ePAR: Electronic Performance Assessment Review Quick Start Guide
Table of Contents

Introduction

This Guide will provide an overview of key aspects of the performance evaluation tool and processes used to assess the job performance of Career Service employees (classified employees). This evaluation tool is known as the electronic Performance Appraisal Review (ePAR).

Employees in this evaluation cohort are covered by the CWA, IFPTE, PBA or FOP collective bargaining agreements and are subject to the rules and regulations of the State of New Jersey Civil Service Commission (CSC).

The evaluation tool is an online format which resides on the State's myNewJersey portal and permits all participants in the process the opportunity to access the tool based on their role in the process, as well to communicate electronically within the system.

Face-to-face communication between the employee and supervisor is an important aspect of each section of the evaluation process.

Participant Roles in the Process

Ratee   The employee being evaluated; the focus of the process.

Rater   The immediate supervisor of the Ratee; She/he initiates the process, conducts the evaluation and provides honest and constructive feedback to the Ratee.

Reviewer   She/he is the immediate supervisor of the Rater and performs a review of the document, provides comments for the record if applicable, and signs all evaluations conducted by the Rater.

Review Timeframes

The evaluation cycle is conducted on the fiscal year cycle beginning July 1st of each year and concluding on June 30th of the following year. There are three distinct timeframes during the evaluation cycle in which the Ratee and Rater meet formally.

The initial meeting between the Rater and Ratee should occur in the first month of the evaluation cycle to discuss performance expectations. The second meeting should occur at the six month or mid-point of the evaluation cycle, called the Interim Review. The Ratee is evaluated at this stage and rated against standardized Job Factors or competencies. The last formal meeting within the cycle should be held in order to the conduct the Final Review, which assesses and rates the employee's performance over the entire twelve month evaluation period.

Evaluation Sections

The Rater initiates each section of the evaluation process.

1. Job Expectations contains fields for Major Goals and Major Job Responsibilities and Essential Criteria for Successful Accomplishments;

2. An Interim Review of performance will occur at the six-month period and includes justification and development plan sections to support overall ratings; and

3. The Final Review of performance which encompasses the entire evaluation timeframe will occur in the last month of the evaluation cycle.

Performance Rating Scales

The ePAR system automatically computes the numerical ratings which the Rater enters at the Interim and Final evaluation points. The three tier ratings are:

1 = **Unsuccessful** - Ratee failed to achieve most of the essential criteria for the job responsibilities outlined.

2 = **Satisfactory** – Ratee met and occasionally exceeded essential criteria.

3 = **Exceptional** – Ratee significantly exceeded essential criteria consistently in sustained job performance.

With the use of the ePAR system the employee evaluation process is automated to include:

Rater	Rater, Ratee & Reviewer	Rater & Ratee
View displays all employees who must be evaluated.	Rating cycle due dates visible to all participants in the process.	View up to date status on progress toward completion at each phase of the evaluation process.
Automated tabulation of Interim and Final rating scores. Job Expectations are automatically rolled over to the next evaluation cycle with editing capabilities.	Electronic document routing and "signatures" at each phase in the process. Automated email notification at each phase when action is required by a participant.	Access to previous evaluations conducted within the ePAR system under the All Reviews tab.
Confidential communication between Rater and Reviewer within the system using Feedback tool.	Option to print the document at any point in the process or download in PDF format.	Access to Significant Events Form throughout the entire evaluation cycle. The process must be initiated by the Rater.

Employees who are subject to the evaluation process (Ratees) will have access to their individual evaluation and dashboard. Ratees will:

- see information related to the current rating cycle;
- be able to track the status of progress throughout the various stages of the evaluation cycle; and
- receive electronic notification when they are required to review and electronically sign Job Expectations, Interim and Final Evaluations.

The Rater's supervisor, called the Reviewer in the ePAR process, will also access his/her own dashboard to:

- review the completed document for consistency;
- communicate confidentially with the Rater within the system;
- document comments on the Ratee's ePAR, if applicable; and
- electronically sign the ePAR at each stage of the process.

Getting Started

To begin the process Raters, Ratees and Reviewers must initially register to access the myNewJersey Portal page on the State's website where ePAR resides.

Each participant in the process has a unique employee ID generated electronically by the Civil Service Commission and provided by HR, which is required to register. This ID is different from an employee's Banner ID. Registration to access the myNewJersey portal is a one-time process. Thereafter, all participants in the process must use their established log on and password to access ePAR.

