



Hidalgo County

Employee Classification and Compensation Plan

And Related Policies

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Purpose

The purpose of the Hidalgo County Employee Classification and Compensation Plan is to provide an organized position control structure and uniform classification system to meet the needs and demands of the County workforce.

Objectives

The Classification and Compensation plan accomplishes the following objectives:

- Groups positions with similar duties and pay while providing a high degree of flexibility to County departments and offices.
- Compensates employees with salaries that internally equitable and compare favorably with other similar counties and the State of Texas.
- Allows for the possibility of incentives for excellence in job performance.
- Provides for the development of a promotional career ladder.

Application

This classification plan and related compensation schedule apply to all regular, full-time salaried positions as authorized by the Hidalgo County Commissioners' Court.

Exceptions

This classification and compensation plan does not apply to the following, for reasons that their positions are appointed, their salaries are set by other governing bodies and/or they abide by separate classification and compensation plans:

1. Elected Officer or Official
2. Commissioners' Court Executive Office Department Heads
3. Hidalgo Sherriff's Office
4. Hidalgo County Juvenile Probation Department
5. Court Reporters

Definitions

For purposes of this plan and related policies, the following definitions apply:

Career Ladder Promotion - The movement of an employee from one classification to another classification in a career ladder position with a higher pay grade within the same department.

Change Of Status – The form required to process any change that affects the title, table, grade, salary, or fund of a position and an employee.

Classification – The designation of job classes on the basis of job function and responsibility and assignment to the appropriate category (job), title (position), and pay grade (level).

Compensation – Pay given for service based on job function and responsibility.

Grade – The level of classification based on job function and responsibility and defined by a specific salary range.

Merit Pay – A raise in pay based on a set of criteria set by the department head/elected official, also referred to as pay-for-performance.

Position Audit – The review of the functions and responsibilities of a position for the purpose of determining eligibility for re-classification or re-grade.

Promotion – The movement of an employee from one classification to another classification with a higher pay grade.

Reclassification – A change in a position due to new and fundamentally changed duties being performed (requires approval by the Classification Committee and Commissioners' Court).

Re-grade – A change in the grade of a position (requires approval by the Classification Committee and Commissioners' Court).

Selection – The voluntary (employee applies for a vacant posted position and is selected by the selecting authority) movement of an employee from their current position in an office or department to a vacant position in a different office or department within the County, which may or may not have a change in classification or pay grade.

Step – The specific rate of pay within a grade.

Transfer - The movement of an employee from their current office or department to a new office or department in the County, with no change in classification or grade.

Classification Committee

The Classification Committee has been assigned the following duties and responsibilities by Commissioner's Court:

1. Maintain and keep current the position classification plan.
2. Advise and assist Commissioners' Court in equitably and uniformly applying the plan.
3. Make recommendations to Commissioners' Court with respect to the operation and the improvement of the plan as necessary.

The Classification Committee is comprised of the following members:

Director of Human Resources

Budget Officer

County Treasurer

Related Policies



COMPENSATION

POLICY NUMBER: _____

TITLE: PROBATIONARY STEP POLICY

EFFECTIVE DATE: FEBRUARY 15, 2010

PROBATIONARY STEP

New Hires

All newly hired employees of the County must begin their employment at the Probationary Step 0 salary level. After the employee's probationary period is completed (usually 6 months unless extended), the salary level will be increased to the Step 1 salary level. If probationary period is extended, Step 1 salary level will not be granted until employee is off probation.

Probationary Step and Change of Status

A Change of Status form will need to be submitted by the department to initiate the change from Step 0 to Step 1. The department is responsible for initiating the Change of Status to place the employee off probation. Change of Status placing the employee off probation will be effective the next full pay-period after receipt of the Change of Status form by Human Resources Department. No retroactive payments will be allowed if the department fails to submit the Change of Status form timely.

Exceptions

The following positions are exempted from the Probationary Step and may be hired at the Step 1 salary: attorneys and licensed medical professionals (Registered Nurses, Licensed Vocational Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, and Midwives).



COMPENSATION

POLICY NUMBER: _____

TITLE: MERIT PAY

EFFECTIVE DATE: FEBRUARY 15, 2010

MERIT PAY POLICY

Merit pay, also known as pay-for-performance, is defined as a raise in pay based on a set of criteria set by the department head/elected official. This usually involves the department head/elected official conducting a performance review during a certain time period.

AWARD CRITERIA

Merit salary increases may be awarded to county employees based upon one or more of the following criteria:

1. An employee who demonstrates outstanding performance evidenced by an above average or excellent overall rating on a current performance evaluation may be recommended for a merit salary increase.
2. An employee who demonstrates efficient use of county resources that result in significant savings to the department, program, division or the county may be recommended for a merit salary increase.
3. An employee must have been employed by the county for the six months immediately preceding the effective date of the merit salary increase.
4. At least one year must have elapsed since the employee's last merit salary increase.

Merit salary increases awarded during the annual budget preparation process must also consider criteria included in the approved budget guidelines and the budget instructions issued by the Department of Budget and Management.

MERIT RAISE RECOMMENDATION/APPROVAL

Merit salary increases are limited to a one step salary adjustment and will be initiated by the immediate supervisor, and approved by the appropriate department head/elected official. For all Commissioners Court Department's, merit raise recommendations will be subject to the review the Commissioners' Court Executive Officer and the Human Resources Director.

