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MEMO

TO: County Commission
FROM: Robert W. Wilson
Date: June 28, 2024
Subject: Policy Update – 406 Wage and Salary Administration

This proposed policy change was discussed at the Department Head meeting on Wednesday, June 26th and is directly related to the county condensing our matrix to 12 steps per paygrade. Under current policy, a DH can hire at step 2-5 with portfolio and administrator approval. At the time this policy was implemented, our matrix had an average of 19.75 steps. Step 5 is about 25% of the paygrade – so DH could hire 25% up the pay scale with just portfolio and administrator approval.

If we use that same 25% analysis looking at our 12-step matrix, DH should be able to hire up to a step 3 of the pay scale with portfolio and administrator approval. Moving from step 5 to a step 3 is consistent with moving from a 19.75 step matrix to a 12-step matrix – that would maintain a 25% increase. Department heads could, of course, still request Commission approval to hire over a step 3 – that wouldn't change.

SUGGESTED MOTION: Amend Employee Handbook, Section 406 Wage and Salary Administration allowing Department Heads to hire up to a step three with approval from the County Administrator and Portfolio Commissioner.

406 Wage and Salary Administration

Effective Date: 06/28/2024

We maintain a wage and salary administration system for all employees. Annually, as part of the budget development cycle, the Board of County Commissioners shall set the specific structure for pay administration plan based on our financial condition, changing personnel needs/concerns that are identified through Department reviews, and the changing community pay standards. The Commission may choose to distribute salary adjustments based on cost-of-living increases, merit, changes in the grades/classification, and/or changes in community salary standards.

Every three years, we will conduct a comprehensive system review that includes both a review of select positions and a market study to determine the base for our salary scale. Between studies only special adjustments will be considered based on documented significant changes.

Each Department Head is accountable to forecast and control salary expenditures within the approved annual salary budget. Salary adjustment increases outside the annual pay administration schedule shall be initiated by the request of the Department Head, approved by the County Commission, and administered by the Human Resources Department.

Overview of the Classification System

All positions have been assigned a Decision Band Method (DBM) rating by our professional consultant. These ratings are the current structure for the pay and classification system. A Position Analysis Questionnaire (PAQ) is filed in the Human Resources Department for all standard positions. These positions will all be assigned a position number. You may be asked to complete a PAQ, which will be reviewed by your supervisor and your Department Head. Each PAQ designates essential functions according to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Certain designated positions have specific training and/or experience requirements related to their DBM rating/classification. If you meet those specific requirements, your position classification (DBM rating) may be adjusted.

Policies for Adding New Positions

Prior to the addition of any positions, the Department Head will be responsible for writing a PAQ describing the proposed duties and submit the PAQ to the Human Resources Department. The Human Resources Department and Department Head will then present a recommendation(s) to the Personnel Overview Committee.

Department Heads must submit PAQs for new regularly budgeted positions for review by 5:00 PM on the 1st Monday of April of each year. If a position is added in the middle of the year, a temporary DBM rating/classification will be assigned by the Personnel Overview Committee with full review by our professional consultant as part of the annual review process, if needed.

The PAQ and recommendation will be reviewed by the Personnel Overview Committee:

1. If the position is similar to an existing position, a DBM rating/classification title may be assigned by the Personnel Overview Committee, if there is agreement with the department head's recommendation.
2. If the position is not similar to an existing position, the Human Resources Department will review the information to ensure that it is complete, and then submit it to the County's salary consultant for assignment of a DBM rating and classification/title.

Re-Classification Procedures

In the event there is a permanent and significant (more than 25%) change in duties, you or your immediate supervisor may request a re- classification. Re-classification requests will require that a current PAQ be submitted with written documentation from you and the Department Head stating the reasons for the request with a list of similar positions. Re-classification requests will be considered once each year prior to budget preparation. Requests must be submitted no later than the first Monday in April of each year to the Human Resources Department.

All reclassification requests will be reviewed by the Personnel Overview Committee to ensure that all relevant information is provided and to identify other positions that could be affected by the positions. The Personnel Overview Committee will then send all material to our salary consultant for final recommendation.

Re-classifications will then be appropriately budgeted for and will become effective the first of the following year unless there is an emergency reason for immediate change.

If a position has been re-classified at a higher grade, your salary will be placed at least at the minimum of the range. If your position is reclassified to a lower grade because re-evaluation indicates reduced duties, no salary reduction should occur. If your salary is above the maximum of the new grade:

1. No new salary increments or general structure increases will apply until the maximum for the new grade equals or exceeds your salary.
2. If there has not been a substantial change in duties, classification review can only be done as part of the overall structure review (every three years) or once per position between comprehensive reviews.

Starting Salary/Promotional Adjustments

New employees, other than seasonal employees, are generally hired at the minimum of the salary range. New employee salaries will commence on the first day of actual work.

In some unusual instances, employees may be hired above the minimum of the salary range. Justification for hiring a new employee at a step above the minimum includes but is not limited to:

1. Market conditions that create recruitment difficulties for certain skill sets.
2. Availability of a candidate whose qualifications significantly exceed the position's minimum qualifications if it is determined that it is in the County's best interest to hire the exceptionally qualified candidate over other candidates that meet the minimum qualifications.
3. Consideration should be given to maintaining internal equity within the department.
4. Department heads may hire new employees at step two (2) through ~~five (5)~~ **three (3)** with the approval of both the County Administrator and Portfolio Commissioner. In the event that either or both the County Administrator and Portfolio Commissioner are not in agreement with the department head request, the department head may request that the matter be placed on the Commission agenda for consideration by the entire board. Hiring above step ~~five (5)~~ **three (3)** must be approved by the full County Commission. Requests to hire above step ~~five (5)~~ **three (3)** will be submitted by the department head to the Human Resources Office with written justification. The County Administrator will forward the request to the County Commission with a disposition recommendation. All requests for hiring a new employee above a step one (1) must be done at the time of hire and will not be considered retroactively.

Starting step for appointed Department Heads will be determined by the County Commission.

The starting salary for newly elected officials will generally be the minimum of the County pay scale for that position. Salaries for County Commissioners shall be established at the rate allowed by state law.

In recognition of increased duties and responsibility, if you have been promoted, you will be granted a salary increase to the first even step that is at least 5% over the current salary, assuming that this promotional adjustment does not adversely impact any other employees by creating an internal inequity. If an inequity among employees within a DBM rating will be created by a 5% adjustment, the Department Head and the Human Resources Department will recommend a fair salary adjustment using the criteria established in the starting salary policy.

Lateral Transfers

If you are transferred or you transfer to a class of comparable value or worth as determined by the DBM rating method, you will not receive an adjustment in pay, and your status date will not change.

Salary Increases

All salary increases are contingent on satisfactory performance of assigned duties and responsibilities as documented through annual performance evaluations and subject to County Commission approval. Employment status date will change.