

City of La Crosse – Classification and Compensation Plan

CLASSIFICATION PLAN

Section 1. Adoption of Classification Plan

The City will establish and maintain a Position Classification Plan. The Common Council has responsibility for adopting the position classification plan that assigns all City positions to position classifications. This position classification plan shall include all regular full-time and part-time positions in the City covered under the Employee Handbook, with the exception of LPPSA, LPPNSA, IAFF, ATU and Library positions. The classification plan shall be maintained, and reviewed at the time of a vacancy, to reflect the current responsibilities and requirements and other applicable factors for all covered City positions. For each position there shall be a written position or class description which will include the following:

- a. Position or classification title;
- b. FLSA status;
- c. A position summary which explains the nature of the work responsibilities of the position;
- d. The essential duties and responsibilities;
- e. Position requirements such as the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for performance of the work;
- f. A statement of the education, experience and training required, and desired (if different) for recruitment;
- g. Specialized requirements such as licensures, certifications, or registrations; and
- h. Physical requirements and working conditions in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Section 2. Maintenance of Classification Plan

The Director of Human Resources shall be responsible for the preparation, administration and maintenance of the classification plan to ensure that position classifications accurately reflect the essential duties and responsibilities, required knowledge, skills, and abilities, and other position requirements. Department Heads shall be responsible for notifying the Director of Human Resources of substantive changes in the nature of the duties, responsibilities, working conditions, or other factors affecting the classification of any existing position in their department.

The Director of Human Resources or designee shall review and analyze changes in position classifications and determine whether the change in the nature or level of duties and responsibilities warrants a revision or reassignment of the position classification, establishing a new position classification to which the position is assigned, or taking other appropriate action.

The Director of Human Resources or designee shall determine whether changes in a position classification warrants a review of the job evaluation points assigned to a position classification and if so, whether that review results in a change in the position classifications assigned grade in the Compensation Plan.

The Human Resources Department shall maintain all official position descriptions for all City positions.

Section 3. Classification of New Positions

The Director of Human Resources or designee shall be responsible for analyzing and assigning new positions to existing position classifications or developing a new position classification and evaluating the new position classification for placement in the City's Compensation Plan. New positions must be approved by the Common Council. The Director of Human

Resources, or designee, shall be responsible for determining the qualifications and experience level of the new position, in consultation and review with the Department Head and Mayor.

Section 4. Amendments to the Classification Plan

The Common Council shall approve amendments to the Classification Plan by adding, changing, or deleting positions or classes of positions and salary grades based on internal analysis, market comparisons, authorized budget allocation and other relevant factors, based upon the Director of Human Resources recommendations. New positions introduced during the budget process are subject to Council rule 22. The Common Council reserves the right to modify or eliminate all or any portion of the Classification Plan at any time.

Section 5. Use of the Classification Plan

The classification plan is used for the following:

- a. As a guide for recruiting and determining eligibility of applicants for employment in City positions;
- b. In determining lines of promotion and promotion eligibility;
- c. Development of employee training programs;
- d. Determining compensation levels for position classifications, and;
- e. Providing uniform job terminology

Section 6. Administration

The City of La Crosse Common Council authorizes the Director of Human Resources to implement the Classification Plan.

Section 7. Request for Reclassification

Requests for reclassification of a position to a higher classification grade should be submitted, in writing, by the Department Head to the Human Resources Department between April 1 and April 15 of each calendar year. The request should include the specific reasons for the request for reclassification, and must clearly demonstrate increased complexity and/or responsibility within their respective position. Upon receipt of the request the Director of Human Resources or designee shall study the request and determine the merit of the request for reclassification. If the Director of Human Resources determines a reclassification is justified, a recommendation shall be presented to the Common Council. If approved by Common Council, the Director of Human Resources or designee shall make the necessary changes to maintain a fair, equitable and accurate classification plan.

If the request for reclassification is denied based on the merit of the request, the employee has the ability to appeal the determination within 20 calendar days of the date of the determination. Human Resources will coordinate a review of the appeal to the reclassification determination by an outside consultant. If the consultant determines a reclassification is justified, a recommendation shall be presented to the Common Council.

COMPENSATION PLAN

Section 1. Coverage of the Compensation Plan

Employees shall be compensated in accordance with the Compensation Plan established by the City and adopted by the Common Council and administered by the Human Resources Department. Positions covered by LPPSA, LPPNSA, IAFF and ATU and Library positions are not included in the City's Compensation Plan. The City shall develop and maintain a compensation plan based on equitable compensation relationships for all position classifications covered by the Compensation Plan in accordance with state and federal laws. The compensation plan shall include all regular full time and regular part-time position classifications covered under the Employee Handbook of the City.

