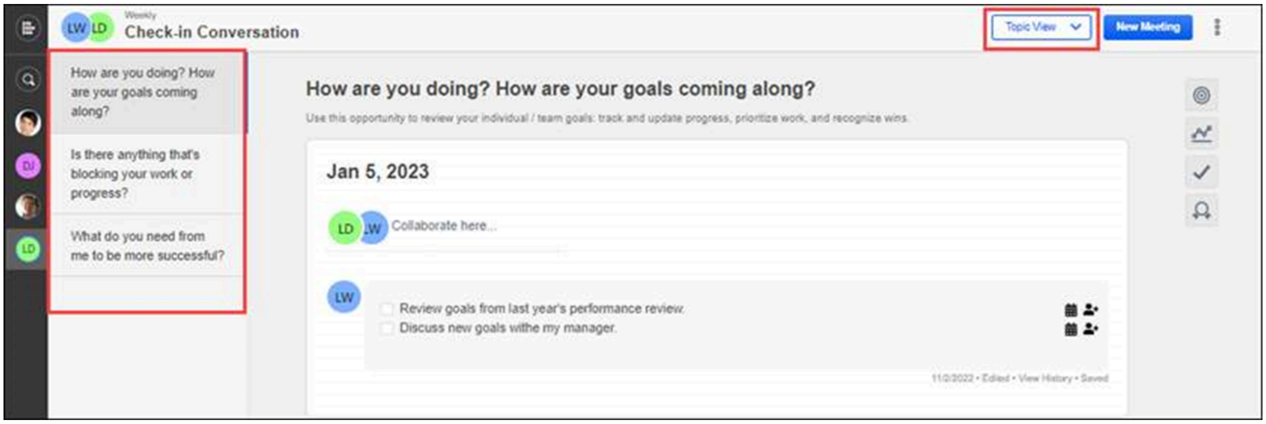


View a summary of all Follow-Ups on your Check-In Insights dashboard.



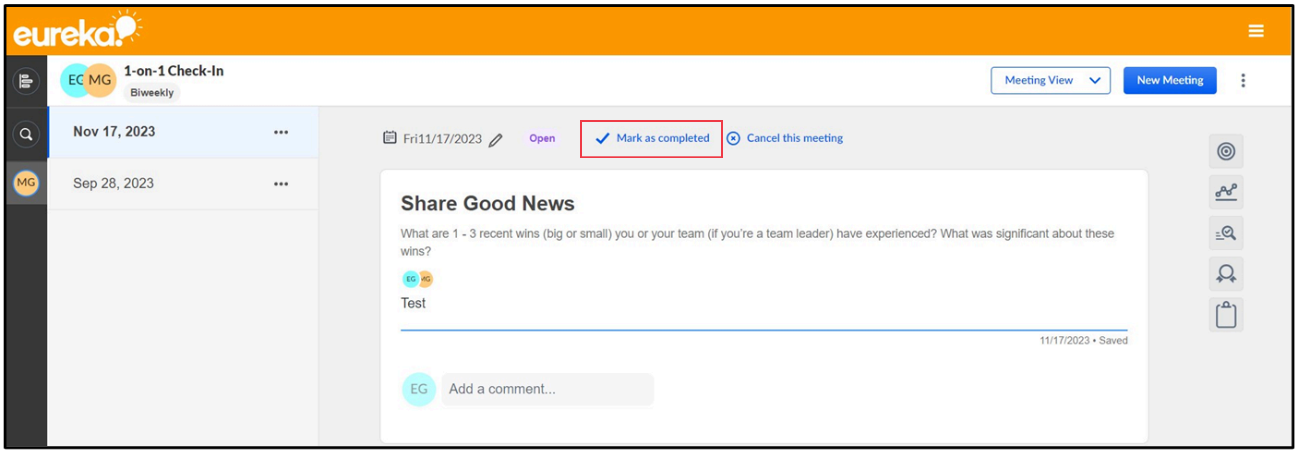
Change Your View to Access Information

The default view for Check-Ins is by date, which is referred to as **Meeting View**. To change your view, select **Topic View** from the drop-down menu. This view displays all topics in this meeting in the left pane and is a helpful view to easily spot trends.