Raters and Reviewers who are Higher Education Managers or supervisors within the AFT bargaining unit are not in the State's personnel information system and are assigned an identification number referred to as a non-state identification number.

Ratees with career service titles including those who also serve in the role of Rater will have a unique employee ID assigned by the Civil Service Commission.
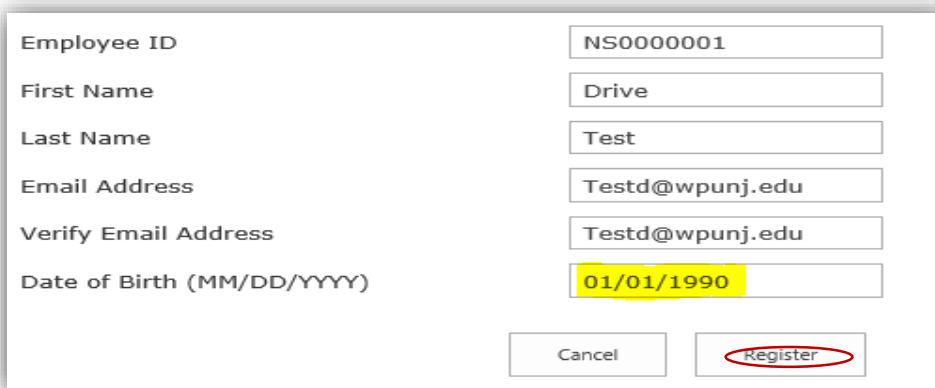
Registration Instructions for Raters Using a Non-State ID Number

To create an account on myNewJersey which permits access to ePAR, follow the instructions below using the ID number provided by the Office of Human Resources.

1. Go to:

https://wwwnet1.state.nj.us/NJ/NJ_ePar_Reg/SelfRegistration.aspx

- Enter the ID number provided to you;

- Enter your first and last name in the designated fields;

- Input your WP email address;

- Enter **01/01/1990** in the Date of Birth field (this is standard, regardless of your actual date of birth); and

- Click the "Register" button.

Employee ID	NS0000001
First Name	Drive
Last Name	Test
Email Address	Testd@wpunj.edu
Verify Email Address	Testd@wpunj.edu
Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)	01/01/1990

Cancel   Register

2. Next you will be asked if you have a myNewJersey Log on ID. If you are a Department Chairperson, Librarian, Professional Staff member or Higher Education Manager, the answer to that question will be "No."

Link ePAR to Your myNewJersey Account
Do you have a myNewJersey Logon ID?

○ Yes
⦿ No

3. Click "Next" to continue the registration process to create a myNewJersey account. In this step you will be asked to create a unique ID and password using the parameters listed below. **Do not use your WP log on Credentials.**

- Log on IDs can only contain letters, numbers and the following four characters: @ - *
  _ ; and
- Passwords must be at least 8 characters long, chosen from at least three of these groups: lowercase letters, uppercase letters, digits, and other characters (except space, quotes, <, >, & and \).

When all the requisite information has been entered, select the "Create myNewJersey Account" tab and you will be brought to the ePAR link on the myNewJersey portal.

The example below depicts the view of the ePAR link on the myNewJersey portal home page. Directly beneath the ePAR link will be another link to the ePAR instruction manual which will be accessible to all participants in the process.

4. To ensure the success of the registration process, close all browsers and navigate to http://nj.gov.

- Select the log in tab and enter your log on ID and Password to access the myNewJersey portal.

- Once you have re-entered the portal, click on the ePAR link to view the current Rating Cycle information and the names of employees you are required to evaluate as a Rater under the tab "My Ratees."

Please note that all Raters will not have a Reviewer role. All participant's view include information depicting the current rating cycle. An example is provide below for your reference.

