

SAUK COUNTY

COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY & STRATEGY

PURPOSE

- **Overall** - The purpose of the Sauk County compensation system is to support the recruitment, motivation, success, and retention of qualified and productive employees and to encourage and reward activities that promote the County's vision, mission and values as an organization.
- **Recruit/Retain** - To that end, Sauk County desires to recruit and retain individuals who are customer oriented, demonstrate initiative, are team players, and accept responsibility, authority and accountability for work performance.
- **Incentives** - Once employed, Sauk County believes that incentives are necessary if the employees are to be successful in achieving the mission, goals and objectives of the County.
- **Administration** - The County will administer the system in an open, fair, and equitable fashion.

Goal 1 – Internal & External Parity

- The compensation system will reflect both internal equity and external parity within the various labor markets in which the County must compete. The system will also reward employees who perform at above standard levels within their respective job class

Objective 1 – Compensation Levels

Compensation levels should represent organizations similar in character to Sauk County. Data will be compiled from either a custom survey or from published survey sources, as appropriate, and adjusted to reflect economic differences between the regional metropolitan area and other metropolitan areas studied.

Strategies – Labor Markets

- Sauk County recognizes the existence of labor market differences among the various levels and function of work performed at the County. Sauk County will create and maintain a single salary structure on the median of the identified labor market for Baraboo, WI, and adjust the salary structure based on labor market and functional differences as deemed necessary.

Strategies – Executive Level Classes

- For executive level classes and jobs the labor market will include comparable private and public sector organizations (approximately 50%-200% of the County's size) and with whom the County competes for labor.

Strategies – Professional and Other Exempt Job Classes

- For professional and other exempt jobs, the labor market will include other private and public sector organizations with whom the County competes for labor in Wisconsin and elsewhere as applicable.

Strategies – For FLSA Non-Exempt Job Classes

- For all other non-FLSA exempt jobs, the labor market will include private and public sector organizations with whom the County competes for labor in the local area.

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SAUK COUNTY COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY & STRATEGY

Objective 2 – Market Parity

The midpoint of the salary structure will be based on the median of the collected market as reported in salary survey results. Pay range minimums and maximums will be established from survey results to provide for market parity.

Strategies – Range Spans

- The salary structure should provide sufficient breadth with range spans based on the level of the job classification and market information. Typically, salary ranges for lower level jobs are narrower than upper level jobs. This differing range spread approach reflects a variety of factors including a longer learning curve, greater consequence of error, the cost of recruitment and training, and increasing value to the organization over time. As a result, broader salary ranges will have relatively higher maximum rates of pay than a narrow classification structure.

Strategies – Annual Increases & Salary Structure Adjustment

- Sauk County will research the market and related market data to determine an appropriate salary increase budget to apply to employee salaries.
- The salary structure should be adjusted on an annual basis based on market trends to ensure ongoing competitiveness with the labor market.
- The salary structure adjustment is separate from the employee increase amount. A salary structure adjustment does not equate to across-the-board increase for employees. Sauk County will determine separate figures for the salary structure adjustment and the annual salary increase budget based on market trends.

Strategies – Process for Salary Progression

- The length of time for progression within the salary range should increase as jobs move up the salary grade structure. Progression within the salary range should be based on proficient or competent performance up to the top of the second quartile of the established salary range. Progression above the second quartile of the salary range shall be based solely on performance that is above proficient.

Strategies – Job Rate Percentile

- Each classification should have a job rate (midpoint) set in relationship to the salary paid incumbents occupying like positions in the relevant labor market. The job rate shall fall between the second and third quartiles for like positions in the labor market.

Strategies – Hiring Range

- The hiring range should be from the range minimum to the beginning of the second quartile of the salary range for exceptionally qualified or preferred qualifications of individuals. Appointment above the 25th percentile should require approval by Human Resources; any hiring amount over the mid-point should require the approval of the designated County administrator.

SAUK COUNTY COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY & STRATEGY

Objective 3 – Internal Equity

To ensure staff positions within Sauk County with comparable responsibilities, decision-making authority, supervisory responsibilities, complexity and difficulty of the work, and other requirements should be paid similarly. Higher pay should be associated with relevant educational attainment and seniority in the position.

