

HUMAN RESOURCES

Building and Maintaining a Productive Workforce, the Lifeblood of an Organization

SUMMARY

The 2019/20 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury elected to investigate what progress had been made on implementation of the 2006/07 Civil Grand Jury's report recommendation to re-centralize some of the County's HR (Human Resources) functions in light of a decentralization effort that took place in the early 2000s. Focus was placed on the recruitment function because the 2006/07 Final Report recommended that the recruitment function be kept in each department.

The 2019/20 Civil Grand Jury found that the recruitment function was not operating at an optimal level in either the centralized or decentralized departments. The staff in these departments should be assessed for skill level and classification and rebalanced among the departments in order to provide optimal recruitment for the County. In addition, it may be necessary to add additional personnel positions. The Compensation Philosophy used by the County for classification and salary levels, last revised in 1989, must be updated in order to keep the County in a competitive position in the area of recruitment and retention, especially in the recent pre-covid 19 environment of low unemployment. In addition, critical employee positions should be identified, and hiring and referral bonuses made available. Lastly, a viable Learning and Organizational Development Division should be reestablished.

BACKGROUND

Today, Monterey County's human resource (Human Resources) function is partly decentralized. Human Resources staff in 14 departments report directly to the Human Resources Department Director. Human Resources staff in the remaining 10 departments report to their respective department heads, but function under a 1999

“Partnership Memorandum of Understanding” between the then-County Administrative Officer¹ and the departments, detailing duties and responsibilities incumbent on those departments under a new “decentralized” human resources operation. At that time, the Human Resources decentralization covered all county departments, but functionally, this Human Resources decentralization was not all-inclusive. Only selected Human Resources subject areas were transferred down to the individual department level. These included recruitment, skills testing, and position classification. Other Human Resources functions were retained by central Human Resources. During the mid-2000s a limited re-centralization occurred, which resulted in the present hybrid Human Resources landscape.

The distribution of the Human Resources function among the county’s various departments is set forth below:

DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES RECEIVING ALL HR SERVICES THROUGH HRD		
Administration Office	Board of Supervisors	Clerk of the Board
County Counsel	Child Support	Civil Rights Office
Cooperative Extension	District Attorney	Elections
Human Resources	Information Technology	Public Defender
Sheriff-Coroner	Monterey County Free Libraries	
Monterey County Water Resources Agency		
DEPARTMENTS WITH HR STAFF WHO CARRY OUT SPECIFIC HR FUNCTIONS		
Agricultural Commissioner	Assessor-Clerk Recorder	Auditor / Controller
Department of Social Services	Health	Natividad Med. Ctr.
Probation	Emergency Communications / 911	
Treasurer – Tax Collector	Resource Management Agency (RMA)	

¹ At that time the CAO had responsibility for the county Human Resources function, which was then merely a division of the CAO.

METHODOLOGY

Selected departments of Monterey County were chosen for review of policies, procedures, and practices related to employee services. The departments that were analyzed were matched in approximate size and complexity. Half of the departments selected provided their own Human Resources services while half utilized the services of the Human Resources Department.

The following information was obtained: 1) organizational chart of staff positions within the Department; 2) documentation of current budgeted positions; 3) documentation of positions by actual working/functional titles; 4) number and chart location of positions that have been created, eliminated, vacated and filled within the past fiscal year; and, 5) duration of any position vacancies (newly created or existing).

The Report issued by the 2006/07 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury also was reviewed, as were County budgets. Personnel Policies and Practices were researched. Finally, members of the Civil Grand Jury conducted interviews with several department heads and were provided with additional data based on the interviews.

