

PALM BEACH COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Meeting Date: April 28, 2026

Department: Administration

I. EXECUTIVE BRIEF

**Title:** Modification to Performance Review Process for Contractual Employees

**Summary:** On June 3, 2025, during the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting, the BCC directed staff to continue the annual performance review process for the (3) three contractual employees (County Attorney, County Administrator, and County Auditor) based on a review period of March 1, 2025 – February 28, 2026. This process is to include the addition of a 360-degree performance review.

For this Workshop Item, staff seeks the BCC’s feedback and direction to incorporate the following modifications for the Performance Review Process for Contractual Employees:

**A)** Utilizing the start date of each contractual employee contract as the basis for the performance review schedule. Currently, the three (3) contractual employee contracts have staggered start dates; in lieu of a fixed calendar-year cycle. This approach will ensure that every contractual employee completes a full year in their role prior to evaluation. For the current contractual employees, the anniversary dates, based on the effective dates of their respective contracts are as follows:

- |    |                                     |                           |
|----|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | County Auditor David Zamora         | July 1 <sup>st</sup>      |
| 2. | County Administrator Joseph Abruzzo | August 18 <sup>th</sup>   |
| 3. | County Attorney David Ottey         | December 19 <sup>th</sup> |

**B)** Incorporate a 360-degree rater review as part of the Performance Review Process using the current Employee Performance Management System (EPMS). The addition of the 360-degree performance review system will allow the BCC to maintain a consistent and flexible review process based on the components and integrating into the current County operating systems;

**C)** With approval of implementing the EPMS, staff is seeking direction on who will be assigned as the 360 Reviewers for each contractual employee. The 360 Reviewers will receive a request from the EPMS system to complete the 360 rater reviews 60 days prior to the contractual employee’s anniversary date, as determined by the start date of their contract. This will allow the County Commissioner and/or the 360 Reviewer access to begin submitting information on behalf of their County Commissioner; and

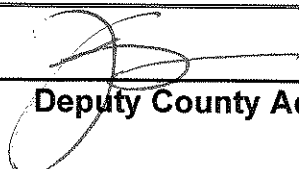
**D)** Approval for competencies and format. Staff has provided a suggested review format and five (5) sample competencies for approval that will be integrated accordingly into the EPMS. Goals and Objectives can be added by both the contractual employee and the BCC. Countywide (DO)

**Background and Policy Issues:** On June 3, 2025, during the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting, the BCC directed staff to continue the annual performance review process for the (3) three contractual employees (County Attorney, County Administrator, and County Auditor) based on a review period of March 1, 2025 – February 28, 2026.

**Attachments:**

- Sample Competencies

Recommended By: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Deputy County Administrator

4/17/26  
Date

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

County Administrator

Date



# CONTRACTURAL EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE REVIEW

## AIS Summary Backup

The following five sample competencies provide a consistent framework for evaluating the performance of all three contractual employees, County Attorney, County Administrator, and County Internal Auditor. Each competency reflects a core area of leadership essential to effective County operations: Strategic Leadership & Organizational Stewardship, Operational Excellence & Accountability, Collaboration & Stakeholder Engagement, Analytical Judgment & Problem Solving, and Communication & Influence.

To demonstrate how these competencies translate into measurable expectations, examples of **role-specific goals** have been provided for each contractual position. Each goal is directly connected to one of the competencies, for example, the County Attorney's goal to develop a legal risk management framework aligns with Analytical Judgment & Problem Solving; the County Administrator's goal to reinstate a performance-based employee evaluation system supports Operational Excellence & Accountability; and the County Internal Auditor's goal to implement a corrective-action tracking program aligns with Collaboration & Stakeholder Engagement. These examples illustrate how competency-driven goals create alignment, accountability, and clarity across all contract positions.

## COMPETENCY 1

### Strategic Leadership & Organizational Stewardship

The ability to set direction, uphold the County's mission, and lead with integrity while ensuring that decisions, actions, and guidance reflect the responsibilities of their respective roles. This competency reflects how effectively they model ethical leadership, build trust, and guide the organization toward long-term success.