Rating Year 2016(07/01/2015 to 06/30/2016)

2016 Rating Cycle Due Dates

☐ Job Expectations due by July 31, 2015

☐ Interim Review due by December 31, 2015

☐ Final Review due by June 30, 2016

Registration Instructions for Ratees and Raters in Career Service Titles

 To create an account on the myNewJersey portal which permits Ratees and supervisors with the dual role of Rater/Ratee to access ePAR, follow the instructions below using the ID number provided by the Office of Human Resources.
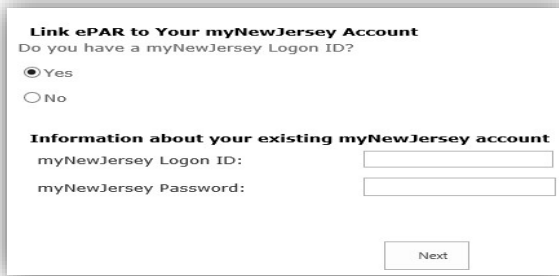
1. To begin the process go to:

https://wwwnet1.state.nj.us/NJ/NJ_ePar_Reg/SelfRegistration.aspx

- Enter the ID number provided;
- Enter your first and last name in the designated fields;
- Input your WP email address;
- Enter your Date of Birth; and
- Click the "Register" button.

Employee ID	000000001
First Name	Joe
Last Name	Jones
Email Address	jonesj@wpunj.edu
Verify Email Address	jonesj@wpunj.edu
Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)	05/11/1956

Cancel   Register

2. Next you will be asked if you have a myNewJersey Log on ID.

Career service (classified) employees who currently access their pension and health benefits information through the State's website have a myNewJersey username and password and must answer "Yes" to this question.

Link ePAR to Your myNewJersey Account
Do you have a myNewJersey Logon ID?
◉ Yes
○ No

Information about your existing myNewJersey account
myNewJersey Logon ID: [_____]
myNewJersey Password: [_____]

[Next]

Upon entering your existing myNewJersey log on ID and password click "Next" and the system will bring you to the ePAR link on the myNewJersey portal. **Skip to paragraph number 4 on the following page for next steps in the process**.

3. If you currently **do not** have a myNewJersey log on ID, select no from the available options and click "Next."

Link ePAR to Your myNewJersey Account
Do you have a myNewJersey Logon ID?
○ Yes
◉ No

Continue the registration process to create a myNewJersey account by creating a unique log on ID and password using the parameters listed below. **The newly created log on ID and password should not be your WP log on Credentials.**

- Log on IDs can only contain letters, numbers and the following four characters: @ - *. ;
- Passwords must be at least 8 characters long, chosen from at least three of these groups: lowercase letters, uppercase letters, digits, and other characters (except space, quotes, <, >, & and \);
- The email address for log on ID or password recovery should be your WP email address; and
- Retain the ID and password created for future reference.

After you have entered all the requisite information, select the "Create myNewJersey Account" tab and you will be brought to the ePAR link on the myNewJersey portal.

4. The example below depicts the view of the ePAR link on the myNewJersey portal home page. Directly beneath the ePAR link will be another link to the ePAR instruction manual which will be accessible to all participants in the process.

 To ensure the success of the registration process, close all browsers and navigate to http://nj.gov.

- Select the log in tab and enter your Login ID and Password to access the myNewJersey portal.
- With the exception of the Login ID you are able to change information through the "Change Profile Link" on the myNewJersey home page anytime you are logged into myNewJersey.

Once you have re-entered the portal, click on the ePAR link to view the current Rating Cycle information and the status of your individual evaluation process, if you are the employee (Ratee) being evaluated.

If you are the supervisor (Rater) conducting the evaluation, your view should include information for all the career service (classified) employees whose performance you are required to evaluate.

System Time Out and Character Limitations

When entering information into the ePAR system please use the **Save Draft** feature frequently as the system has automated time out features which may cause you to lose data entered if it is not saved in a timely manner. Specifically, the system will time out after thirty (30) minutes of inactivity. In addition the ePAR and myNewJersey portal session times out after a maximum of two (2) hours.

There is a maximum of two thousand (2000) characters including spaces permitted for data entry fields such as comments, job responsibilities and essential criteria. The system allows a maximum of five thousand (5000) characters including spaces for data entry in the Justification and Development fields. Description of the incident which supports the completion of the Significant Event fact sheet is limited to five hundred (500) characters including spaces.

Creating and Finalizing Job Expectations

From the Dashboard, the **Rater** selects an employee's name from the listing by clicking on it.

➢ Type or cut and paste information into the Major Goals of the Department and the Major Goals of the Ratee fields.

➢ Under Major Responsibilities and Essential Criteria for Successful Accomplishments, click **+add new** and a new text box will appear.

➢ Type or cut and paste information into the Job Responsibility and Essential Criteria fields.

➢ Click **+add new** for each additional Job Responsibility and Essential Criteria fields needed.