DISCUSSION

Human Resources – the people – are the lifeblood of an organization. The Human Resources Department is the heart that pumps the blood and sustains the life of the organization. In general, Human Resources is charged with building and maintaining a healthy, viable, and productive workforce. Building the workforce, specifically recruitment and hiring, is key for Human Resources. It is foundational. Human Resources faces myriad challenges in maintaining today's workforce, including: compliance with laws and mandates, management, leadership, training and development, innovation, performance, compensation, and benefits. These

challenges take on an even greater scope for a Human Resources charged with building, managing, and sustaining the biggest workforce in the County. Approximately 5,200 County employees serve 438,000 Monterey County residents, as found in the 2017 Budget.

Vacancies

An example of two departments that have their own Human Resources staff are the Department of Social Services and the Health Department. Using data provided by each department, the Department of Social Services has 875 full-time-equivalent (FTE) employees including 20 Human Resources staff. The ratio of Human Resources staff to employees is approximately 1:44. Their vacancy rate in November 2019 was 8.3%. The Health Department has 1,102 FTE employees including 12 Human Resources staff. The ratio of Human Resources staff to employees is approximately 1:92. Their vacancy rate in November 2019 was 23%. This comparison suggests that the total Department staff has an effect on Departmental vacancy rates. Through several interviews it is evident that recruitment for both County personnel vacancies and rates of hire for positions in centralized or decentralized departments has not been occurring at an optimal level.

Training

The Learning and Organizational Development (LOD) Division of the central Human Resources Department was responsible for county workforce training. Due to budget-cutting measures implemented in the 2018/19 fiscal year, LOD lost all but one of its staff, who was reassigned to another Human Resources function. Consequently, the ability to deliver quality and effective employee training through its Learning and Development Network (LDN) system was eliminated. An exclusively online platform, Learning Management System (LMS) was put in place as a substitute.

The Monterey County Health Department participated in a County-wide Employee Engagement survey in 2019. A series of questions were posed, covering several areas related to workplace environment, including personal relationships, department

leadership, and “career development.” In regards to the latter, respondents reported a satisfaction rate of slightly more than 60% to the question: “I am satisfied with the job-related training Monterey County offers.” This result is not a high level of satisfaction as measured by the above-mentioned survey and leaves room for improvement.

A robust training program that includes in-person training is critical in recruiting and retaining valued employees, especially in a low unemployment environment. The investment in the educational advancement and leadership development of the County's employees may reduce the high cost of employee turnover over the long run.²

Compensation

The Human Resources Department handles compensation for the entire County workforce. In a competitive labor environment it is important for purposes of recruitment and retention that an organization carefully considers how it handles employment offers, compensation, benefits, promotions, raises, and bonuses.

As a tool to promote a structured approach and uniformity of outcome in the setting of employee compensation, Monterey County in the 1980's adopted what it called a “Compensation Philosophy” (Appendix A). According to interviewee accounts, the Compensation Philosophy was an effort to use a market value mechanism to set wages. The County would look at what selected cities and counties in the state paid workers who occupied identical/similar positions to those being filled here. Dollar figures would be averaged, and that number would constitute the top of the compensation range for that same position in Monterey County. The comparison entities would be chosen based on a variety of factors, including similar cost of living and relative employer competitiveness. The list of these comparison agencies was last revised in 1989 and consists of eight counties and two cities.

²“To Have and To Hold,” <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/to-have-and-to-hold.aspx>

In human resources terminology, a Compensation Philosophy is a form of a mission statement, providing direction regarding an employee compensation budget. The Compensation Philosophy is used to develop a compensation policy or plan. This could include such items as types of compensation, how those different types will be used, and the definition of a market for comparison purposes. The practical use of “Compensation Philosophy” wording by Monterey County reflects archaic terminology. An example of a contemporary comprehensive Compensation Philosophy is presented in Appendix B.

The Civil Grand Jury concluded that the “Compensation Philosophy” described above was deficient in the following ways: 1) the 30-year old list of comparison entities is both unwieldy and outdated, and 2) the comparison’s use of the average compensation rate paid by comparison entities as the top of the Monterey County pay scale acts as a disincentive for both current and potential employees. This Compensation Philosophy is unlikely to satisfy the County’s need for contemporary market analysis in the establishment of competitive employee compensation packages. It is, therefore, less than fully effective in furthering the County’s recruitment and retention goals.