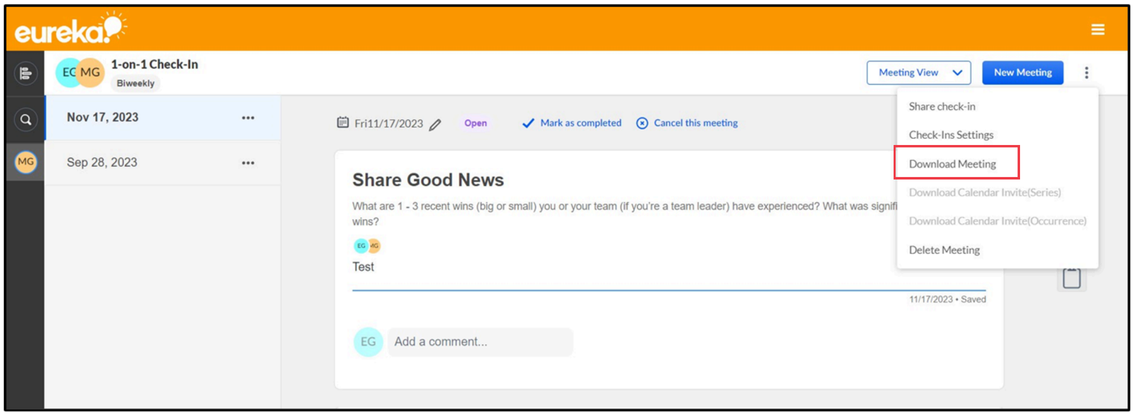
Mark a Check-In Complete

Once you have held your meeting and added notes, mark it complete.



Download a Check-In

You can download all notes and topics for a selected meeting to a .pdf file. To download, click the ellipsis, and then select **DOWNLOAD MEETING**. This option is only available in **Meeting View**.



Looking for more resources on how to use Check-Ins? Access the Snap Guides for step-by-step directions on how to use Check-Ins. bit.ly/CheckInSnapGuides.

ongoing performance conversations
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APPENDIX

Employee Status Changes
Resources

Employee Status Changes

OPC is the performance process for employees in the Administrative Management bargaining unit. **Participation is required.** The following information describes status changes that may trigger or impact a step in the OPC process. This information does not supersede any applicable MOU provisions.

<table>
<tr><th>Employee Status Change</th><th>OPC Action Steps</th></tr>
<tr><td>New Hire</td><td>The Performance Planning performance task will automatically deploy to the supervisor within 30 days of the new hire's start date.</td></tr>
<tr><td>New Employee Probationary Release</td><td>Employees who are released on New Hire Probation do not require an evaluation. Contact HR for specifics on New Hire Probationary Release.
Once Eureka is updated with the employee's separation status, their account will change to 'Inactive,' and the task will be removed from the supervisor's pending queue. Eureka will update once the employee's separation is processed by HR.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Promotional Probationary Failure</td><td>The employee will return to their former classification provided they were not in the previous class for the purposes of training for a promotion to the higher class.
Upon return, the employee will follow the evaluation and merit dates that they had in their former classification.
Supervisors should only consider time in the former classification when completing the evaluation. Supervisors should not reference the promotional probationary failure in the evaluation narrative.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Probation</td><td>Probation approval is integrated into the annual evaluation. Make the selection when completing the year-end evaluation.
Any deferrals or releases should be discussed with Human Resources and are not documented via the evaluation process.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Promotion</td><td>Upon promotion, new evaluation dates will be established beginning with the effective date of the promotion.
If the employee has a pending performance task for their prior classification, note the following:
If task is in a 'Not Started' status, leave as-is. Do not open the task. Eureka will update once the employee's promotion is processed by HR, and the task will automatically be removed from the supervisor's pending queue.
If task is in an 'In Progress' status, the performance task will remain active and assign to the employee's new supervisor. The previous supervisor should complete all pending Performance Planning and Quarterly Check-In tasks prior to employee's promotion. For pending Year-end Evaluation tasks only, contact L&OD at hrslod@ceo.oc.gov. to request to remove the existing task due to employee promotion.</td></tr>
</table>