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### SAMPLE 4 LEVEL-SCALE RATING

#### 1. Exceptional (Exceeds Expectations)

Consistently demonstrates outstanding strategic leadership and stewardship.

- Proactively sets clear, forward-looking direction aligned with the County's mission.
- Serves as a trusted, ethical leader who models integrity in all decisions and interactions.
- Anticipates organizational needs, strengthens cross-departmental trust, and drives sustainable long-term improvements.

- Provides guidance that elevates overall County operations, legal strategy, or audit oversight beyond expectations.

## **2. Strong (Meets Expectations)**

Reliably demonstrates effective leadership and stewardship.

- Provides clear direction and guidance consistent with the County's mission and responsibilities.
- Makes sound, ethical decisions and maintains trust with staff, partners, and the public.
- Supports the organization's long-term goals and performs their strategic duties competently.

## **3. Developing (Partially Meets Expectations)**

Shows emerging capability but needs more consistency in strategic leadership or stewardship.

- Direction and decision-making are generally aligned with the County's mission but may lack clarity, foresight, or follow-through.
- Ethical leadership is present but inconsistently modeled or communicated.
- Needs to strengthen trust-building, organizational alignment, or long-term planning.

## **4. Needs Improvement (Does Not Meet Expectations)**

Does not demonstrate the level of leadership or stewardship required for the role.

- Fails to provide clear strategic direction or make decisions consistent with the County's mission.
- Actions or guidance may undermine trust, create confusion, or fail to uphold expected ethical standards.
- Does not contribute effectively to long-term organizational alignment or success.

# **COMPETENCY 2**

## **Operational Excellence & Accountability**

The capacity to manage complex functions, ensure compliance with laws and policies, and maintain high standards of accuracy, timeliness, and quality. This includes overseeing

systems, processes, and resources to achieve organizational goals while demonstrating sound judgment and accountability.

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#### **SAMPLE 4 LEVEL-SCALE RATING**

##### **1. Exceptional (Exceeds Expectations)**

Consistently delivers outstanding operational performance and exemplifies strong accountability.

- Manages complex functions with precision, foresight, and efficiency.
- Ensures seamless compliance with all applicable laws, policies, and standards.
- Regularly improves systems and processes to enhance organizational effectiveness and quality.
- Demonstrates exceptional judgment and personal accountability that positively impacts county operations.

##### **2. Strong (Meets Expectations)**

Reliably demonstrates effective operational management and accountability.

- Oversees functions, resources, and processes competently and on schedule.
- Maintains consistent compliance and adheres to county policies and regulations.
- Ensures accuracy, timeliness, and quality in day-to-day operations.
- Makes sound decisions and takes responsibility for outcomes.

##### **3. Developing (Partially Meets Expectations)**

Shows capability but requires greater consistency, structure, or follow-through.

- Generally manages functions effectively but may experience occasional issues with timeliness, accuracy, or prioritization.
- Compliance is maintained but may require reminders, clarification, or more active oversight.
- Process improvements or resource management need strengthening to meet the role's expectations.
- Judgment is adequate but not consistently aligned with organizational needs.

#### **4. Needs Improvement (Does Not Meet Expectations)**

Does not demonstrate the required level of operational management or accountability.

- Struggles to manage key functions, processes, or resources effectively.
- Compliance issues, missed deadlines, or lapses in accuracy or quality occur too frequently.
- Operational decisions may create inefficiencies, risks, or confusion.
- Accountability is lacking, with limited ownership of outcomes.

### **COMPETENCY 3**

#### **Collaboration & Stakeholder Engagement**

Skill in building strong working relationships with departments, elected officials, community partners, and internal teams. This competency reflects the ability to navigate differing perspectives, foster cooperation, and maintain trust across the organization.

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#### **SAMPLE 4 LEVEL-SCALE RATING**

##### **1. Exceptional (Exceeds Expectations)**

Demonstrates exemplary collaboration and engagement across all stakeholder groups.