➢ Use the **Save Draft** button to save information during the data entry process.

➢ Once Job Expectations are finalized, click **Submit**. Job Expectations will be shared with the Ratee.

➢ All participants in the process can print the document in **Shared** or **Complete** status.

Next, the Rater must schedule the **Face-to-Face meeting** with the Ratee to discuss the Job Expectations.

At the conclusion of the meeting the Rater must **Confirm** in the system that the meeting was held.

The **Ratee** will receive a system-generated email prompting him/her to review and sign the document. The Ratee can also add comments in the field provided which becomes a permanent part of the official record.

Next, the **Rater** will be prompted by a system-generated email to access the system to acknowledge that the Ratee's comments, if any, have been noted by checking the appropriate box and electronically signing the document.

In addition to signing the document, the **Rater** can also add comments to the document in the field provided, which becomes a permanent part of the official record. In the event the Ratee refuses to sign the ePAR, the Rater can also certify the Ratee's refusal to sign the document.

The process now moves to the **Reviewer** who will be notified by a system generated email that evaluations are ready for review and electronic signature.

From the Dashboard, she/he will select the **employee** by clicking on **Pending Review** in the **Requested Feedback and Reviews** field on the form.

Requested Feedback and Reviews		
Employee Name	**Feedback Requested**	**Pending Review**
GAMBINO, JOSEPH A [000331015]	NA	Pending Review
MIGLIACCIO, DEANNA L [000328591]	NA	Pending Review

The **Reviewer** then clicks on the **Sign** icon to complete the process.
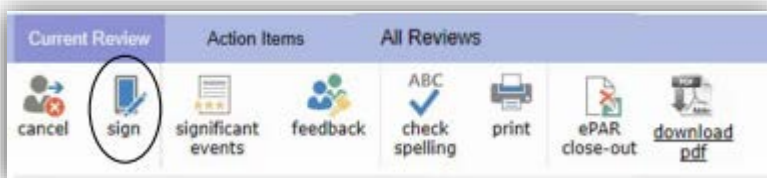
A final system-generated email will be sent to the Rater indicating that the Reviewer has reviewed and signed the evaluation.

At this point the Job Expectations section of the evaluation is complete. Each participant in the process can print or download the document. The information remains in the system for completion of the Interim and Final Review sections of the evaluation. Do not submit paper copies of the document to HR. Information contained in the evaluation will be accessed by HR through various reporting tools and discussion and guidance on performance issues and documentation can be provided by the Director of HR.

Interim and Final Reviews

To Access the system go **to WP Connect** under the **Employee** tab go to **Appraisals** and select **ePAR myNewJersey**. Once on the Log on page use the Log on ID and password you created initially.

If you have forgotten either of those passwords use the appropriate Forgot your Id or Password hyperlink found on the log on page. Civil Service Commission IT personnel will provide information on how to reset or change the applicable field.

To begin the Interim or Final Review, the **Rater** will select an employee name to begin the process and click on the applicable evaluation section. For illustrative purposes this example will describe the process for conducting the Interim Review. However, this process will be replicated to conduct the Final Review.

Click the Interim Ratings tab, then enter numerical ratings for each Job Factor based on the numeric ratings of 1, 2 or 3 and their corresponding definitions which are displayed in the system.

- Next, click the **Compute Rating** button at the top of the page. The **Compute Rating** icon calculates performance factor ratings to determine Interim and Final Evaluations.

- Click **Next** to proceed to the Justification and Development Plan section.

- Complete the Justification and Development Plan which are required fields and click **Save Draft** if you wish to discuss the Justification and Development Plan with the Reviewer prior to sharing with the Ratee, or **Submit** to immediately share with the Ratee.

- The Ratee will be notified that the document can now be viewed. Next schedule the **Face-to-Face meeting** to discuss the evaluation.

  Conduct the **Face-to-Face meeting** and then **Confirm** that the meeting was held.

