

Pay Policies

The below pay policies for hiring rate/starting salary and promotions shall be in effect September 1, 2020, and as long as career path pay plan is continued.

Hiring Rate/Starting Salary:

All employees will normally be hired at the minimum of their assigned salary grade. Starting pay above the minimum may be approved by the County Manager following the below guidelines:

Direct Experience:

A new employee with direct experience may be hired at the step equivalent to the years of direct experience the employee has prior to hire. Any starting salary above minimum must be approved by a management team including the Human Resources Director and Finance Director prior to County Manager approval.

Direct experience is defined as the years of service in a comparable or related position for an entity that participates in the North Carolina Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System (LGERS) or North Carolina Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System for Local Law Enforcement Officers (LGERS LEO).

An entity that participates in the North Carolina Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS), or with a federally recognized Indian Tribe or federal agency is considered as indirect experience. On occasion, this indirect experience may be viewed as direct experience in the salary calculation when the management team and the County Manager take into account the level of expert knowledge, skills and abilities the new hire acquired through such prior employment relative to the position for which they are being hired to fill.

Example: A social worker with 12 years' experience in another county who participates in LGERS can be hired at Step 12 based on their direct experience.

Law Enforcement:

In addition to the above, active duty certified North Carolina law enforcement officers who apply to be employed as a certified law enforcement officer with the Jackson County Sheriff's Office may also qualify for direct experience under the following conditions:

1. The applicant must be certified under the North Carolina Department of Justice through one of two divisions:
 - a. the NC Sheriff's Training and Standards and/or
 - b. the Criminal Justice Training and Standards.
2. The applicant must be actively working as a full-time NC certified law enforcement officer.

3. Only the consecutive years of North Carolina certified law enforcement service up to the time of application can be counted towards direct experience. (Note – NC certified years of service associated with retired officers may only be counted as indirect experience as defined by this policy).

Any starting salary above the minimum must be approved by a management team including the Human Resources Director and Finance Director prior to County Manager approval.

Example: An applicant that has worked for Western Carolina University for five years as a certified law enforcement officer and continues to work for WCU at the time of employment with the Jackson County Sheriff's Office can be hired at a Step 5 based on their direct experience.

Licensure and/or Certification:

Adjustments may be calculated if the position with the county requires a professional licensure and/or certification as mandated by North Carolina General Statutes in order to perform the duties of the position if the following conditions are met:

1. An assessment and verification will be made of the applicant's prior employment while in possession of such licensure and/or certification to ensure it was full-time with either the State of North Carolina, a political subdivision thereof, a federally recognized Indian Tribe, or federal agency.
2. The applicant's licensure and/or certification must be in an acceptable active status at the time of hire.
3. Any starting salary above the minimum must be approved by a management team including the Human Resources Director and Finance Director prior to County Manager approval.

Public Health Registered Nurses:

In addition to the above, registered nurses who apply to be employed as a public health nurse with the Department of Public Health may also qualify for direct experience under the following conditions:

1. Must possess an active current license to practice as a Registered Nurse in North Carolina issued by the North Carolina Board of Nursing.
2. The applicant must be actively working as a full-time registered nurse in the State of North Carolina at the time of application. Employment in the private or non-profit sector which would normally be considered as indirect experience may be evaluated as direct experience.
3. Only the consecutive years of licensed employment as a North Carolina registered nurse up to the time of application may be counted towards direct experience.

Any starting salary above the minimum must be approved by a management team including the Human Resources Director and Finance Director prior to County Manager approval.

Public Health Physician Extender II:

In addition to the above, nurse practitioners who apply to be employed as a physician extender II with the Department of Public Health may also qualify for direct experience under the following conditions:

1. Must possess an active current license to practice as a nurse practitioner in North Carolina issued by the North Carolina Board of Nursing.
2. The applicant must be actively working as a full-time nurse practitioner in the State of North Carolina at the time of application. Employment in the private or non-profit sector which would normally be considered as indirect experience may be evaluated as direct experience.
3. Only the consecutive years of licensed employment as a North Carolina nurse practitioner up to the time of application may be counted towards direct experience.

Any starting salary above the minimum must be approved by a management team including the Human Resources Director and Finance Director prior to County Manager approval.

Indirect Experience:

A new employee with indirect experience may be hired at a step equivalent to a portion of the indirect experience the employee has prior to hire following the below formula. When calculation results in partial number or decimal, the amount should be rounded down to the nearest whole number to determine Step, with the exception of an employee with eligible service above one year, but less than two years, the indirect experience may be rounded up so that the employee may begin at a starting salary calculated at Step 2.

$$\# \text{ of years of indirect experience} \times 25\% + 1 = \text{Step}$$

Indirect experience is defined as the years of service in a comparable or related position for an entity who does not participate in LGERS which may include employers of the private sector, non-profits, TSERS, and volunteer fire departments and rescue squads. Employees coming from an entity who participates in TSERS must have creditable service in the system that is transferrable to LGERS.

Example: A social worker with 12 years' experience in the private sector is hired by DSS and can be hired at Step 4 based on their indirect experience. $(10 \times .25 + 1 = 4)$.

The County Manager has the authority to approve up to Step 12. Any starting salary above Step 12 or a starting salary that does not meet the above guidelines must be approved by the Jackson County Board of County Commissioners.

Promotion:

When a promotion occurs, the employee's salary shall be increased to the greater of (1) the minimum rate of the salary range assigned to the classification to which the employee is promoted or (2) adjusted to the career path step within the salary range assigned to the classification if the promotion is within the career ladder at the recommendation of the Department Head, Human Resources Director, Finance Director and approval of the County Manager provided that the adjusted salary does not exceed the maximum of the assigned salary range.

Trainee/Work Against and Demotion pay policies are outlined in the Jackson County Human Resources Manual.

Adopted: 06/18/2018

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