- Builds strong, trusting relationships that enhance organizational alignment and effectiveness.
- Actively fosters cooperation, even in complex or high-stakes environments.
- Navigates differing viewpoints with diplomacy, clarity, and fairness.
- Serves as a unifying presence who strengthens partnerships with departments, elected officials, and community entities.

##### **2. Strong (Meets Expectations)**

Consistently collaborates well and maintains productive relationships.

- Communicates effectively with internal and external stakeholders.
- Works cooperatively to achieve shared goals and resolves differences constructively.

- Maintains trust and demonstrates reliability in interactions with partners and teams.
- Engages appropriately with departments, officials, and community groups.

### **3. Developing (Partially Meets Expectations)**

Shows potential but needs to improve consistency or relationship-building skills.

- Interactions are generally positive but may lack follow-through, clarity, or responsiveness at times.
- May struggle to navigate conflicting perspectives or build cohesion across groups.
- Needs to strengthen trust, communication, or engagement with certain stakeholders.
- Collaboration may be reactive rather than proactive.

### **4. Needs Improvement (Does Not Meet Expectations)**

Does not meet expectations for collaboration or stakeholder engagement.

- Has difficulty building or maintaining effective working relationships.
- Communication may create misunderstandings, tension, or barriers to progress.
- Struggles to work cooperatively or to represent the County effectively with key partners.
- Actions may erode trust or impede the ability to achieve shared goals.

## **COMPETENCY 4**

### **Analytical Judgment & Problem Solving**

The ability to evaluate complex issues, interpret legal, operational, or financial information, assess risks, and develop well-reasoned solutions. This competency reflects how they approach challenges and make informed decisions that protect the County's interests.

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### **SAMPLE 4 LEVEL-SCALE RATING**

#### **1. Exceptional (Exceeds Expectations)**

Demonstrates outstanding analytical capability and consistently delivers high-quality, well-reasoned solutions.

- Quickly understands complex issues and distills them into clear, actionable insights.
- Anticipates risks and proactively develops innovative, defensible solutions.
- Integrates legal, operational, or financial considerations with strong professional judgment.
- Decisions consistently safeguard the County's interests and improve organizational outcomes.

## **2. Strong (Meets Expectations)**

Regularly demonstrates solid judgment and effective problem-solving.

- Accurately analyzes information and provides reliable recommendations.
- Assesses risks appropriately and selects reasonable, timely solutions.
- Uses available data and expertise to inform decisions.
- Approaches challenges methodically and protects the County's interests in routine situations.

## **3. Developing (Partially Meets Expectations)**

Shows foundational analytical skills but needs more consistency or depth.

- Understands issues but may lack clarity, completeness, or confidence in analysis.
- Can identify risks but may have difficulty prioritizing or addressing them effectively.
- Solutions may be adequate but occasionally lack timeliness, precision, or strategic awareness.
- Requires guidance to tackle more complex problems or decisions.

## **4. Needs Improvement (Does Not Meet Expectations)**

Does not yet demonstrate the analytical judgment or problem-solving required for the role.

- Struggles to analyze information accurately or identify key issues.
- Decisions may overlook risks, lack justification, or create complications.
- Solutions are frequently incomplete, delayed, or misaligned with organizational needs.
- Judgment may expose the County to operational, legal, or financial vulnerabilities.

## COMPENTENCY 5

### Communication & Influence

The ability to communicate clearly, professionally, and persuasively with diverse audiences, including the Board, staff, external partners, and the public. This includes translating complex information into understandable terms and influencing outcomes through effective communication.

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#### SAMPLE 4 LEVEL-SCALE RATING

##### 1. Exceptional (Exceeds Expectations)

Delivers communication that is consistently clear, compelling, and impactful.

- Translates complex legal, operational, or financial information into concise, accessible messages for any audience.
- Communicates with confidence, diplomacy, and credibility in high-visibility settings.
- Influences decisions and outcomes through well-reasoned, persuasive communication.
- Strengthens relationships and organizational clarity through proactive, transparent messaging.

##### 2. Strong (Meets Expectations)

Communicates effectively and appropriately with most audiences.