Employee Status Change	OPC Action Steps
Temporary Promotion	• Employees on temporary promotion do not participate in OPC. • Employees on temporary promotion are not entitled to a merit increase in the temporary classification. • Supervisors should still set performance expectations with the temporarily promoted employee and meet regularly for 1-on-1s. • When the temporary promotion ends, the employee will follow the evaluation and merit dates that they had in their former classification.
New Employee Probationary Release	• Employees who are released on New Hire Probation do not require an evaluation. Contact HR for specifics on New Hire Probationary Release. • Once Eureka is updated with the employee's separation status, their account will change to 'Inactive,' and the task will be removed from the supervisor's pending queue. Eureka will update once the employee's separation is processed by HR.

Leave of Absence	• Evaluation dates may be extended due to leave of absences longer than 14 days. Contact HR to determine if the employee's evaluation dates will change once the employee returns from leave.
	• If an employee is on an approved leave and has a pending performance task, the following should occur:
	    ◦ Supervisor will leave the task in a pending status in Eureka.
	    ◦ Once Eureka is updated with the employee's leave status, their account will change to 'Inactive,' and the task will be removed from the supervisor's pending queue.
	• Note: An employee on leave will be placed on an inactive status in Eureka. Performance tasks will not be assigned for employees on inactive status. The scenario above will only apply if the employee's performance task is pending before the approved leave is processed in the HR data system.
	
	Returning to Work from a Leave:
	• Return to work processing can take up to two weeks for the HR data system to be updated and changes to be reflected in Eureka.
	• If the employee returns from leave and their evaluation dates have not changed, the task will be reinstated, and the supervisor is to complete the pending performance task.
	• If the employee returns from leave and their evaluation dates have changed, the pending task will automatically be removed from the supervisor's queue and a new performance task will be assigned based on the updated evaluation dates.

Employee Status Change	OPC Action Steps
Lateral Transfer/Reassignment	• An employee's evaluation dates do not change for lateral transfers. • No evaluation forms need to be completed at the time of transfer; however, the previous supervisor should meet with the employee to discuss successes and development opportunities. No documentation is required for this conversation. • The new supervisor should meet with the employee within the first 30 days of starting the new role to discuss performance expectations within each competency area. Optional: You may choose to document this conversation using the Check-In tool. Reference the Lateral Transfer Check-In Template. **Final Review Expectations for the Previous and Current Supervisor** • If the employee has a pending year-end evaluation performance task, the previous supervisor is responsible for completing it. • If an employee transfers within the last three months of the cycle, the evaluation should be completed by the previous supervisor. Use the Co-Planner feature to give the pervious supervisor access to complete the performance task. • If the employee transfers at some point during the cycle, but before the last three months, the "new" supervisor is responsible for completing the evaluation and should contact the previous supervisor for input to consider when completing the final evaluation.
Separation	• No performance review is required for employees separating for any reason, including retirement.

Supervisory Changes

It's important to ensure that the performance evaluation is reflective of performance throughout the entirety of the review period. Below are expectations and guidelines for supervisors to follow if the employee was supervised by more than one person throughout the evaluation period.

- Supervisor Rotations: When supervisors transfer, the incoming supervisor should meet with the previous supervisor to discuss performance of team members. This information should be considered when completing the evaluation.

- Employee Transfers: See supervisor expectations for scenarios related to employee transfers under 'Lateral Transfer' in the table above.

Resources

Performance management is a core responsibility for every supervisor. Ensure you are effectively fulfilling your responsibilities by completing all performance training. There are a variety of resources available to help you learn about OPC.

