



Department of Human Resources

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

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Date: August 18, 2023

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Margo Franklin, Chief Human Resources Officer, Department of Human Resources

Subject: From the Chief Human Resources Officer, Department of Human Resources, requesting approval to implement a new, stepless compensation range structure and migrate non-represented employees for positions in the Business Support, Finance/Accounting, and Medical Examiner job families to the new ranges effective retroactively to Pay Period 15, which began on July 9, 2023, and authorizing the Office of Strategy, Budget and Performance and the Office of the Comptroller to process an appropriation fund transfer up to \$427,337 from Org. Unit 1972 to affected departments to effectuate the new compensation plan

File Type: Action Report

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**REQUEST**

This report seeks Milwaukee County Board approval of the Department of Human Resources' (DHR) plan to transition to a new compensation structure for three position families. DHR, in conjunction with compensation consultants from the Newport Group, recommend transitioning Milwaukee County's current pay grade structure for non-represented employees to a new structure consisting of 51 initial levels/ranges with a salary minimum, midpoint and maximum. This long overdue step is needed to further simplify and transform Milwaukee County's compensation structure that has grown to almost 300 pay grades. In December 2022, DHR provided an informational report ([File No. 22-1081](#)) outlining the goal to migrate away from steps to ranges and provide more flexibility in compensation administration for Milwaukee County to meet the dynamic needs of the job market. Further, DHR staff stated they would develop and propose an entirely new non-represented compensation range structure for County Board approval. The updated structure is completed along with pay adjustments/advancements in the range for some employees in the Business Support and Finance/Accounting job families based on years of service, along with staff from the Medical Examiner's office, and is attached to this report as **Attachment 1**.

**POLICY**

Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	<a href="#">17.055</a>
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**BACKGROUND**

DHR is responsible for managing Milwaukee County's compensation practices. Over many years, numerous grades have been created resulting in almost 300 pay grades across Milwaukee County. The current grade structure has significant deficiencies, including grade overlap and major inconsistencies within the steps of individual grades. In January 2023, Milwaukee County suspended use of the rigid, restrictive, and unequal steps found in the pay grades. However, the outdated and confusing salary structure still remains, and it still currently being used. The Department of Human Resources must migrate Milwaukee County's compensation structure to a more modern and market comparable structure.

The current compensation structure is not effective. A new, range-based, streamlined structure will best position Milwaukee County to facilitate a more effective compensation transformation. DHR has been working with the Newport Group on pursuing a new compensation structure. Normal progression through steps for employees, except represented public safety employee as stated in their collective bargaining agreements, was suspended in 2010. Although the current structure ceased step-progression functionality, for non-represented employees in 2010, the compensation structure was

not updated. In January 2023, as a phased approach to transforming compensation, DHR eliminated the steps in current grades for non-represented jobs and established a minimum and a maximum using the current first and last step of each applicable grade. These grades will be administered as ranges without restrictive steps.

Since that time, DHR and the Newport Group have worked diligently to build out a new more streamlined compensation structure consisting of ranged grades.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Department of Human Resources recommends approval to implement a new, stepless compensation range structure for the business support, fiscal/accounting, and medical examiner job families, as the next phase in transforming Milwaukee County's compensation. This includes the migration of non-represented employees to new salary ranges and approval of a an appropriation fund transfer up to \$427,337 from Org. Unit 1972 processed by the Office on Strategy, Budget and Performance and Office of the Comptroller.

An appropriation fund transfer is being requested for positions moved to new grades but fall below the minimum of the new grade placement. In addition, upon approval of this resolution and based on an analysis done in conjunction with the Newport Group, HR plans to implement pay adjustments/advancements in the range for employees in the Medical Examiner's office and some employees in the Business Support and Finance/Accounting job families based on years of service upon approval of this resolution. These adjustments/advancements would be retroactively paid back to the pay period starting on July 9, 2023 (PP 15). DHR will report the 203 employees receiving an advancement/adjustment to their salary based on compression/seniority data in the 2023 December cycle compensation report.

Related File No's:	<a href="#">22-842, 22-1081</a>
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### **ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Describe how the item aligns to the objectives in the [strategic plan](#):

- 1A: Reflect the full diversity of the County at every level of County government
- 1B: Create and nurture an inclusive culture across County government
- 1C: Increase the number of County contracts awarded to minority and women-owned businesses
- 2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity
- 2B: Break down silos across County government to maximize access to and quality of services offered
- 2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions
- 3A: Invest "upstream" to address root causes of health disparities
- 3B: Enhance the County's fiscal health and sustainability
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

### **FISCAL EFFECT**

The costs associated with these pay adjustments will be disseminated from the allocation in the 2023 Adopted budget ([Countywide Non-Dept – Strategic Program Area 8: Central Salary Costs](#)) to the budgets of each department listed if approved. This funding was set aside by policymakers for the purpose of salary adjustments based on DHR's recommendation related to the compensation project.

### **TERMS**

The new salary ranges and/or rates would be effective beginning pay period 15 (07/09/2023).

### **VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES**

[Margo.Franklin@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:Margo.Franklin@milwaukeecountywi.gov)  
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### **PREPARED BY:**

Margo Franklin, Chief Human Resources Officer, Department of Human Resources

**APPROVED BY:**

Margo Franklin, Chief Human Resources Officer, Department of Human Resources

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Resolution

Fiscal Note

Listing of Jobs and Pay Ranges to be Changed (Attachment 1)

PowerPoint (Attachment 2)

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors  
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk  
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Executive's Office  
Joe Lamers, Director - Strategy, Performance & Budget  
Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr., Chair, Personnel Committee  
Personnel Committee Members  
Steve Cady, Research & Policy Director, Office of the Comptroller