- Provides clear, professional information that supports understanding and informed decision-making.
- Adapts communication style to fit the audience and context.
- Demonstrates the ability to influence outcomes through logical, respectful communication.
- Maintains responsiveness and ensures key stakeholders receive accurate information in a timely manner.

##### 3. Developing (Partially Meets Expectations)

Shows basic communication skills but needs more consistency or refinement.

- Messages are generally understandable but may lack clarity, detail, or audience-specific tailoring.

- Occasionally struggles to translate complex issues into simpler terms.
- Influence may be limited due to hesitancy, incomplete information, or inconsistent delivery.
- Needs to strengthen communication structure, confidence, or responsiveness.

#### **4. Needs Improvement (Does Not Meet Expectations)**

Communication lacks clarity, effectiveness, or professional impact.

- Explanations may be confusing, incomplete, or poorly structured.
- Struggles to tailor messages to the audience or setting.
- Difficulty influencing outcomes due to unclear, untimely, or ineffective communication.
- Communication gaps may create misunderstandings or reduce stakeholder confidence.

### **SAMPLE GOALS:**

#### **“Operational Excellence & Accountability” for All Three Roles**

*This competency applies to all contractual employees, but the expression of excellence differs by function.*

##### **County Administrator**

Focus: Operational systems, performance management, and enterprise-wide accountability.

Example Goal:

Reintroduce and fully implement a countywide performance-based evaluation system to improve accountability, align compensation with performance, and ensure long-term fiscal sustainability.

How it connects to the competency:

- Strengthens countywide operational consistency.
- Ensures processes support accuracy, fairness, and disciplined resource use.
- Holds managers accountable for performance quality and timeliness.

## **County Attorney**

Focus: Legal operations, compliance integrity, and risk-controlled decision making.

Example Goal:

Develop a countywide legal risk management framework that standardizes contract review, mitigates litigation exposure, and ensures legally sound operations across departments.

How it connects to the competency:

- Enhances operational reliability through stronger legal processes.
- Ensures compliance with laws and statutes—an essential component of accountability.
- Provides timely, accurate legal analysis that supports effective county operations.

## **County Internal Auditor**

Focus: Oversight, verification, correction, and strengthening internal controls.

Example Goal:

Launch a corrective-action tracking program with departments to accelerate closure of audit findings and reduce repeat risks across County operations.

How it connects to the competency:

- Holds departments accountable for addressing findings and improving controls.
- Improves the accuracy and reliability of county processes.
- Enhances operational discipline by ensuring that corrective actions are timely and effective.

## **Example of expanded goal details**

### **“Operational Excellence & Accountability”**

#### **Goal (County Administrator)**

**Reintroduce a comprehensive, performance-based evaluation system for all County employees to ensure accountability, equitable compensation decisions, and long-term fiscal sustainability.**

*Competency Link: Operational Excellence & Accountability*

**Key Components:**

- Implement a standardized performance management process across all departments.
- Establish clear evaluation criteria aligned with County mission, values, and job expectations.
- Train all supervisors and managers on conducting fair, timely, and meaningful performance reviews.
- Integrate performance results into compensation decisions beginning with the next fiscal cycle.

**Measures of Success:**

- 100% of employees receive a formal annual evaluation by the designated deadline.
- 90% of supervisors complete performance-management training.
- Annual budget impact of step or merit increases aligns with performance outcomes, replacing automatic across-the-board increases.
- Employee engagement scores related to “fairness” and “clarity of expectations” improve by 10%.

**Timeline:**

Full implementation by the end of FY2026 with mid-year check-ins and pilot group feedback cycles.

**SYSTEM SCREENSHOT**

JA Joseph Abruzzo  
Manager County Commissioners

Annual Review 0% Complete  
Review Template: County Contractual Employees  
Process: Annual - Contract Employees

360-Rater Feedback 0 Selected	Self-Review Due 1/18/2026	Manager Review Due 2/17/2026	Approval Unsent	Archive Due 3/18/2026
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Request 360-Rater Feedback

Select 360-Raters [Dropdown] Request Outside 360-Rater Feedback

Select a Group [Dropdown] Add

Added County Commissioners to 360-Rater Feedback Group