



**U.S. Department of Justice**  
Federal Bureau of Prisons

**PROGRAM STATEMENT**

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## **Warden Competency Assessment**

/s/

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Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons

### **1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The purpose of the Warden Competency Assessment is to assess the level of proficiency individuals have in leadership and management competencies that contribute to successful performance in the Warden position. The Federal Government, led by the Office of Personnel Management, is focusing on competencies to ensure that current and future organizational needs can be met. Over time, the missions and programs of Federal agencies are expected to evolve. To ensure that the Federal workforce is prepared to meet new organizational demands, it is important that it has the needed skills. Workers who possess skills in the necessary competencies will be able to transition into new responsibilities and duties more readily. Focusing on competencies provides the flexibility that organizations need to ensure their workforce can accomplish their missions and programs today and in the future.

Competencies include knowledge, skills, and abilities, but also encompass behaviors, values, interests, motivations, capabilities, and other characteristics. Competencies provide a fuller perspective on individuals and what they bring to their jobs.

This Program Statement applies to all current Wardens and other individuals eligible to be considered for selection to a Warden position.

**Program Objectives.** The expected results of this program are:

- Competency assessment results will be used to identify competency strengths and competency gaps, if any.
- Learning plans will be developed to address competency gaps, if needed.
- Transfer of knowledge among Wardens will be facilitated.

- Warden selections will match individuals' competency proficiency and the leadership needs of the institution.

## 2. PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. The **Assistant Director**, Human Resource Management Division, is responsible for the overall administration of this program.
- b. **Direct Supervisors (Regional Directors, Assistant Directors, and Other Supervisors)** ensure that the Warden Competency Assessment is offered to Wardens and individuals eligible to be selected to a Warden position in their region, division, or area of supervision in compliance with current laws and regulations.
- c. **Wardens and Other Eligible Individuals** who are being rated are responsible for becoming familiar with the objectives and procedures of the assessment and understanding the competencies associated with the Warden position. Employees are responsible for seeking clarification from their supervisors on any competency definition, rating criteria, and proficiency level illustration that is not clear. The employee should inform the supervisor of any factors or circumstances that he/she believes should be considered in assessing his/her competency proficiency and identifying a learning plan.
- d. **Human Resource Managers** provide training, advice, and assistance to employees and supervisors on this program, including completing the assessment in BOP-Learn.

## 3. THE WARDEN COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT

The BOP Warden Competency Assessment addresses 32 competencies linked to six areas of responsibility and a set of fundamental competencies.

<i>Area of Responsibility</i>	<i>Related Competencies</i>
Leading Change	Creativity and innovation, external awareness, flexibility, resilience, strategic thinking, vision.
Leading People	Conflict management, developing others, leveraging diversity, team building.
Results-Driven	Accountability, customer service, decisiveness, entrepreneurship, problem solving, technical credibility.
Business Acumen	Financial management, health care systems management, human capital management, technology management.
Building Coalitions	Partnering and relationship building, influencing/negotiating, political savvy.
Performance Management	Building performance culture, differentiating and facilitating performance, goal setting.
Fundamental Competencies	Continual learning, integrity and honesty, interpersonal skills, oral communication, public service motivation, written communication.

Warden competencies are based on the SES Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) and competencies, but many of the original definitions have been modified to relate to the Warden position. Also, a new competency has been added that addresses Health Care Systems Management.

A 52-page document on the responsibilities of the Warden position and related competency assessment items is available at [http://sallyport.bop.gov/co/hrm/persdir/wses/Competency\\_Project/competency\\_assess\\_may2012.pdf](http://sallyport.bop.gov/co/hrm/persdir/wses/Competency_Project/competency_assess_may2012.pdf)

#### 4. BASIC PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

a. **Initial Assessment and Annual Updates.** The initial competency assessment is completed when the Warden or other eligible individual has worked for the direct supervisor at the current location for one year. Two assessments are completed: the Warden or other eligible individual self-assesses and the direct supervisor assesses the individual. The assessments must be completed within 30 days of the date when the one-year timeframe was met. If a new supervisor comes on board within 30 days of the one-year timeframe, the assessment is delayed until the individual has been supervised by that person for one year.

Subsequent assessments are completed in following years on the anniversary of the initial or most recent assessment. Assessments must be completed within 30 days of the anniversary date. If a new supervisor comes on board within 30 days of the anniversary date, the assessment is delayed until the individual has been supervised by that person for one year.

Section 5 describes how the competency assessment rating, or proficiency level, is determined.

b. **Assessment Feedback.** The direct supervisor and the individual being rated review the Competency Assessment results together and agree on the learning efforts needed to improve proficiency. A newly developed Learning Program for Current Wardens will assist with these efforts.