-
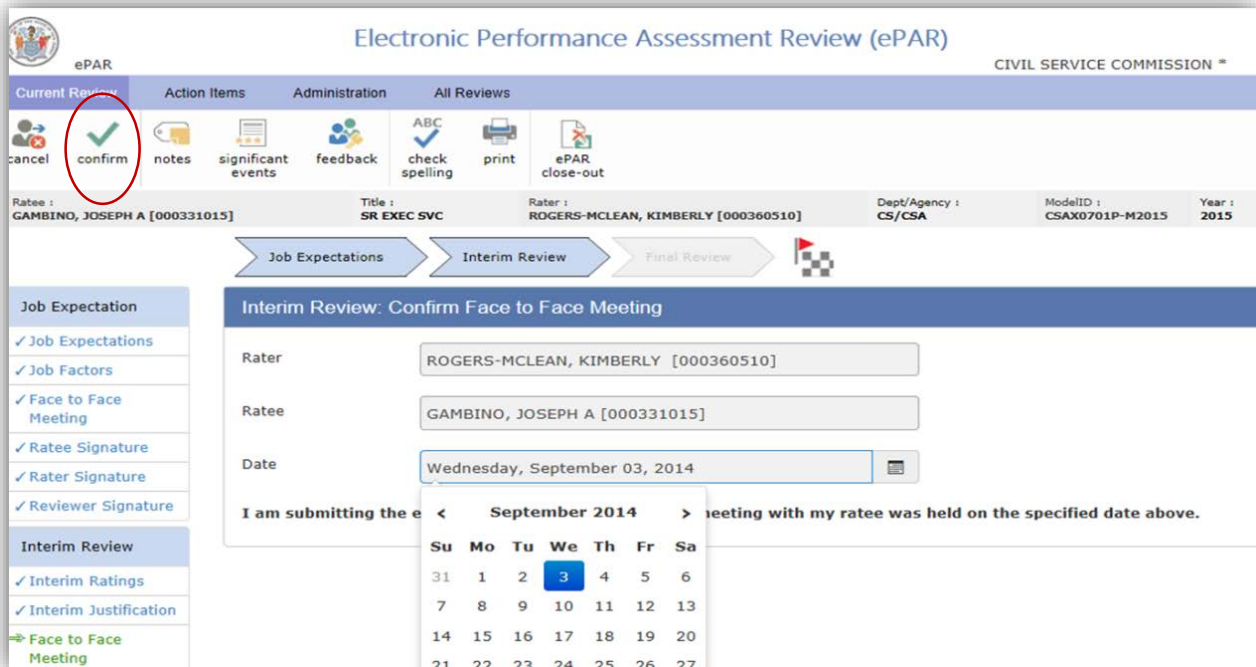
- The **Ratee** will be notified that the evaluation can be reviewed again and signed electronically.

- Once signed by the Ratee, the **Rater** will re-enter the system and access the Ratee's evaluation. The Rater must now place a check mark in the box acknowledging that the Ratee's comments, if any, are noted. The **Rater** will scroll to the top of the screen and click the **Sign** icon.

- The **Reviewer** will then be notified by system generated email that evaluations are ready for review and electronic signature.

- From the Dashboard, the **Reviewer** will select the **employee** by clicking on **Pending Review** in the **Requested Feedback and Reviews** section and add comments as appropriate. The Reviewer will then click on the **Sign** icon to complete the process.

Raters and Ratees can now print full copies of the evaluation. An electronic copy of the document is maintained under the tab All Reviews. Do not submit hard copies of the evaluation to HR. HR will access information through various reporting tools and discussion and guidance on performance issues and documentation can be provided by the Director of HR.

The process outlined above must be repeated to conduct the Final Evaluation.

Note: Job Expectations created in the current rating cycle will be rolled over into the next evaluation cycle. The Expectations can be edited or revised and new Ratee goals should be established.

Unsatisfactory Rating at Final Review

Should a Ratee receive an overall rating of Unsatisfactory in the Final Review, the Rater must prepare a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The PIP is prepared after the Reviewer signs the evaluation and must contain specific performance areas needing improvement and measurable indicators for satisfactory improvement. The Rater must contact HR for guidance in this process.
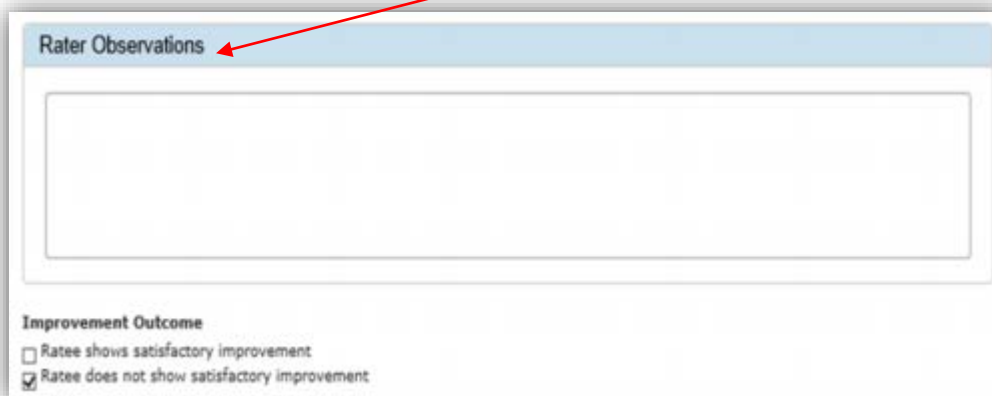

