

Webb County Government Classification / Step Increase Policy

Approved April 27, 2015 with Modifications June 4, 2015

With Revisions through December 8, 2015

The county maintains a classification plan, which applies to elected officials and department heads (unless stipulated by statute), and assigns each class of positions to a pay grade based on the principle of equity among positions requiring similar knowledge, skills and abilities and having similar levels of responsibility. Classification of jobs is done for the position and not for the person currently filling or being considered for a job. For purposes of classification/pay administration, the definitions are as follows:

1. A job description is a written description of the duties, responsibilities, reporting relationships, requirements and qualifications for a position.
2. A pay plan is a document that assigns dollar values to each job class, group's classes into pay grades, and arrays pay grades on a pay schedule showing salary and wage steps and ranges for each grade.
3. Equity was a "one-time" adjustment given to the employee and was included in the initial implementation of the new pay system.

The compensation plan developed for the county is based on an internal value system reflected in the classification plan and on a salary survey of comparable organizations to help assure an externally equitable and competitive pay system.

The pay plan consists of twenty-eight grades and 34 steps. The range is deliberately broad so that problems associated with employees reaching the top of their pay range will be minimized.

I. **At Hire - Discretionary Steps:**

On July 28, 2014 the Commissioners Court approved a Step Discretion as follows:

- ❖ Department Heads and Elected Officials have the discretion to hire above the minimum entry rate as follows, subject to any probationary periods:

Figure 1

GRADES		STEPS
5 -20	Discretion to Hire up to 5 Steps into the Grade	A,B,C,D,E
21 -28	Discretion to Hire up to 10 Steps into the Grade	A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J

- ❖ For Attorneys Only (Public Defender, County Attorney, and District Attorney), the Department Head and Elected Official have the discretion to hire or promote above the minimum entry rate as follows:

Figure 2

GRADE	EXPERIENCE	STEPS
22	0 – 2Years	K –M
	3 – 4Years	N –P
	5 Years or more	Q – S
23	0 – 2Years	N –P
	3 – 4Years	Q – S
	5 Years or more	T –V
24 –26	-	N –W
27-28		K-M

II. Effective Pay Start Date:

All new hires, promotions, demotions and transfer pay start dates are effective at the beginning of the next pay period following HR approval process and notification.

Note: Failure to adhere to this policy regarding effective start date will delay the employee’s Health Benefit coverage for an additional 30 days above the plan waiting period.

III. New Full-Time Employees in Civil Service Positions:

Elected Officials and Department Heads shall pay at Step A mandatory probationary period as stated in the Civil Service Rules & Regulations for the grade which the employee was hired. Human Resources will notify departments when the probationary period is about to end. At the time, the Elected Official or Department Head will have the option to consider a salary adjustment to place the employee at a higher step within the Elected Official’s or Department Head’s discretion for that slot as shown in *Figure 1*.

Note: This is NOT subject to the “Salary Review Dates” in section VI.

IV. **Promotions:**

An employee, excluding Attorneys, shall be promoted when:

- ❖ The employee moves to a position classified in a higher pay grade and meets the minimum requirements of that position.
- ❖ Effective Pay Start Date section.
- ❖ Promotions may occur intra/interdepartmental (within and between departments).

At the time an employee is promoted to a previously established position in a classification with a higher pay grade, the step within the pay grade will be based on the higher of:

- A. 5% percent above the employee's current grade and step (pre-promotion); *please note that when calculating the amount of the 5% percent pay, IF the proposed salary amount falls between steps on the scale, then the amount of pay will be rounded up to the next higher step on the scale.*
- or
- B. The entry rate **discretionary steps** of the new paygrade.

Figure 3

EXAMPLE OF A PROMOTION	
Employee's Current Grade/ Step: 12 / U	Salary: \$ 40, 408.21
Promotion 5% of current salary	\$ 2,020.41
Salary with 5%	\$ 42,428.62
Grade of New Position: 16 (Discretionary Steps A –E)	Salary: \$40,358.97 (E)
5% being higher, salary falls between these steps:	
Step I: is \$ 42, 415.07	Step J: \$42,945.26
Therefore, 5% promotion (with round up, per policy) New Salary ⇔	\$42,945.26

V. **Transfers:**

Transfers can only occur within the same pay grade. A lateral transfer occurs when a full-time employee moves to another position within the same pay grade (whether in the same department or another). An employee who laterally transfers shall be paid the same step he/she received prior to transferring.

VI. Salary adjustments (Current Position, Slot & Grade):

~~If an Elected Official or Department Head finds that an employee was not placed properly on the pay scale or if the employee is not hired at or above the discretionary steps allotted to that pay grade,~~ In the case of a re-evaluation of a position(s) based on Changes in Duties or a Re-focused job description, the Elected Official or Department Head may seek to have that salary adjusted subject to the **Salary Review Dates** below. The adjustment may be one step, or multiple steps, but shall never exceed the steps identified in **Figure 1** and/or **Figure 2**. There is no limit to the times a salary may be adjusted as long as it does not exceed the discretionary limit in **Figure 1** and/or **Figure 2**.

Any salary adjustments regarding discretionary steps must first be submitted to Human Resources for review and evaluation prior to Commissioner's Court consideration for approval. The deadline for submission for salary changes are:

- February 1st for April consideration and/or approval
- or
- July 1st for Budget consideration and/or approval

VII. Demotions:

A demotion is the movement of an employee from a higher pay grade to a lower pay grade. This occurs when an employee is transferred or accepts a vacant position that is at a lower pay grade from his/her current position.

In the case of a vacant position not being available, the Elected Official or Department Head may revert the employees' slot/pay to discretionary entry rates (A-E or A-J).