The Civil Grand Jury noted that the County now recognizes the desirability of reviewing its Compensation Philosophy with a view toward possibly undertaking revisions, at least with respect to the list of comparison public entities governing calculation of the wage scale. An experienced compensation consultant could be of critical assistance in the creation of a comprehensive and easily understood employee compensation and classification program.

Recruitment

The employee vacancy rate among the various County departments runs from 0%-30%. As of November 2019, the employee vacancy rate in some areas of the Health Department ranged from 20%-30%. The lengthiest vacancies in that department were in the categories of Environmental Health Specialist, Psychiatric Social Worker, Nurse Practitioner, and Physician. According to witness testimony, there are several possible reasons for this vacancy rate, including non-competitive salaries and turnover of workers who use employment with Monterey County as a training ground for employment elsewhere.

The Health Department is one of the county departments with its own Human Resources function, operating under the 1999 “Partnership Memorandum of Understanding” with the County Administrative Office. The Employment Engagement Survey of 2019 for the Health Department, mentioned above, indicated that respondents gave a low score when asked if they are paid fairly for the work they do, and gave a low score when asked if the amount of work that they are expected to perform is reasonable. Witnesses testified that these low scores reflect the high vacancy rate which leads to an overburdened workforce.

The Civil Grand Jury was informed by interviewees that service areas of the Health Department’s Public Health Bureau which have seen the highest number of vacancies in the last three years are those that are not grant-funded and are primarily focused on communicable disease control/prevention. Among the Public Health program areas with the highest vacancy rates, communicable disease control/prevention is the most impacted in terms of its ability to deliver services. Specifically, the ability to investigate reported incidents of tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases is adversely impacted. Also impacted are the case management activities of Public Health social work staff.

In the event of multiple job vacancies at any particular point in time, Public Health Bureau managers currently prioritize recruitment efforts to fill the vacancies. The

highest priority usually is given to nurses, according to those interviewed, because Health Department Human Resources staff is unable to apply its resources effectively to all concurrent Bureau openings.

The Health Department currently does not use monetary bonus incentives to fill vacancies. With the exception of physicians and some other hard-to-fill positions, relocation expenses are not offered. In addition, performance-based incentives are not a component of Monterey County's personnel policies and practices.

The Monterey County Personnel Policies and Practices Resolution (adopted 9-15-98, Updated 7-19-19), which includes the basic salary and benefits, and personnel rules and procedures for Monterey County employees generally, contains a section under Salary and Benefits section on employee incentive programs.

Section A.49.1 (Employee Bonus Programs, amended 4-29-08) reads in part:

- a) All positions, except those at Natividad Medical Center

An employment bonus of up to \$5,000 may be paid to new, permanent employees hired into 'difficult-to-fill' positions as determined by the County Administrative Officer...

Section A.49.2 (Employee Referral Bonus Program, amended 4-29-08) reads in part:

- a) All positions except those at Natividad Medical Center

A bonus of up to \$2,000 may be paid to permanent employees who refer successful candidates hired into 'difficult-to-fill' positions as determined by the County Administrative Officer...

Section A.49.3 (Employee Relocation/Moving Allowance, revised 7-22-08) reads in part:

The County Administrative Officer may approve relocation and/or moving expenses for newly hired county employees, except those appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The County Administrative Officer may authorize a Relocation Moving Allowance of up to \$10,000. S/he must request Board of Supervisors authorization for Relocation/Moving Allowance in excess of \$10,000...

The Civil Grand Jury learned that none of these incentives were utilized, except for relocation expenses for physicians on a limited basis.

