



Compensation Policy

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Owner	Board of Commissioners (BOC)
Reviewer(s)	Chief Human Resources Officer, Human Resources Division Managers
Approver(s)	Board of Commissioners (BOC)
Related Policies	Employment; Performance Appraisal
Related Standards	N/A
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HR Review Cycle	Every 2 years

1. PURPOSE

To provide regulations concerning the compensation of approved county positions.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to full-time and part-time positions. If you have questions regarding this policy, contact Human Resources.

3. DEFINITIONS

Market Control Point (MCP) - represents a fair and competitive salary based on market pay levels and indicates that internal salary progression for individual employees is reasonable and promotes pay equity. For certain classifications, the market control point is the midpoint of the range.

Grade and Step Plan - A salary structure with standard progression rates based on acceptable performance. This structure is established for sworn/certified classifications.

Sworn - Employees who are employed in positions requiring active Georgia POST Peace Officer Certification or active certification from the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council and/or State of Georgia Emergency Medical Technician Certification. Sworn employees must take the oath of office to hold such position and have authorized powers such as power of arrest.

4. POLICY

The Compensation Plan is designed as a fair and equitable method of payment for employees in the county. The plan shall establish basic salary schedules as approved by the Board of Commissioners. The salary ranges will include minimum and maximum rates of pay for all positions included in the classification plans. The compensation of each employee is the product of the basic salary structure and the components that shall be used to adjust employee compensation.

A. Compensation Plan Structure Adjustments

Cobb County has established a Classification and Pay Schedule for all graded classifications. Each year the Board of Commissioners will decide on the applicability and the ability of Cobb County to apply an adjustment to the salary structure. These adjustments will be considered based on various factors that may include indexes, market reviews, and budgetary constraints. Structure adjustments will



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be implemented through a percentage increase which will be applied equally to all salary ranges.

As part of the County's compensation plan, the Board of Commissioners has implemented a Grade and Step Plan for certain graded sworn positions to provide a structure for movement within a salary range and across grades.

B. Merit Award Adjustments

The merit award adjustment will be used to reward employees for job performance. When deemed appropriate, the Board of Commissioners may approve Merit Award Adjustments for all employees as part of the annual budget process.

1. Increases are awarded to employees whose job performance either meets or exceeds performance expectations. The performance appraisal instrument is essential to administering this process effectively. The merit award program is based upon the principle that performance that is described as either meeting or exceeding performance expectations should be rewarded, because such performance is a greater contribution to the jurisdiction than performance that needs improvement or does not meet expectations.
 - i. Merit award adjustments for non-step employees are a percentage of the employee's base pay.
 - ii. Merit award adjustments as part of the Grade and Step plan will move employees to the next step of their grade.
2. The job performance of all employees is reviewed and appraised once a year. Under the "common review date" plan, all appraisals will be completed and submitted to Human Resources by January 31. Employees must have been employed prior to October 1 of the previous calendar year in order to be eligible for a merit increase. Merit increases become effective the first full bi-weekly in March for all eligible employees. Employees who do not have a performance evaluation for the previous year on file with Human Resources by January 31 are not eligible for a merit increase.
3. For non-step employees, if a merit increase would cause an employee to exceed the salary range on the merit effective date, then the employee shall be provided non-cumulative payment(s) which shall not increase the employee's base salary or rate of pay.

C. Starting Rates for New Employees

1. In most cases, a new employee will be paid the minimum rate of pay for the position. The minimum rate of pay for each position is based on the assumption that a new employee meets the minimum qualifications stated in the class specification. In the event that qualified applicants cannot be located for a given position, consideration should be given to holding the position and creating a lower-level position which will reflect lower-level duties and corresponding lower entrance requirements.
2. If a selected candidate exceeds the minimum qualifications stated in the class specification and will not accept appointment at the minimum rate of pay for the position, the candidate may be appointed at a higher rate within the salary range with the approval of the Chief Human Resources Officer, upon verification that the request will not result in a salary inequity. However, every effort should be made to recruit a qualified candidate who will accept appointment at the minimum rate of pay for the position.



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3. Persons beginning employment covered under the Grade and Step plan will begin at step one of the relevant classification. These new employees will be eligible to advance to the next classification after satisfactorily completing the working test period for the entry classification.
4. Experienced employees entering an entry classification under the lateral programs authorized by the County Manager will have base pay calculated on eligible service. The lateral employee will then be placed in a step that is consistent with the current salary guidelines.
5. Difficulty of recruitment may require payment of a higher rate of pay. If difficulty of recruitment at the minimum rate of pay for a class specification persists, consideration may be given to assigning a higher pay rate or reevaluation of the position to determine if a higher pay grade is indicated. Positions above the minimum rate must be secured within the framework of the budget of the department employing the individual.

D. Employee Transfers

An employee may be transferred to another department in a position with the same pay grade, and such transfer will not change the employee's pay or the date from which eligibility for consideration for a merit increase shall be counted.