Strategies – Job Evaluation Methodology

- County will use a job family structure that is based on levels of responsibility within bodies of work and a formal job evaluation methodology, the Decision Band™ Method.
- This job family structure will determine which positions are comparable and to establish an internal hierarchy of classifications.
- The results of these internal comparisons will form the basis of the compensation structure.

Strategies – Differences in Responsibility

- The salary range/grade structure shall be designed to reflect substantial differences in the levels of responsibility for the various job classes within the organization. As a result, finite distinctions will not be reflected in the salary grade structure but, rather, will be recognized by individual compensation within a salary range/grade.

Goal 2 – Simplified Classification System

To provide for a simplified classification system that defines the general scope and complexity of the work required. The classification system will also facilitate internal equity across all jobs within all departments Sauk County.

Objective 1- To establish a classification structure that reflects meaningful and measurable differences in the level of work across the County and within each occupational group.

Strategies – Broadly Defined Career Levels

- The classification system will consist of broadly defined job families and classes that reflect the body of work, level of responsibility, and the essential duties and responsibilities performed by incumbents. This approach will facilitate flexibility in the assignment of duties to individual employees within the job family and classifications to represent a general area of assignment, as well as flexibility for employees to expand experiences, skills, and knowledge.
- Where practical and feasible within each classification series, there will be an opportunity for career advancement through career levels, dependent on the work available at Sauk County. The difference in job levels will be clearly defined and defensible.
- FLSA status of broad classifications is based upon applicable state and federal regulation.

SAUK COUNTY COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY & STRATEGY

Objective 2 – Develop and maintain a job family framework with general work characteristic descriptions. The job family framework plan will meet the current needs of describing the body and level of work across Sauk County while providing maximum flexibility to manage and organize the work in a changing environment and provide detailed position responsibilities as determined by managers and employees.

Strategies – Class Structure

- The existing classification system will be continuously reviewed and modified to identify changing level descriptions and key responsibility levels in job families that will enhance the understanding of the structure. Recommendations will be made to make the system consistent with County goals, work requirements, and position County to be responsive to change.
- The classification descriptions, including the statements of essential duties, minimum qualifications, and physical requirements, will be written in a generic form to provide flexibility across the job families in staffing, promotion, and work organization.
- The goal is to ensure that new hires are qualified and capable of performing the work required and that the work being performed is reflected by an appropriate title. Incumbents who currently do not meet the minimum qualifications will be grandfathered into their current classes. However, any incumbent not meeting the new minimum requirements will be encouraged to acquire the required knowledge and/or skills within a reasonable time period so that they will be qualified for other positions within, as opportunities arise.
- The classification descriptions are not meant to replace individual job descriptions, but to be used as a basis for describing the specific responsibilities that fit into the type and level of work described by the classification description.

Objective 3 – Create a process for requesting reclassification of jobs. The reclassification process will be administered by the Human Resources Department in an efficient, cost effective, responsive, fair, and equitable manner to meet the needs of both the County and its employees. Because Sauk County has adopted the concept of broad job classifications, the number of reclassifications should be minimal since the differences between classifications will be clearly defined.

Strategies – Reclassification

- Timetables for reclassification requested review will be set and acted upon.
- Responsibilities for each step of the process will be established including the incumbent, department head, and human resources.
- Employees will be notified in writing of the results of the reclassification process and reasons for approval or denial.
- Employees who are reclassified will not receive any adjustment in their base compensation unless the salary range for the class into which they are reclassified has a minimum salary that exceeds the employee's current salary. Reclassification is not to be used to circumvent promotions into a higher job classification as appropriate.

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SAUK COUNTY COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY & STRATEGY

Objective 4 – Develop a process for creating new job classes. The classification system will be responsive to organizational and environmental change through the creation of new classes and redefinition of job responsibilities as defined by Sauk County.

Strategies – New Job Classes

- Managers will develop a new position description and submit to Human Resources for review and placement within the job family structure.
- The job family structure and position specific classification descriptions will be reviewed by the departments on an annual basis to ensure they meet current needs. Human Resources will facilitate the review process.
- Human Resources will respond to department requests for individual reclassification, and will assist with the revision of class specifications and development of new class specifications within the broad class concept, as necessary to meet the on-going operational requirements of the County.