Section 2. Objectives

The City recognizes that employees play a significant role in the provision of services in the community. The City strives to recruit and retain high quality employees to provide public services. The City has identified the following objectives in its Compensation Plan:

- Provide fair and equitable rates of pay to employees
- Develop a system that establishes a market rate and salary range for each position.
- Establishes rates of pay that allows the City to successfully compete for, recruit and retain qualified employees
- Establishes a market position which is fiscally responsible with public resources
- Ensures consistent administration throughout the City

The City upholds the principal of equal employment opportunity (EEO), basing differentials in pay solely on qualifications, position responsibilities and individual performance without regard to non-position related attributes. No individual shall be discriminated against with respect to compensation because of race, color, creed, religion, political affiliation, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran's status, disability or any other group or class against which discrimination is prohibited by state or federal law.

Section 3. Compensation Plan

The compensation plan is designed to establish and maintain a salary structure which attracts, motivates, recruits and retains qualified employees and is competitive with the local labor market. These objectives are accomplished through the use of:

- a. Formal job evaluation system.
- b. Competitive compensation structure with salary increases based on factors as determined by the Common Council.
- c. The compensation plan will consist of salary grades with an established minimum, midpoint, and maximum rate. Position classifications will be placed in a salary grade based on the formal job evaluation ranking of the position classification and upon market considerations.
- d. The overall compensation plan (pay and benefits) will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis. Recommended changes shall be communicated to the Common Council and employees.
- e. The overall compensation (pay and benefits) may be limited by budgetary constraints (available revenues) and be structured accordingly.

The compensation plan is structured with twenty (20) grades with a seven (7%) percent spread between grades. Each grade is comprised of eleven (11) steps with a 2.75% spread between steps.

Section 4. Maintenance of Compensation Plan

The Director of Human Resources shall review the status of the compensation plan annually and evaluate any amendment(s) necessary to maintain an up-to-date and competitive compensation structure.

The Director of Human Resources, in consultation with the Mayor, shall make recommendations for modifications to the plan to the Common Council based upon a study of local economic conditions, the financial state of City government, and market conditions of position classifications and other relevant factors deemed appropriate for consideration.

Section 5. Transition to a New Compensation Plan (2014)

The following three principles shall govern the transition to a new pay plan:

- a. No employee shall receive a pay reduction as a result of the transition to a new pay plan.
- b. Employees being paid at a rate lower than the minimum wage rate for their position classification in the new compensation plan shall receive an increase to the minimum of the new pay grade.
- c. Employees being paid at a rate above the maximum rate established for their position classification shall have their wage frozen at that level until such time as the maximum rate for their position equals or exceeds the employee's wage. At such time when employee's pay realigns with the pay range for their position, the employee shall be placed at the step closest to their current wage which provides an increase.

Section 6. Payment at Listed Rate

All employees covered by the compensation plan shall be paid within the pay range established for their respective position classification (with the exception of 5(c) noted above).

Section 7. Rate of Pay upon Hire (New employee)

New employees to the City of La Crosse shall be hired at the minimum rate of the salary grade assigned to their position classification. Appointments above the minimum rate of the salary grade are subject to the approval of the Director of Human Resources, when deemed necessary to serve the best interests of the City, based on such factors as qualifications or prior experience of the applicant, a shortage of qualified applicants available at the minimum rate, or the inability to hire qualified applicants willing to accept employment at the minimum rate. Human Resources shall consider internal equity of incumbent employees in the classification and department when making an employment offer for compensation above the minimum rate established for the classification. The salary may not exceed the maximum rate of the range of the salary grade to which the position is assigned.

A starting wage above step 6 (midpoint) in the compensation plan for "new employees" shall require the approval of the Common Council upon the recommendation of the Director of Human Resources and the Mayor. The compensation level of current employees in the same classification will not be increased to provide a higher rate of pay for a new hire. Department Heads are not authorized to present compensation offers to potential candidates. It is the responsibility of the Human Resources Department to present all employment offers to potential employees, including wage and benefit levels.

Section 8. Salary Adjustments

The Director of Human Resources or designee shall be responsible for implementing all salary adjustments. Employees shall be advised of all salary changes. Salary adjustments may occur as a result of the following:

- a. **Across the Board Increase:** The Common Council may grant an across the board adjustment each fiscal year based on the recommendation of the Director of Human Resources and the Mayor, and budgetary considerations. The increase shall be applied to the midpoint (step 6) of each grade; the remaining steps are calculated from the midpoint, maintaining a 2.75% differential between steps. Subject to funding, changes to the compensation plan shall take effect on the first full pay period in January of each year.
- b. **Step Increase:** Step increases for those employees who have not reached the maximum of the range assigned to their position may be authorized by the Common Council. Annual performance will be the determining factor for a step increase. Employees who leave City employment prior to July 1 shall not be eligible for a step increase or stipend. Provisions for step increase are defined in Section 9.