E. Promotional Increases

1. When an employee is promoted or advanced to a position in a higher grade, the employee's salary will increase at least to the minimum of the new grade. If an employee is promoted or advanced to a position one grade or more higher, the increase will be at least the minimum of the new grade or at least a percentage increase of the MCP that will not create a salary inequity that cannot be justified. The maximum increase will be 15% of the MCP unless an equity adjustment is warranted. The County Manager, with the recommendation of the Chief Human Resources Officer and the requesting management, is granted the authority to make the appropriate adjustment to the salaries of the incumbents to avoid any inequity. No employee's salary will be set below the minimum or increased above the maximum of a salary range.
 - (a) Typical promotions are one to four pay grades. On the rare occasion where a promotion is more than four pay grades, the maximum 15% increase is not sufficient without causing an inequity with other incumbents. In these instances, the County Manager, with the recommendation of the Chief Human Resources Officer, is granted the authority to approve the promotional increase requested by management. Such approval must be documented in a letter of justification from management and placed in the employee's file.

Procedures for determining a promotional increase are:

- i. The department head will recommend the amount of the promotional increase within the standards stated in this policy.
- ii. The Chief Human Resources Officer will ensure that the standards of these policies are met before processing the recommended change.
- iii. The decision regarding a promotional increase will reflect the promoted employee's experience, seniority and performance in comparison with other employees' backgrounds in the same job or in the same department. Final



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approval for promotional salary rates and pay adjustments will be determined by the Chief Human Resources Officer upon verification the adjustment will not result in a salary inequity.

2. Employees working in classifications with a Grade and Step plan who are promoted to another classification within the grade and step plan will have their salary adjusted to the corresponding salary rate for their step on the promotion classification. i.e., Police Officer II at Step 5 promoted to Police Sergeant will receive a pay adjustment to the current corresponding amount approved for Step 5 for Police Sergeant.

F. Effects of Demotion

When an employee is demoted to a lower position, the employee shall be paid at a rate which is within the approved range for the position. The rate of pay will be set by the County Manager in consultation with the Chief Human Resources Officer, taking into consideration the circumstances surrounding, and the reasons for, the demotion. Typically, demotions will follow the promotional policy in reverse and the employee's salary amount should be reduced by the amount it was increased when the promotion occurred. An employee who is demoted in a reduction in force action shall have his/her salary reduced to a point on the lower range which will cause a 5% reduction in compensation. All salary adjustments are limited to the salary range approved for the position.

G. Pay Plan Improvements

Whenever a new or different scale of salaries is made applicable to a class of positions, persons employed in these positions will receive salary adjustments as follows:

1. All employees whose salaries are below the minimum rates for the new grades will be brought to the minimum of the new grades in the proposed compensation plan.
2. Employees whose salaries are currently at or above the new range maximums will receive no adjustment in the implementation. Their base salaries shall be "frozen" until such time as the pay structure is adjusted upward and their current salaries are incorporated.

H. Supplemental Salaries

Specialty Pay: Any additional pay that is given in consideration for advanced knowledge, qualifications and/or certifications needed to effectively execute the official responsibilities and duties of their assigned position, and/or are exposed to above than average exposure to hazards in the execution of their official duties and/or responsibilities.

Specialty Pay does not refer to normal activities of the Public Safety function, which foundationally has specific qualifications, certifications, and/or meet yearly requirements to continue to hold such position. These are qualifications, certifications, and/or yearly requirements which are universal to the Public Safety job function and are a foundational requirement for all personnel who are in like positions.

Example: Police officers must hold a Georgia POST certification and meet certain yearly criteria to continue to have official powers of arrest in the state of Georgia. Also, all Public Safety personnel are inherently exposed to a certain amount of danger and hazards which are endemic to Public Safety.



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Categories of Specialty Pay:

1. Category I: Advanced Skill/Knowledge criteria- Each position is assessed to determine if the individual needs to have an advanced knowledge and/or certification to adequately execute the duties of the position. These positions would receive either a 5% or a 10% (of the MCP for their individual pay grade) SP, based on the determination made within this policy.
 - a. The following positions are allowed 5% SP within Category I.
 - i. Investigators/Recruiting and Background and general investigations at CCPD, CCSO, and CCFD.
 - ii. Crisis Response Team
 - iii. Mobile Field Force
 - iv. Fire Communications Specialist
 - v. Paramedics non-ALS Station
 - vi. CIU
 - vii. Community Affairs
 - viii. Ranger Unit
 - ix. PIO
 - x. Homeland Security Unit
 1. Includes officers/deputies assigned full-time as a Federal Task Force Officer
 - xi. Tactical Dispatch
 - xii. Civilian Training Officers
 - xiii. Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT)
 - b. The following positions are allowed 10% SP within Category I:
 - i. Certified Training Instructors assigned to CCFD Training Unit, Safety Village, DPS Training, Sheriff's Office Advanced Training or NCGLEA, or E911
 - ii. Specialty Investigators
 - iii. CCPD Persons Unit
 - iv. CCPD SVU
 - v. CCPD STEP Investigators
 - vi. CCPD TBCU Investigators
 - vii. CCSO Fraud and Forgery
 - viii. CCSO Fugitive Apprehension
 - ix. Field Training Officers (FTOs), Jail Training Officers (JTO), Post Certified Training Officers (CTO 911)
 - x. Firefighter III
 - xi. Paramedics ALS Station
 - xii. Fire Executive Officer
2. Category II: Additional Hazardous Exposure and advanced skill/knowledge/certification - Each position is assessed to determine if the individual's position will expose the employee to additional hazards beyond foundational hazards endemic to their job function in order to execute their official duties and are expected to obtain and maintain an advanced skill/knowledge/certification to execute their official duties.

