

# Probationary Period

## What is a probationary period?

The probationary period is the introductory phase of employment required for all new and rehired classified employees. JMU utilizes the probationary period to evaluate an employee's capabilities, work ethic, and overall performance. This provides supervisors with an opportunity to determine if the employee meets the position requirements and departmental values and objectives. The probationary period also provides employees an opportunity to acclimate to their new role, team dynamics, and departmental expectations. During the probationary period, either JMU or the employee may end the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause. JMU [Policy 1322](#) provides guidance on the probationary period for classified employees.



### How long is the probationary period?

Normally, the duration of the probationary period is twelve months; however, the probationary period may be extended up to six additional months when performance concerns exist. Additionally, probationary periods must be extended when an employee is on leave for more than 14 consecutive calendar days.



### How is performance evaluated during the probationary period?

The supervisor must complete the [Probationary Progress Review](#) at 3, 6, 9, and 12-month intervals. This form is used to record and review employee progress toward meeting established essential functions and performance expectations. Supervisors should document both positive progress toward fulfilling the responsibilities of the position along with areas where additional growth is needed.



### How is poor performance addressed during the probationary period?

Performance concerns must be documented using the Probationary Progress Review. If a rating of "Unsuccessful" is assigned, the supervisor must complete an Employee Development Plan to outline expectations for improvement. If the supervisor determines that the employee is not suited for the position and is unable to improve satisfactorily, the employee may be terminated. Supervisors must contact their HR Consultant prior to the issuance of an "Unsuccessful" rating and/or terminating an employee.

### Did you know...

that employees may receive a bonus for completing their degree? [Check out](#) JMU Policy 1408 for information on degree attainment bonuses!

