

# Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Policy

**Document ID:** HR-EMP-010 **Effective Date:** January 1, 2024 **Last Reviewed:** March 2024 **Owner:** Human Resources **Applies To:** All Employees

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## Policy Statement

NovaTech is committed to helping employees succeed in their roles. When performance falls below expectations, we provide structured support through a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). This policy outlines the PIP process, expectations, and support available.

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## Purpose

The Performance Improvement Plan is designed to:

- Clearly communicate performance gaps
- Provide specific, measurable improvement goals
- Offer support and resources for improvement
- Document the improvement process
- Create a path back to good standing

A PIP is **not** a precursor to termination—it's an opportunity for genuine improvement with manager support.

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## When a PIP is Appropriate

### Appropriate Use Cases

- Consistent failure to meet performance expectations
- Pattern of missed deadlines or deliverables
- Quality of work below role requirements
- Failure to meet goals after informal coaching
- Behavioral issues affecting team performance

### **Not Appropriate For**

- First-time performance concerns (use coaching first)
  - Issues requiring immediate action (safety, ethics)
  - Situations better addressed by role change
  - External factors beyond employee control
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## **PIP Process**

### **Step 1: Pre-PIP Assessment**

#### **Manager responsibilities:**

1. **Document concerns** with specific examples
2. **Review history** of feedback and coaching
3. **Consult HR Business Partner** before initiating
4. **Consider alternatives** (training, role adjustment)
5. **Prepare improvement plan** draft

### **Step 2: PIP Meeting**

**Participants:** Employee, Manager, HR Representative

#### **Meeting agenda:**

1. Explain purpose of PIP
2. Review specific performance concerns
3. Present improvement plan and goals
4. Discuss support and resources
5. Answer employee questions
6. Set check-in schedule
7. Employee acknowledgment (not agreement)

### **Step 3: Active PIP Period**

**Duration:** Typically 30-60 days

#### **During this period:**

- Weekly 1:1 meetings with manager
- Documented progress reviews
- Access to additional training/resources
- HR check-ins at midpoint

## Step 4: PIP Conclusion

### Possible outcomes:

1. **Successful completion** - Return to good standing
  2. **Extension** - Additional time if progress shown
  3. **Role change** - If skills better suited elsewhere
  4. **Employment separation** - If goals not met
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## PIP Document Components

### Required Elements

#### PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Employee Name: [Name]  
Position: [Title]  
Department: [Department]  
Manager: [Manager Name]  
HR Partner: [HR Name]  
PIP Start Date: [Date]  
PIP End Date: [Date]

#### PERFORMANCE CONCERNS

[Specific, documented examples]

#### IMPROVEMENT GOALS

[SMART goals - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound]

#### SUCCESS CRITERIA

[Clear metrics for successful completion]

#### SUPPORT PROVIDED

[Training, resources, coaching]

#### CHECK-IN SCHEDULE

[Weekly meeting dates]

#### CONSEQUENCES

[Outcome if goals not met]

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Manager Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
HR Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Employee Rights During PIP**

### **Guaranteed Rights**

- Clear communication of expectations
- Regular feedback on progress
- Access to HR representative
- Reasonable resources for improvement
- Response to concerns in writing
- Continued benefits during PIP period

### **What Employees Can Do**

- Ask clarifying questions
  - Request additional support
  - Document their perspective
  - Seek HR guidance confidentially
  - Focus on improvement without fear
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## **Manager Responsibilities**

### **Before PIP**

- ☐ Document performance concerns thoroughly
- ☐ Provide prior informal feedback
- ☐ Consult with HR Business Partner
- ☐ Prepare specific, achievable goals
- ☐ Schedule PIP meeting with HR present

### **During PIP**

- ☐ Meet weekly for progress review
- ☐ Document all check-in conversations
- ☐ Provide timely, specific feedback

- ☐ Remove barriers to improvement
- ☐ Recognize progress made
- ☐ Maintain professional relationship