- c. **Demotion – Performance Related:** An employee may receive a decrease in salary due to a demotion to a lower level position assigned to a lower salary grade. The new salary must fall within the range of the new position classification, and be an established step within the salary grade.
- d. **Promotion:** The salary of an employee promoted, or assigned an interim appointment, to a exempt professional position classification with a higher salary grade, shall receive a minimum of four percent (4%) increase for one grade, or eight percent (8%) for two grades or more, provided the employee meets the minimum requirements of the position as determined by the Department Head, subject to review and approval by the Director of Human Resources. The employee shall be placed at the pay step which provides the minimum of four percent (4%) or eight percent (8%) increase. The new salary must fall within the range of the new position classification, and be an established step within the salary grade. If the four percent (4%) or eight percent (8%) is less than step one of the salary grade, the employee will be placed at step one. Promotion or interim assignment may only occur when a position is vacated. At the completion of the interim assignment the employee would return to their former position, at the step they would have been placed at had they remained in the position.
- e. **Reclassification:** When a position is reclassified resulting in the assignment of the position to a different salary grade, the Director of Human Resources has the discretion to adjust the salary upward, provided that the adjusted salary does not exceed the maximum of the new salary range; or to adjust the salary by placing it in the step which is closest to, or equal to, the employee's current rate however it shall not result in a pay decrease. In cases where the current salary is below the minimum of the new grade the salary shall be brought up to the minimum of the new salary grade. Employees who experience a *negative* change in pay grade as a result of reclassification may not experience a reduction in pay. If the employee's present pay falls within the new range, the employee will be placed in the new range at the step closest to their current pay, without a decrease. If the employee's current pay exceeds the new range maximum, the employee will maintain their current rate of pay however would not be eligible for further base-accumulating pay increases until his/her pay is again within the pay range for the new position.
- f. **Transfer:** The Director of Human Resources may adjust the salary of an employee transferred to a non-exempt position based on qualifications and relevant prior experience, within the established pay grade. Human Resources shall consider internal equity of incumbent employees in the classification and department when making an employment offer for compensation above the minimum rate established for the classification. Employees who transfer to a position with the same job title shall receive no adjustment in base pay.

Section 9. Performance Evaluations and Step Increases

Performance evaluations are conducted on an annual basis to provide a planned and orderly means of evaluating individual performance. The performance evaluation provides an opportunity for performance feedback and to establish goals and objectives for the upcoming performance period. It is meant to improve employee performance at virtually any level of performance. The following principles shall be followed for the administration of the performance evaluation program:

- a. Step increases are subject to funding by Common Council through the budgetary process.
- b. Subject to funding and eligibility requirements for step increases, step increases shall be effective the first full pay period in July.
- c. Performance evaluations shall be conducted annually, and shall serve the evaluation period of June 1 (previous year) through May 31 (present year). Human Resources will provide Performance Evaluation forms to be used in evaluating employee's performance. All evaluations must be received in Human Resources by the end of June. Failure to do so will result in the delay of the step increase for the employee until completion of the review and its review by the Human Resources Department. In these cases, a retroactive step increase will be granted with the effective date of the first full pay period in July, assuming the employee has "met" or "exceeded" expectations in each of the performance factors.

- d. An employee must receive a “meets expectations” or “exceeds expectations” in each performance factor to be eligible for a step increase. Progression shall be limited to one step. Employees at or above the top step who meet the established performance factors shall receive a \$500 performance stipend, subject to Common Council funding. The stipend shall be received in the paycheck representing the first full pay period in July.
- e. The responsibility for conducting performance evaluations is delegated to the employee’s immediate supervisor. The Department Head is responsible for reviewing the completed performance evaluations to ensure accuracy and consistency within the Department. The Human Resources Department will review all evaluations to ensure consistency city-wide.
- f. Department Heads will be evaluated in a closed session by the Mayor and designated member(s) of the Executive Committee. Members of the Common Council may provide written input to the evaluators. While in closed session only the Mayor and member(s) of the Executive Committee may participate in the performance evaluation.
- g. Guidelines for conducting effective performance reviews are available in the Human Resources Department.
- h. The original performance evaluation, as well as employee self-evaluation or comments, shall be maintained in the employee’s personnel file.
- i. All personnel should understand clearly that step increases are based upon performance and not upon the mere passage of time.
- j. If no increase has been recommended, the reason for this will be communicated to the employee by their immediate supervisor. A performance improvement plan will be initiated.
- k. Initial pay step advancement for a new, transferred, or promoted employee: To be eligible for the initial step advancement, the new, transferred or promoted employee must have six months of competent service in the new position by the salary review date of July 1 (i.e. hired, transferred or promoted to a new position the previous calendar year between July 1 and December 31). An employee hired, transferred or promoted to a position within the first six (6) months of the year would not be eligible for a step advancement for that year, as they would not meet the six (6) months of service by the July 1 salary review date.

Section 10. Effective Date of Salary Changes

Salary changes shall become effective on the date of the transfer, promotion or demotion.

Section 11. Mandatory Deductions from Salary

Deductions which are required by law shall be deducted from employees’ pay and may include:

- a. Federal income tax.
- b. State income tax.
- c. Social Security/Medicare.
- d. Wisconsin Retirement System.
- e. Garnishments.
- f. Other deductions as requested and authorized by the employee for benefits.

Section 11. Advance on Wages

There shall be no advance on wages and no paycheck will be released early.

Section 12. Amendments to the Compensation Plan

The Common Council reserves the right to modify or eliminate all or any portion of the Compensation Plan at any time.