Graduate College Handbook Chapter 10 - Performance Management, Dismissal, Appeal

**10.3 Performance Management**

At the beginning of the Postdoctoral Scholar’s appointment, the PI/Supervisor shall establish in writing clear expectations ([template](http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/post_doc/pi-resources.php)), at a minimum, for the Postdoctoral Scholar’s: (a) reporting duties (frequency, level of detail, format, etc.); (b) level of performance; and (c) professional conduct. The Postdoctoral Scholar is thereafter responsible for meeting or exceeding these expectations.

A practical first step is for a PI to work with a new Postdoctoral Scholars to establish an IDP within the first three-months of the appointment. The [Individual Development Plan](http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/current/professional_development/idp/) **is an interactive web-based tool that** serves as a constructive means of communication between the postdoc and PI and also provides a planning process that identifies both professional development needs and career objectives.

Reviewing the IDP on an annual basis is a good practice. At an administrative level, Annual Reviews are strongly recommended, not required. We provide an [annual review template](http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/post_doc/pi-resources.php) that builds on the progress of the IDP.

If a Postdoctoral Scholar is unsatisfactorily performing his/her duties, the PI/Supervisor shall promptly attempt to address these issues via informal coaching and mentoring. The PI/Supervisor shall document such efforts.

If informal coaching and mentoring does not improve the performance, the standard procedure requires the PI/Supervisor to develop an action plan. If the action plan is not successful after a period of 60 days, a written Notice of Unsatisfactory Performance may be given to the Postdoctoral Scholar (see below for Notice of Dismissal).

An action plan shall include: (a) a detailed description of all relevant performance deficiencies and prior attempts to address the performance deficiencies; (b) specific steps and improvements which the Postdoctoral Scholar must satisfy; (c) a list of University resources which may be helpful to the Postdoctoral Scholar (*e.g.*, CELT, online training, EAP, etc.); and (d) a defined timeline in which the steps and improvements must be satisfactorily made. The Department Chair and the Graduate College Dean shall be copied on the action plan.

**10.4 Dismissal**

**10.4.1. Dismissal due to Unsatisfactory Performance**

If a PI/Supervisor determines dismissal of the Postdoctoral Scholar is appropriate due to performance deficiencies, the PI/Supervisor shall contact the Dean of the Graduate College for review/approval of the request prior to issuing a Notice of Dismissal.

A Notice of Dismissal shall be given with a minimum of one month’s notice, unless the Postdoctoral Scholar’s continued presence on campus poses potential harm to the university. The Department Chair, Graduate College Dean shall be copied on the Notice. At the time of a dismissal, the Postdoctoral Scholar will turn in all ISU keys and property, etc. and s/he has an obligation to leave notebooks and data in a state that will allow continuation of the project.

The Postdoctoral Scholar has the right to appeal the dismissal (see below for Appeals Process).

**10.4.2. Dismissal due to misconduct**

The PI/Supervisor shall immediately report to his/her Department Chair allegations pertaining to any misconduct committed by a Postdoctoral Scholar.

The PI/Supervisor also has the responsibility to immediately report allegations pertaining to possible [research misconduct](http://www.policy.iastate.edu/policy/research/misconduct), criminal activity, unlawful harassment or discrimination, or sexual misconduct committed by a Postdoctoral Scholar to the appropriate office, such as the Equal Opportunity Office any allegations regarding unlawful harassment or discrimination, or sexual misconduct.

A Postdoctoral Scholar who has committed misconduct may be dismissed by his/her PI/Supervisor upon a formal investigation and with approval of the Graduate College Dean. The PI/Supervisor shall notify the Department Chair and contact the Graduate College to begin the process as soon as the alleged misconduct is reported or becomes known. As used herein, misconduct may include, but is not limited to, acts of violence or threats of violence, harassing or discriminatory conduct, sexual harassment, theft, conviction of criminal acts, research misconduct, plagiarism, and other behavior or conduct of a serious nature.

Only after the alleged misconduct is investigated and a request for dismissal is approved shall the PI/Supervisor provide a written notice of dismissal, with a copy provided to the Department Chair, the College Dean, and the Graduate College Dean. At the time of a dismissal, the Postdoctoral Scholar will turn in all ISU keys and property, etc. and s/he has an obligation to leave notebooks and data in a state that will allow continuation of the project.

**10.5 Appeals Process for Postdoctoral Scholar Dismissal**

A Postdoctoral Scholar who has been dismissed based on either performance deficiencies and/or misconduct has the right to appeal the dismissal via the Grievance Policy outlined in the handbook.

If no appeal is submitted within 10 business days, the Postdoctoral Scholar Resignation Action of the Enrollment Personnel Action (EPA) will be initiated by the PI’s department/center.