



New Beginnings FAQs

What is New Beginnings?

New Beginnings is a new performance appraisal system for DoD civilian employees; it will be rolled out to different components in stages over the next three years.

Why are we adopting a new appraisal system?

After the National Security Personnel System failed, Congress authorized the development of New Beginnings in 2010. Unlike NSPS, this new system has been developed jointly by the Department of Defense and employee unions, led by AFGE.

What is the main goal of New Beginnings?

The main objective of New Beginnings is to develop and maintain a results-oriented performance culture that ties individual performance to organizational goals through a performance and appraisal system that emphasizes employee and supervisor interaction. It calls for employees to get more communication and feedback during the course of the year.

How is the system being deployed?

New Beginnings will be rolled out to different components in stages between now and the end of 2018. The first group of about 15,000 employees will transition to the new system in April 2016. About 3,500 bargaining unit employees will be in this first group, including about 3,000 AFGE members who work at the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA). (See attachment for list of locals involved in the April rollout).

How is New Beginnings different from my current appraisal system?

Currently there is a multitude of appraisal systems in place throughout DoD. Generally, they are a pass/fail or a 5-tiered system. New Beginnings relies on a 3-tiered evaluation system: (1) unsuccessful, (3) fully successful, and (5) outstanding. All employees must have written performance plans, developed jointly with their supervisors, that detail the critical elements of their job and set goals for the year ahead. Performance goals will be established using the SMART criteria: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely.



How are employees evaluated?

Employees must meet at least 3 times with their supervisor during the year to discuss progress toward meeting performance goals. Supervisors must notify employees early if they are not performing at the fully successful level and provide clear guidance on what employees must do to improve performance. Employee assessments and year-end supervisor appraisals will be submitted using a computer-based program called MyPerformance.

What should locals do?

Each component will be rolled into New Beginnings at different times between now and the end of the 2018. Each local will receive a notice from the agency before New Beginnings is implemented. Each local should submit a demand to bargain as soon as they are notified by the agency that employees are transitioning to New Beginnings. AFGE has developed detailed bargaining guidance to assist locals in negotiating specific provisions of New Beginnings.

What should employees do?

Employees should attend training sessions and informational meetings being conducted by the Department of Defense and AFGE to better understand New Beginnings. As employees move into the system, they will meet with their supervisor to develop a written performance plan that will guide their work during the evaluation period. At the end of the performance cycle, employees will have the opportunity to write a self-assessment that the supervisor will consider in evaluating the employee's performance. Employees should raise issues related to the performance cycle process through the administrative or negotiated grievance process.

Where can I get more information?

AFGE members can access the latest bargaining guidance and other materials at www.afge.org/NewBeginnings.