#### **After PIP**

- ☐ Conduct formal conclusion meeting
- ☐ Document outcome
- ☐ If successful: acknowledge and support
- ☐ If unsuccessful: follow separation process

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### **HR Responsibilities**

#### **Support Functions**

- Review PIP documentation before initiation
- Attend PIP initiation meeting
- Provide employee support resources
- Conduct midpoint check-in with employee
- Ensure fair and consistent process
- Document all PIP-related communications

#### **Compliance**

- Ensure non-discriminatory application
- Review for legal considerations
- Maintain confidential records
- Track PIP outcomes for patterns

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### **Support Resources**

#### **For Employees on PIP**

Resource	Description
HR Business Partner	Confidential support and guidance
Employee Assistance Program	Counseling and stress management
Learning & Development	Skill-building resources

Resource	Description
Internal mentorship	Peer support (if appropriate)
External coaching	Available for certain roles

### **For Managers**

Resource	Description
HR Business Partner	Process guidance and documentation
Manager training	Difficult conversations workshop
Templates	PIP document templates
Legal review	For complex situations

## **Timeline Guidelines**

### **Standard PIP: 30 Days**

Appropriate for: - Clear, measurable goals - Skills that can be demonstrated quickly - Behavioral improvements

### **Extended PIP: 60 Days**

Appropriate for: - Complex skill development - Multiple improvement areas - Project-based measurement

### **Maximum Duration: 90 Days**

Extensions beyond 60 days require: - VP approval - HR review - Documented progress toward goals

## **Documentation Requirements**

### **Manager Documentation**

All of the following must be documented:

1. Pre-PIP coaching conversations
2. PIP document with signatures
3. Weekly check-in notes
4. Progress assessments
5. Final outcome determination

## **Storage**

- PIP documents stored in HRIS (Workday)
  - Access limited to: Employee, Manager, HR, Legal
  - Retention: 5 years after PIP conclusion
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## **Post-PIP Guidelines**

### **Successful Completion**

- Formal acknowledgment from manager
- PIP closed in HRIS
- No negative impact on future reviews if performance maintained
- Manager continues regular 1:1 support
- Eligible for normal merit and promotion processes

### **Unsuccessful Completion**

- Follow separation procedures (HR-EMP-015)
  - Final pay and benefits per policy
  - Exit interview conducted
  - References limited to employment verification
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## **Legal Considerations**

### **Non-Discrimination**

PIPs must be applied consistently regardless of: - Protected class status - Recent protected activity (leave, complaints) - Tenure or level

## Documentation Standards

All PIP documentation should be: - Factual and objective - Free of subjective characterizations - Focused on job-related performance - Reviewed by HR before delivery

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## Exceptions

### Situations Requiring Different Approach

Situation	Alternative Process
Safety violation	Immediate suspension/investigation
Ethics breach	Conduct investigation (HR-EMP-012)
Executive level	Board/CEO involvement
New hire (< 90 days)	Probation process

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## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Does a PIP always lead to termination?** A: No. Many employees successfully complete PIPs and return to good standing. The goal is genuine improvement.

**Q: Will a PIP affect my future at NovaTech?** A: A successfully completed PIP, with sustained performance, should not negatively impact your career trajectory.

**Q: Can I have someone with me in PIP meetings?** A: An HR representative will be present. You may also request to bring a support person (colleague, not legal counsel) with HR approval.

**Q: What if I disagree with the PIP?** A: You can document your perspective in writing and discuss concerns with HR. Signing the PIP acknowledges receipt, not agreement.

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## Contact

- **HR Business Partners:** hrbp@novatech.com
- **Employee Relations:** er@novatech.com
- **Employee Assistance Program:** 1-800-XXX-XXXX

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*Related Documents: Performance Management (HR-EMP-005), Employee Handbook (HR-GEN-001), Separation Procedures (HR-EMP-015)*