Example: *Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD)*.

- a. The following positions are allowed 10% SP within Category II:



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- i. EOD
- ii. SWAT
- iii. Dive Team
- iv. Hazardous Material Response Team
- v. K-9
- vi. CCPD and CCSO Motor Unit
 - 1. Personnel must be assigned to Motor Unit full-time to receive this Specialty Pay (SP).
- vii. Technical Rescue Team
- viii. VIPER
- ix. MCS Organized Crime/Narcotics Unit
 - 1. Personnel must be assigned full-time to receive this Specialty Pay (SP)
- x. FAST
- xi. Mounted Patrol
 - 1. Personnel must be assigned to Mounted Unit full-time to receive this Specialty Pay (SP)
- xii. Medial Operations Team

ii. Employees will receive only one (1) SP pay designation in the event personnel meet required criteria in more than one SP area, with the exception of FTOs/JTOs/CTOs/Medical Operations Team Members/FF IIIs.

Example 1: If a person is assigned to SWAT and also as a DPS Instructor, both having a 10% SP designation, the person would only get 10% and not 20%.

Example 2: If a person is a FTO/JTO and also assigned to CCPD EOD, that person could receive 20% in SP based on their FTO/JTO status.

Example 3: If a person is assigned to the Medical Operations Team or is appointed as FF III and is certified as a Paramedic, that person could receive 20% in Specialty Pay based upon their station assignment.

iii. Sworn and civilian employees assigned to the Adult Detention Center up to and including the rank of Lieutenant will receive specialty pay in the amount of \$1.30 per hour.

iv. Sworn employees appointed to Deputy Sheriff III will receive specialty pay in the amount of \$1.40 per hour.

v. Sworn employees assigned to the K-9 unit will receive compensation for 1 hour per day at their regular rate of pay for the care of the canine.
Specialty pay will be discontinued in the event the employee is reassigned to a different position not eligible for specialty pay.

I. Shift Differential

Shift Differential is defined as additional pay received by full-time employees for working non-traditional hours that are generally less desirable or more hazardous. Shift differential shall not apply to 24-hour shifts. This policy outlines guidelines to be utilized in determining shifts and calculating pay for applicable employees.

- a. Shift Definition: Departments utilize a number of different shifts. Therefore, the



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following are guidelines utilized by department heads to determine shift assignment for employees under this policy. The department head will have final authority regarding shift designation.

- i. Day Shift is defined as official shift assignment in which the majority of the total regularly scheduled hours falls between 8AM and 4PM. Shifts that are evenly split between morning shift hours and day shift hours (i.e., 4AM to 12PM) will be considered day shift for the purposes of this policy.
 - ii. Evening Shift is defined as official shift assignment in which the majority of the total regularly scheduled hours falls between 4PM and 12AM. Shifts that are evenly split between day shift hours and evening shift hours (i.e., 12PM to 12AM) will be considered evening shift for the purposes of this policy.
 - iii. Morning Shift is defined as official shift assignment in which the majority of the total regularly scheduled hours falls between 12AM and 8AM. Shifts that are evenly split between evening shift hours and morning shift hours (i.e., 6PM to 6AM) will be considered morning shift for the purposes of this policy.
- b. Only full-time employees are eligible to receive shift differential. Part-time employees are not eligible to receive shift differential.
- c. Shift Differential Pay shall apply as follows:
 - i. Employees assigned to day shift shall not receive shift differential pay.
 - ii. Employees assigned to evening shift shall receive an additional \$0.50 per hour for all hours worked including hours outside their normally scheduled shift. This shall include on-call, standby pay, and leave pay.
 - iii. Employees assigned to morning shift shall receive an additional \$1.00 per hour for all hours worked including hours outside their normally scheduled shift. This shall include on-call, standby pay, and leave pay.
 - iv. Shift transfers must occur only after the required HR transaction deadline notice has been met so that pay rates can be adjusted in advance of such transfer. A copy of all shift transfer orders must be provided to Human Resources in advance of the HR transaction deadline.

J. Non-Cumulative Payments

The Board of Commissioners may approve payments to employees as single or multiple non-cumulative payments that do not adjust base salary. Such payments will be based on available funding in accordance with eligibility criteria. Such payments will be administered as determined by the Board of Commissioners.

5. EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to this policy must be justified and approved in advance by the Board of Commissioners.

6. NON-COMPLIANCE

Violations of this policy may include disciplinary action according to applicable County policies.



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REVISION HISTORY

Version ID	Revision Date	Author	Reason for Revision
	02-1995		Adoption
	10-1998		Revision
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	05-2020		Revision
v.1.0.2020	11-2020	Human Resources	Reformat
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