Raters must meet at least once per month with the Ratee to discuss progress toward performance improvement and document those meetings outside the ePAR tool.

Three (3) months after the implementation of the PIP, the Rater must document the Ratee's progress in the ePAR system and verify the process outcome by checking one of two boxes "Ratee shows satisfactory improvement" or "Ratee does not show satisfactory improvement." Information from the monthly meetings should be included in the Rater's Observations field to support the Rater's position.

A Reviewer signature is not required in this process.

The PIP process can continue into the new rating cycle if no measurable improvement has been achieved. Contact HR for additional guidance.

Tools

The ePAR system offers the Rater and Reviewer resources to facilitate the evaluation process. The key features are Notes, Significant Events and Feedback in addition to Check Spelling and Print functions.

Notes appear only on the Rater's screen and allows the Rater to maintain notes on performance during the rating cycle specific to each Ratee. These notes do not become part of the Ratee's ePAR record and will automatically be deleted at the end of the rating cycle. To add a note select the **Notes** icon then the **New** icon. After the information has been entered click the **Save** icon.
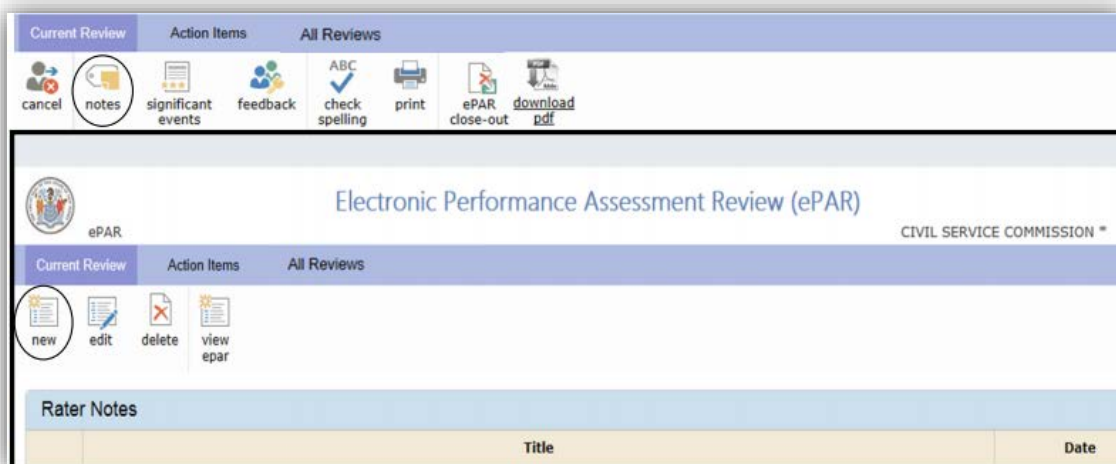
Significant Events are noteworthy positive or negative events which occur during the rating cycle and are included in the formal ePAR record. The icon can be found throughout each phase of the process and a Significant Event should be documented at the time of, or within a reasonable timeframe of, its occurrence. Additionally, this feature can be used to add changes to an ePAR that has already been signed by the Ratee.

Select the employee for whom the event must be documented and click on the Significant Events icon to display the fact sheet. Next select the **New** icon which will display the page where the event information will be entered.

After entering the data, the **Rater** must check the box which states "I verify this significant performance event as the Rater" and then click the **Save** icon. The system will generate an email to the Ratee indicating a Significant Event has been added to the ePAR.

The **Ratee** can now review the information and check the box which states "I verify the event." Next click the **Save** icon. This action will return the Ratee to the prior screen where she/he can enter comments and then sign the document.