Reference

- hrs.oc.gov website: bit.ly/PM-OPC
- FAQ Document
- Eureka Snap Guides
- OPC Eureka landing page

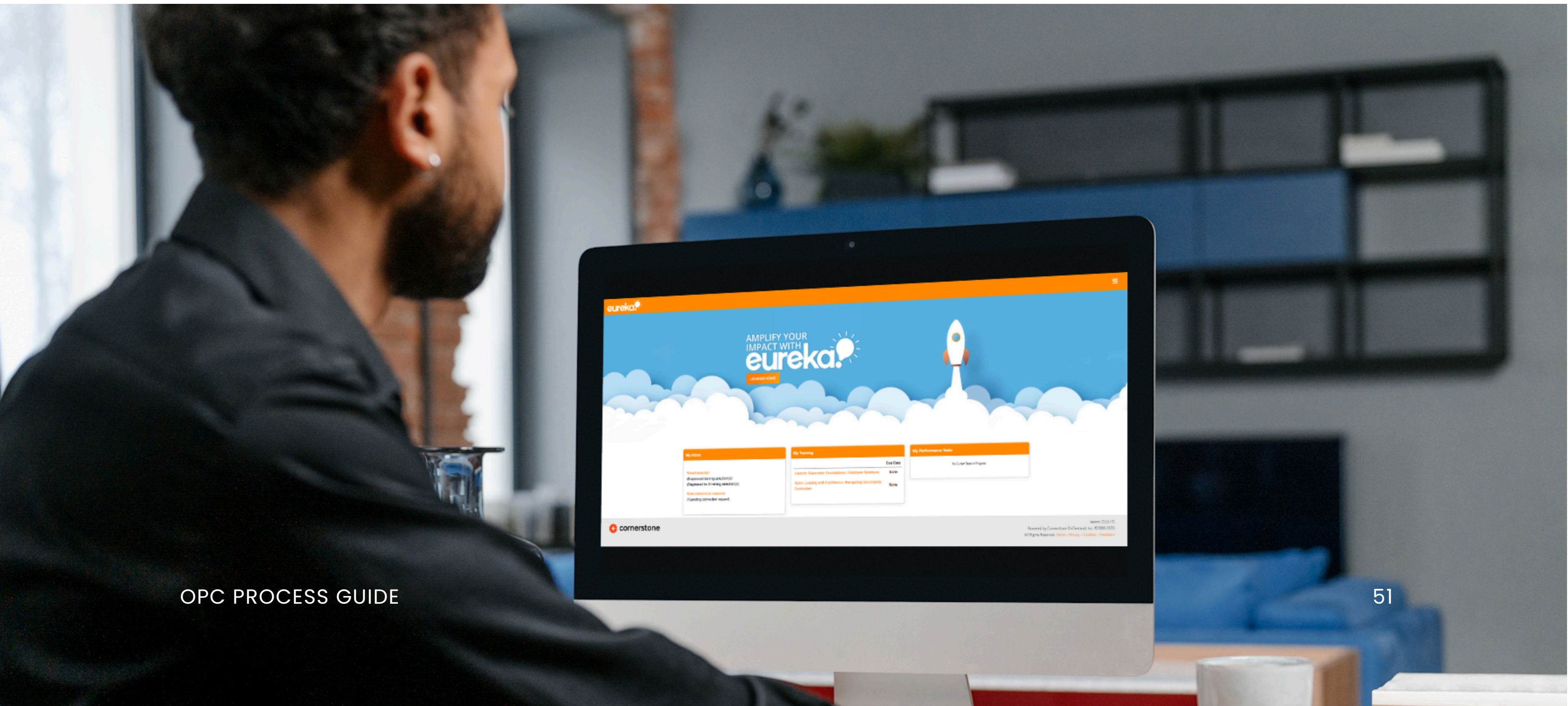
Learn

- Eureka Playlists
- OnDemand eLearning

Contact

- Contact your HR team with any questions.

All of the listed resources are hyperlinked. Not viewing this document online? The easiest way to access these resources is by visiting the OPC playlist in Eureka: bit.ly/OPCPlaylist.



Notes

Performance management is critical to the County's success.

Learning & Organizational DEVELOPMENT

Say hello at hrslod@ceo.oc.gov.