Discussion is encouraged in cases where the individual being rated disagrees with a proficiency rating assigned by the direct supervisor. At the supervisor's discretion, the original rating may be changed. Change(s) must be entered within 30 days of the date the assessment was conducted.

c. **BOP-Learn.** The Competency Assessment, available in BOP-Learn, contains a detailed definition for each competency, the six Proficiency Levels, the definitions for each level, and Proficiency Level Illustrations. Individuals participating in competency assessments use BOP-Learn to complete the assessments, retrieve the results, record the learning plan, and track learning plan accomplishments.

The Competency Assessment in BOP-Learn is maintained by the Workforce Systems and Evaluation Section (WSES), Personnel and Staff Development Branch, Human Resource Management Division, Central Office.

## **5. DETERMINING THE COMPETENCY PROFICIENCY LEVEL**

There are six proficiency levels:

- Level 1 – No proficiency demonstrated.
- Level 2 – Awareness.
- Level 3 – Basic.
- Level 4 – Intermediate.
- Level 5 – Advanced.
- Level 6 – Expert.

The competency assessment contains three sets of proficiency level ratings: the individual's self-assessment, the direct supervisor's ratings, and the pre-assigned desired level of proficiency for each competency. Note that the Executive Staff identified the desired level of proficiency for each competency; those ratings are pre-loaded in BOP-Learn.

The following two criteria guided the Executive Staff's establishment of the desired proficiency levels. They should also guide the individual's self-assessment and the direct supervisors' assessments.

- Level of difficulty of the situations in which the individual applies the competency.
- Level of guidance needed.

For the self-assessment and direct supervisor ratings, a particular proficiency level is assigned if the individual's skill in the competency meets *both* criteria – level of difficulty of the situation *and* level of guidance needed. If one but not the other is met, the individual is assigned to the lower proficiency level. To assist in the rating determination, the Proficiency Level Illustrations provide examples of the skills required for each level.

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Here are three examples of how a Proficiency Level would be assigned for the Resilience competency.

- Example 1: If an individual exhibits resilience in difficult situations and requires frequent guidance, he/she is assigned a Proficiency Level of “Basic,” not “Intermediate.”
- Example 2: If an individual demonstrates resilience in somewhat difficult situations and generally requires little or no guidance, he/she is assigned a Proficiency Level of “Basic,” not “Advanced.”
- Example 3: If an individual shows resilience in considerably difficult situations and generally requires little or no guidance, he/she is assigned a Proficiency Level of “Advanced.”

<b>Competency: Resilience</b>	
<b>Proficiency Level</b>	<b>Proficiency Level Definition</b>
Level 1 – No proficiency demonstrated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lack of proficiency in this competency is detrimental to the organization</li> </ul>
Level 2 – Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Applies the competency in the simplest situations</li> <li>■ Requires close and extensive guidance</li> </ul>
Level 3 – Basic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations</li> <li>■ Requires frequent guidance</li> </ul>
Level 4 – Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Applies the competency in difficult situations</li> <li>■ Requires occasional guidance</li> </ul>
Level 5 – Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations</li> <li>■ Generally requires little or no guidance</li> </ul>
Level 6 – Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations</li> <li>■ Serves as a key resource and advises others</li> </ul>

## 6. ASSESSMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **Warden and Other Eligible Individual Responsibilities.** Individuals receive a BOP-Learn-generated email informing them that it is time to self-assess their competencies via the Competency Assessment in BOP-Learn. Individuals assign the level of proficiency they believe they possess in each competency at the time of the assessment; in particular, the skills they relied on during the past 12 months.

b. **Direct Supervisor Responsibilities.** Direct supervisors receive a BOP-Learn-generated email informing them that it is time to complete a Competency Assessment for a particular person. This task may not be delegated to others. For each competency, the direct supervisor assigns a proficiency level rating. Direct supervisors should consider the skills that individuals exhibited during the past 12 months when assigning ratings.

c. **Joint Responsibilities.** The direct supervisor and individuals being rated can access Competency Assessment results in BOP-Learn, including:

- The assessed level of proficiency in the 32 leadership and management competencies.
- The gaps, if any, between desired and assessed levels of proficiency.
- The gaps, if any, between the individual's self-assessment and the direct supervisor's assessment of proficiency.

d. **Contesting Competency Assessment Results.** Wardens and other individuals eligible to be selected to a Warden position can contest the direct supervisor's assessment by following procedures in Department of Justice Order 1200.1, Chapter 3-2.