FUNDING

Merit raises will be based upon the availability of funding identified during the budget process. Funds will be allocated equitably between departments based on allocation procedures approved by Commissioners' Court. Merit payments may not exceed a one step increase for each position.



COMPENSATION

POLICY NUMBER: _____

TITLE: PROMOTION, SELECTION
AND TRANSFER POLICY

EFFECTIVE DATE: FEBRUARY 15, 2010

PROMOTION, SELECTION AND TRANSFER POLICY

This policy addresses the movement of employees and position slots within or between County departments or offices. These movements are comprised of the following types: Promotion, Selection, and Transfer.

PROMOTION

A promotion is defined as the movement of an employee from their current position in a department/office to a posted vacant position with a higher pay grade regardless of whether the employee is moving within the current department/office or to another department/office.

Eligibility

All candidates who meet the minimum qualifications may be eligible for a promotion. Qualifications for a position may not be modified after the promotion process has begun unless an inappropriate standard has been used through error or a revised standard of the position description requirements has been approved by the Classification Committee.

Increase in Pay

Promoted employees are eligible to receive an increase in base pay. The increase would affect the employee's pay in one of the following ways, whichever is greater:

1. Promoting to Minimum New Pay Grade - Increase employee's base pay to minimum of the new pay grade or;
2. Promoting a Step - Increase employee's base pay by an amount which guarantees a one step increase to their current grade/step.

SELECTION

A selection is defined as the voluntary movement of an employee from their current position in a department/office to a posted vacant position either within the current department/office or to another department/office, which may or may not have a change in classification or pay grade.

Eligibility

All candidates who meet the minimum qualifications may be eligible for a selection. Qualifications for a position may not be modified after the promotion process has begun unless an inappropriate standard has been used through error or a revised standard of the position description requirements has been approved by the Classification Committee.

TRANSFER

A transfer is defined as the lateral movement of an employee from their current department/office to a position in another department/office in the County, with no change in classification or pay grade.

Eligibility

In rare instances, a business need may arise in a department or office for a specific employee or position that is already filled in a different department. Eligibility for employee transfers between departments is based on this need, it is made at the discretion of the relevant department head or elected official of each department or office, may be subject to review by the Classification Committee, and is subject to Commissioner's Court approval.



COMPENSATION

POLICY NUMBER: _____

TITLE: CAREER LADDER PROMOTION POLICY

EFFECTIVE DATE: FEBRUARY 15, 2010

CAREER LADDER PROMOTION POLICY

A career ladder promotion is defined as the movement of an employee from one classification to another classification in a career ladder position with a higher pay grade within the same department. Normal posting procedures will be waived when a department exercises a career ladder promotion.

DETERMINING BASIC ELIGIBILITY

All candidates who meet the minimum qualifications may be eligible for career ladder promotions. Qualifications for a position may not be modified after the promotion process has begun unless an inappropriate standard has been used through error or a revised standard of the position description requirements has been approved by the Classification Committee.

INCREASE IN PAY

Promoted employees are eligible to receive an increase in base pay. The increase would affect the employee's pay in one of the following ways, whichever is greater:

1. *Promoting to Minimum New Pay Grade*

Increase employee's base pay to minimum of the new pay grade, or;

2. *Promoting a Step*

Increase employee's base pay by an amount which guarantees an increase of one step or approximately 3.5% of their current salary.



COMPENSATION

POLICY NUMBER: _____

TITLE: CHANGE POLICY

EFFECTIVE DATE: FEBRUARY 15, 2010

CHANGE POLICY

The Department of Budget & Management (DBM) is responsible for maintaining the employee classification and compensation system and for recommending any changes to the classification or grade of a position.

REQUESTS FOR CHANGES

A change in the grade of a position is called a Re-Grade and a change in a position due to new and fundamentally business related changed duties being performed is called a Reclassification. All changes are subject to review and consideration by the Classification Committee, and final approval by Commissioners' Court.

Re-Grades

Positions may be re-graded on a County-wide basis based on the results of market studies conducted by DBM. While re-grade requests may be submitted at any time, they are generally considered only during the budget process unless an immediate business necessity exists.

Offices or departments must submit a request to DBM to re-grade a position. DBM will review the request to see if it meets the criteria to re-grade a position, such as the uniqueness of the position and the current market conditions. DBM will coordinate and notify offices and departments regarding analysis and recommendations of proposed re-grades to a position.

Reclassifications

Position reclassifications may occur when fundamental changes in the position duties have occurred over time and are the result of planned business changes, organizational restructuring or changes in a program mission. Reclassifications will only occur when a position's job responsibilities have changed significantly in

level and/or scope over an extended period of time compared to the duties listed on the position description.

Offices and departments may submit reclassification requests at any time during the year but will be considered for approval during the annual budget process. The reclassification request should be made by completing a Personnel Adjustment Form (available through DBM) and submitting the completed form along with any supporting documentation to the Classification Committee.

The Classification Committee may direct DBM and Human Resources Department to contact the office or department to conduct a position audit with the incumbent employee.

If the Classification Committee determines that a reclassification is merited, they will calculate the employee's new salary based on the current method of range penetration and perform a cost analysis and determine funding for the recommended action.