If needed, the Rater can make changes to the Significant Event using the **Edit** icon.

The **Feedback** feature facilitates confidential communication between the Rater and Reviewer within the system. The Rater can request feedback from the Reviewer during all stages of the ePAR. It is recommended that the Rater requests feedback before submitting any information to the Ratee.
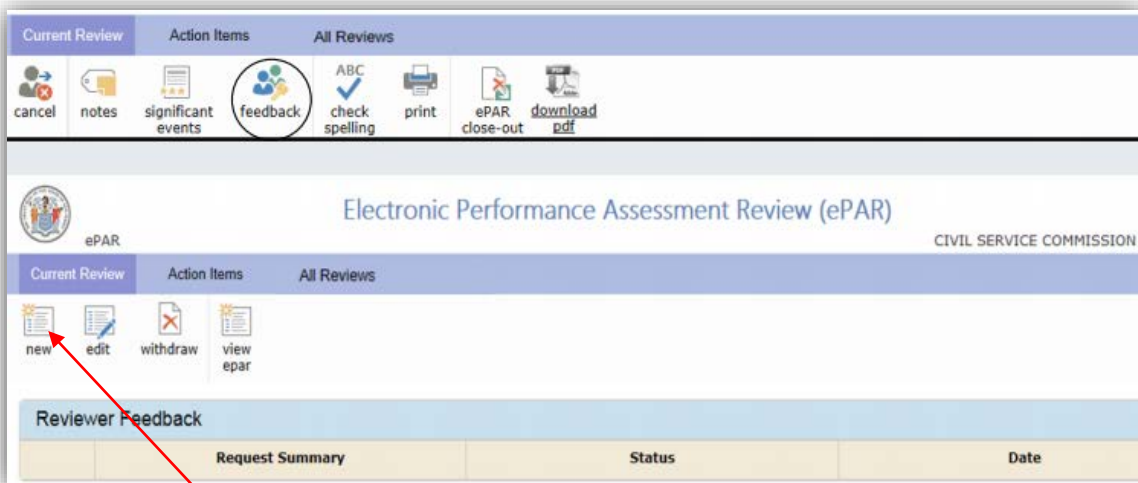
The **Rater** clicks on the **New** icon and the Request Reviewer Feedback page will appear. The Rater can now type in the request for feedback. After comments have been entered click **Save.** The document will then be routed to the Reviewer.

The Reviewer will access the feedback request through his or her dashboard which will display the Reviewer's Feedback Response page.
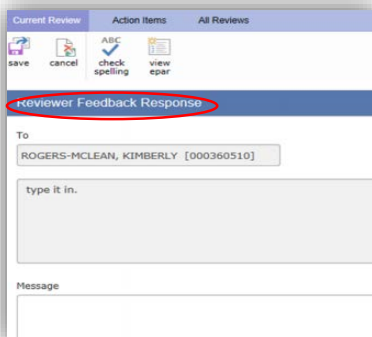
After the response is typed click **Save** and the response will be available for the Rater to view.

General Definitions of Elements in the ePAR Process

Process Buttons

Stage – Defines the part of the ePAR process that is due.

Progress – Details the elements of the Stage process pending in ePAR. For example, one might see in the Job Expectations section – Goal Setting, Face-to-Face Meeting, and Pending Ratee Signature.

Status – Defines what has happened in the Stage section. For example, Initiated - Progress has begun in ePAR; Not Initiated – nothing has begun; Draft- items are being worked on; Shared – ePAR has been sent to others for review; Complete - all parties have signed off.

Ribbon Buttons

Action Items –Displays items that require attention – It displays title of action, message, action triggers and the creation date.

All Reviews – Displays ePAR reviews for self and employees in reporting lines.

Cancel –Does not save changes made.

Check Spelling - Checks for spelling errors.

Compute Rating – Calculates performance factor ratings to determine Interim & Final evaluation.

Confirm – After the Face-to-Face meeting, the button finalizes job responsibilities assigned.

Current Review –Displays Dashboard that includes information such as current rating cycle, important dates, current ePAR for both self and employees, and requested feedback and reviews.

Edit – Allows Rater to make changes to the ePAR and also allows modification to any notes, significant events, Job Expectations, etc. in ePAR.

ePAR Close-out – The button is used to complete a "close-out" on an ePAR Review which occurs under certain conditions. The conditions include when the supervisor changes for a unit or when the employee changes supervisors without any title or appointing authority changes. The former supervisor completes the close-out.