## **7. RELATIONSHIP TO THE BOP'S PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROGRAM**

Individuals eligible to be selected to a Warden position are evaluated under the Performance Work Plan (PWP). The structure of the PWP requires that judgments of performance be made in terms of specific performance measures identified at the beginning of the rating period. Performance measures are particular functions or tasks that must be accomplished in support of a particular objective, or goal, that must be met during the PWP rating period. PWP procedures specifically state that performance is evaluated based on actual work accomplishments of the employee, not on personality traits or other judgments made by the supervisor.

Since the competency assessment produces ratings of skill proficiency, not work accomplishments, the assessment results cannot contribute to the PWP rating. Do not assume that a PWP rating and a rating for a particular competency or set of competencies must be comparable.

For example, an individual may receive an Outstanding rating in the People/Workforce PWP element and an Intermediate competency assessment rating in the conflict management competency. These ratings may not necessarily be contradictory. The individual earned an Outstanding PWP performance appraisal rating because he/she successfully accomplished the required performance measures. However, the competency proficiency level exhibited in accomplishing those measures was at the Intermediate level; the individual operated with little or no guidance but the situations in which he/she operated were difficult situations, not considerably or exceptionally difficult. (Refer to Section 5 for the criteria to determine the competency proficiency level.) It is important to be aware of the criteria used to produce the competency assessment ratings.

## **8. RELATIONSHIP TO THE WARDEN SELECTION PROCESS**

Competency assessment results, along with other information, are considered when the Executive Staff is filling a Warden vacancy. As with all selection decisions, the intent is to fill a position with an individual who will be successful in that position. It is to the advantage of the agency to select individuals with the necessary skills and experience, and to the advantage of the individual to be selected for a position where his/her proficiency makes it highly likely that he/she will be successful.

The goal of the BOP's Management Preference Profile System is to ensure that candidates have the opportunity to present as complete a portfolio as possible about their talents, accomplishments, and location preferences. Competency assessment results will be one more piece of information in the candidate's portfolio. The following information describes the three types of Warden selection and introduces the person-position match structured decision process that the Executive Staff uses when filling a Warden position.

- a. **Initial Warden Selection.** The determination of the Management Selection System (MSS) best qualified (BQ) candidates for the GS-15 Warden position remains the same. The competency assessment results of these individuals may be examined using the person-position match structured decision process (Section 9) when a Warden vacancy is being filled.
- b. **SES Warden Selection.** The SES selection process remains unchanged. The competency assessment results of the individuals selected into the SES may be examined using the person-position match structured decision process (Section 9) when a Warden vacancy is being filled.
- c. **Warden Reassignment.** Individuals who are currently Wardens and non-Warden GS-15 or SES employees have already been selected using the appropriate qualification standard. The competency assessment results of Warden-eligible individuals may be examined using the person-position match structured decision process (Section 9) when a Warden vacancy is being filled.

## 9. THE PERSON-POSITION MATCH STRUCTURED DECISION PROCESS

The purpose of the process is to optimize the person-position match when the Executive Staff is filling a Warden position. The process includes the following seven steps:

- The Executive Staff identify the challenges and priority areas for the institution with the Warden vacancy.
- The Executive Staff identify the leadership strengths, or competencies, needed to meet the institution challenges and priority areas.
- Individuals who possess the needed competencies are identified via an analytic tool that scans the competency assessment results<sup>1</sup>.
- The Executive Staff review the Management Preference Profile (MPP) of the identified individuals as well as other individuals being considered for the position.
- The Director selects an individual to fill the Warden position.
- The selection decision is recorded and the selectees posted on Sallyport.
- At employees' request, BQ and reassignment candidates who were not selected are provided with feedback/coaching, including identification of possible developmental opportunities.

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<sup>1</sup> This step produces a list of all employees in the following categories: (1) Best qualified (BQ) candidates for the GS-15 Warden position, (2) individuals selected into the SES, and (3) current Wardens and other individuals eligible to be selected to a Warden position. The competency assessment results are provided for those who have an assessment on file.

## 10. AGENCY ACA ACCREDITATION PROVISIONS

None.

### REFERENCES

#### *Program Statements*

P3000.03 Human Resource Management Manual (12/19/2007)

P3040.04 Management Preference Profile System (11/6/2008)

PWP Instructions (available at HRM Division Home Page, Personnel and Staff Development, SERS, Performance Work Plans)

#### *Records Retention Requirements*

Requirements and retention guidance for records and information applicable to this program are available in the Records and Information Disposition Schedule (RIDS) on Sallyport.