



Department of Human Resources

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

Date: November 3, 2022

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors *M. Nicholson*

From: Margo Franklin, Chief Human Resources Officer, Department of Human Resources
Dean Legler, Director of Compensation/HRIS, Department of Human Resources *D. Legler*

Subject: From the Chief Human Resources Officer and the Director of Compensation/Human Resources Information Systems, Department of Human Resources, Finalizing Intent to convert Milwaukee County Pay Grades from Step-Based Grades to Range-Based Grades Beginning in January 2023

File Type: Informational Report

REQUEST

This report is submitted to inform the Milwaukee County Board that the Department of Human Resources (DHR) will work with the Department of the Comptroller, Payroll Division to transition Milwaukee County's current pay grade structure for non-represented employees that currently consists of grades comprised of steps to grades that will be represented as ranges with a minimum and a maximum pay amount.

This is an interim step in the County's compensation transformation efforts. In 2023, DHR will develop and propose an entirely new non-represented compensation range structure, for County Board approval, that all non-represented roles will eventually migrate to.

Migrating away from steps to ranges will provide for more flexibility in compensation administration for Milwaukee County.

POLICY

Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances: 17.055

BACKGROUND

DHR is responsible for managing Milwaukee County's compensation practices. The current compensation structure is primarily comprised of grades with rigid and restrictive steps that employees must be placed into. Over many years, numerous grades have been created resulting in approximately 290 compensation grades across the County. The current grade structure has significant deficiencies, including grade overlap. In addition, inconsistency exists within the steps of individual grades as well as between

grades. In order to improve compensation practices, it has been determined that 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 is working with the Newport Group on pursuing a compensation transformation plan. Normal progression through steps for employees, except represented public safety employee as stated in their collective bargaining agreements, was suspended in 2014. Subsequently, progression through steps has only occurred via ad-hoc, one-off step increases able to be absorbed by departmental budgets; or, again in limited fashion, as a part of allocations made for a relatively small number of employee equity/performance adjustments. DHR and the Newport Group are currently in process of building out a comprehensive structure consisting of ranged grades that will be proposed to supplant the step system for non-represented employees.

In January 2023, as an interim step in compensation transformation, DHR will eliminate the steps in current grades for non-represented jobs and establish 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.

Following this initial phase of creating stepless grades, DHR will be working with the Newport Group consultants to finalize a proposal for an entirely new, stepless grade structure that we will present for County Board approval. Upon gaining approval, DHR will eventually migrate all non-represented employees to new jobs in new grades on an iterative job family basis.

Related File No's:	22-842
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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
Transitioning to a non-stepped grade structure will enable the County to more efficiently transition employees into a new structure that will allow for a more consistent and equitable comparison of employees in similar jobs providing for enhancement of market competitiveness, internal equity, understanding of job progression and enhanced transparency.
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

FISCAL EFFECT

Transition to non-stepped grades will allow for more flexibility in administering compensation as we work towards migrating all non-represented roles to a newly-developed stepless grade structure.

TERMS

N/A

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

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PREPARED BY:

Dean Legler, Director of Compensation/HRIS, Department of Human Resources

APPROVED BY:

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

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

cc: Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Executive's Office
Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr., Chair, Committee on Personnel
Supervisor Elizabeth Sumner, Chair, Committee on Finance
Joe Lamers, Director, Office of Strategy, Budget, and Performance
Margo Franklin, Chief Human Resources Officer, Department of Human Resources
Scott Manske, Comptroller
Sue Drummond, Payroll Manager
Steve Cady, Research & Policy Director, Office of the Comptroller