Feedback – Rater can request feedback from the Reviewer during all stages of the ePAR. This button sends the request to Reviewer and prompts him/her to view the ePAR. If there are any issues, discrepancies or questions, the Feedback button should be used to initiate discussion. The comments are confidential between Rater and Reviewer.

New – Initiates any new action including a new job responsibility, significant event, notes, etc.

Notes – Appears only on the Rater's screen and allows one to keep track of notes during the rating cycle. Rater's notes are not part of the ePAR record and deletes automatically at the end of the cycle.

Print – Gives ability to print entire document or any individual section of the ePAR; may print when the document is in Shared or Complete Status. All parties have the ability to print.

Save Draft – Allows Rater to save an incomplete ePAR without sending it to any other parties. If desired, Rater may request feedback from Reviewer without notifying Ratee.

Sign – Initiates electronic signature acknowledging elements of the ePAR.

Submit – Allows Rater to share the ePAR and forward to all parties.

View ePAR – Allows parties to see ePAR up to the most recent completed stage.

Withdraw – Used in the Feedback section to allow the Rater to recall a request for feedback.

Other Resources and Frequently Asked Questions

For questions related to technical difficulties including log on or password issues contact ePAR by email at: ePARHELP@csc.nj.gov or by phone at 609-777-2225.

General questions can be addressed to HR at ext. 2887 or 2723.

ePAR User Guide

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why don't I see the ePAR icon on my NJ portal?

A: If you have more than one myNJ portal account, please check all to see if the icon appears on a different account. If this is unsuccessful or you only have one account, please click on this link to follow the instructions for self-registration. If you need assistance in regards to your employee number id number, please contact your Human Resources Office. https://wwwnet1.state.nj.us/NJ/NJ_ePar_Reg/SelfRegistration.aspx.

Q. I am having trouble seeing the ePAR on my computer.

A. The main supported browser for the ePAR application is Internet Explorer 9 running on Windows 7, anything lower is not supported.

 When these questions are asked, ePARHelp needs the following information along with a screenshot.

• Browser type and version

• PC operating system and version If you are using Internet Explorer 11 (I.E. 11), please contact your helpdesk to make sure it is a trusted site.

Q. The system seems to be stuck on "Working on it." How can I get it to move forward?

A: Try pressing "F5" to refresh the system.

Q. Why am I getting an error message when I try to save ePAR Job Expectations in Draft?

A. There are three reasons which may impact your ability to save in ePAR.

       1. Timing Issue: There are three distinct timeout scenarios for ePAR:

              a. Thirty (30) minutes of inactivity times a user out of myNJ.

              b. Two (2) Hours maximum myNJ session then a user is timed out of myNJ.

              c. Two (2) hour maximum session with ePAR and any other proxy'd application.

       2. Role Issue: Currently in order to successfully utilize the ePAR system, all three roles of Ratee,   Rater & Reviewer must be populated. If any one of the roles is blank, an ePAR cannot be done. The ePAR system will not let one move forward unless all three roles (Ratee, Rater and Reviewer) are populated.

Please contact HR to ensure that all roles are populated in the system.

       3. Orphan Issue: When saving a draft ePAR, information has to be entered into related sections before the document can be saved successfully. For example, Major Goals of the Agency and Major Goals of the Ratee are related fields. Both fields require text before the document can be saved (at least one character). In other words, you cannot leave one of the two related fields "orphaned."

 Another example of related fields are Job Responsibility 1 and Essential Criteria 1. If one section is started, the second related field also needs text to satisfy the Save Draft command. It doesn't need to be complete, only a minimum of one character is required.

Q. Can I make changes to the Job Expectations of the ePAR after it is signed?

A: No. Once it is signed by the Ratee, no changes can be made. You can use the Significant Event Sheet to document any after the fact amendments.

Any Questions not addressed above, please do the following and submit to
ePARHELP@csc.nj.gov

       1. Provide your name and employee identification number.

       2. Provide the date & time you were accessing the application.

       3. Provide the Operating System and Browser Version being used. (contact your helpdesk if you don't know the answer to these questions.)

       4. Was the problem on a particular page, navigating across all pages, or performing an action? Please provide details.

       5. If you observe a particular issue or error-please provide a screenshot and steps to reproduce the error if possible.