

20. YEAR-ROUND LEGISLATIVE STAFF CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PLAN.--

A. Job titles and compensation for all legislative staff shall conform to the classification and compensation plan as adopted and periodically revised by the legislative council.

B. The legislative council service shall publish the plan with any changes approved by the council.

C. The classification and compensation plan committee shall be composed of the statutory legislative agency directors, chief clerks and chiefs of staff of the leadership offices. The committee shall meet no less than once per year and may make recommendations to the council on any revisions to the plan.

D. The fiscal and policy research analyst of the legislative council service and the chief economist of the legislative finance committee shall provide to the plan committee a recommendation on increases to the compensation ranges based on inflation, cost of living, cost of labor and any across-the-board increases to ensure that the plan remains competitive for recruitment and retention, subject to approval by the council. The analyst and economist shall meet no less than once every two years with sufficient time for the council to consider any recommendations before July 1 of the respective year.

E. Once a candidate has been selected to be offered a position, the hiring manager shall work with the respective human resources department to determine a salary range commensurate with experience, education and skills to ensure equity with existing employees. New employees shall be hired at no more than 75% of the compensation maximum.

F. An exception may be made to the 75% cap if the hiring manager has been authorized by the leader of the respective chamber or leadership office or the committee chairs of the respective statutory agencies to exceed the cap, there is sufficient budget capacity and the employee meets at least one of the following:

- (1) prior relevant New Mexico legislative experience;
- (2) prior relevant experience in a legislative setting, e.g., city council, county commission or other state legislature;
- (3) qualifications that substantially exceed qualifications of existing staff in the same or similar positions; or
- (4) other significant considerations, including level of education, professional credentials or specialized knowledge relevant to the position.

G. Salary increases for agency directors, chief clerks and chiefs of staff will be subject to approval by the leader of the respective chamber or leadership office or committee

chairs of the respective statutory agencies.

H. To ensure pay equity, the following parameters shall apply to increases:

(1) the supervisor will consult with the respective human resources department on suggested salary increases based on experience, education and skills;

(2) salaries of employees in any year of employment shall not be increased by more than 3%; provided, however, that this limitation does not include Paragraph (4) of this subsection, across-the-board increases provided by the legislature or a promotion to a higher classification;

(3) the salary of an employee who is being promoted shall be determined using the same policies as new hires; and

(4) an employee who has completed at least 10 years of experience with the New Mexico legislature and is at the compensation maximum may receive an increase of up to 5% in the eleventh year and every fifth year thereafter, excluding across-the-board increases or promotions, provided there is budget capacity, satisfactory performance and authorization from the leader of the respective chamber or office or committee chair.

I. The legislative council encourages its employees to enhance their job skills and career growth through higher education. To support professional development, the respective legislative agency may reimburse employees for tuition paid by the employee if the employee has been a legislative employee for at least one year. Subject to the availability of funding, as determined by employee's supervisor and agency director and in consultation with the agency's chief financial officer, the following reimbursement guidelines apply to this benefit:

(1) tuition for attendance at accredited institutions in New Mexico will be prioritized unless the employee can demonstrate that it is more feasible to attend an out-of-state institution through virtual attendance;

(2) the legislative agency may reimburse up to 100% of tuition costs, including required fees such as laboratory and textbooks, less scholarships, grants or other financial assistance received;

(3) employees are required to complete a course with a grade of C or better. Should an employee receive a grade below C or the equivalent or fail to satisfactorily complete an approved course or if the status is "incomplete" for more than six months, the employee will not be eligible for reimbursement for that particular course. If a participating employee drops an approved course prior to completion, the employee is not eligible for reimbursement for that particular course. Any employee eligible for tuition assistance under this policy shall be required to complete and sign a form agreeing to the reimbursement provisions prior to the disbursement of any funds; and

(4) if an employee leaves the legislature within a year after completing the

approved course work, the employee may be required to reimburse the agency for up to 100% of the costs already paid to the individual. The respective agency may offset any funds owed on the last payroll for the employee. If there is not enough leave or hours to cover the balance, the respective agency may seek other collection remedies.

J. Salaries and salary increases are limited to the classification and compensation plan and this policy as adopted by the legislative council. (As adopted July 18, 2024 and effective immediately.)