As learned in several interviews, the ability of departments across the County to recruit, hire, and retain qualified candidates depends upon a robust recruitment function as well as a compensation structure that allows Monterey County to offer competitive compensation and benefits in an environment that supports the employee's career aspirations. Successful on-going recruitment of employees to fill critical positions prepares the County to provide the services and protections needed by residents of Monterey County, even in light of the COVID-19 crisis.

FINDINGS

- F1. As evidenced by interviews, the current level of vacant health care positions has a direct and negative impact on the County by reducing the County's ability to deliver community disease control and prevention outreach, and to provide adequate Public Health case management activities. This also creates an undue burden on the remaining staff that leads to job burnout.
- F2. Critical positions such as public health nurse practitioners, psychiatric social workers, environmental health specialists, and physicians are not being filled in a timely manner.

- F3. Human Resources staffing levels in some Departments are insufficient to maintain optimum staffing levels.
- F4. Current County personnel vacancy levels and rates of hire confirm that recruitment has not been occurring at an optimal level in either the centralized or the decentralized departments.
- F5. The compensation plan (currently called “Compensation Philosophy”) in use by Monterey County is outdated; the list of public agencies used for “market survey” comparison was last updated in 1989, more than 30 years ago.
- F6. As discussed in interviews, on-line learning systems may provide critical on-demand training, but they cannot replace the human interaction that occurs in person-to-person training, which supports job satisfaction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

When the 2019/20 Civil Grand Jury began our investigations, COVID-19 had not yet become a public health crisis. However, as we conclude our reports, we are tasked to specify a time frame within which to address our recommendations. We have done so, attempting to allow some extra time given the current situation. We ask the County Supervisors, Departments, Cities, and Special Districts responsible for enacting our recommendations to do their best to accomplish these goals as expeditiously as possible, given the effect of the current pandemic crisis on staffing availability.

- R1. The “Compensation Philosophy” should be updated to reflect appropriate and comparable counties and cities for each job classification. This update should be completed in six months.

- R2. County Human Resources should engage an experienced compensation consultant to assist in the creation of a transparent and global compensation and classification program. This should be completed in three months.
- R3. Budgeted positions should be posted in a timely manner giving priority to posting positions that affect the health and safety of County residents. This posting should occur within 60 days.
- R4. Open positions should be proactively advertised within 30 days of an employment vacancy or upon notice of retirement, transfer, or resignation to avoid reduction of essential public services, departmental job burnout, and overtime or temporary hiring expense.
- R5. Each budget cycle should include specific opportunities for department heads to identify and justify specific referral and hiring bonuses for their hard-to-fill positions. This process should begin within six months of the date of this report.
- R6. In order to ensure an adequate staffing level for essential County public health workers, the County should begin a process to identify supplemental funding sources to mitigate un-forecast budget shortfalls in federal and state grants, aid, or other direct program funding. This analysis should be completed in 30 days.
- R7. The Learning and Organizational Development Division of the Human Resource Department should be restored to include classroom training. This should be completed within 18 months.
- R8. The County should conduct a review to determine the level of Human Resources staffing, both in the departments and in the Human Resources Department, that can provide support levels sufficient to achieve the 10%

vacancy rate goal as assumed with the County budget. This review is to be completed within 15 months.

REQUESTED RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Civil Grand Jury requests responses to the Findings and Recommendations from the following governing body within 90 days:

- Monterey County Board of Supervisors
Findings: F1 – F6
Recommendations: R1 – R8

INVITED RESPONSES

- Director of Human Resources, Monterey County Human Resources Department
Findings: F3, F4, F5, F6
Recommendations: R1 – R4, R7, and R8
- Director of Health, Monterey County Health Department
Findings: F1, F2
Recommendations: R2, R3
- County Administrative Officer, Monterey County Administrative Office
Recommendations: R5, R6

Reports issued by the Civil Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code §929 requires that reports of the Civil Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Civil Grand Jury.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Monterey County Compensation Philosophy
<https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-a-h/human-resources/human-resources/human-resources-services/compensation-philosophy>

Appendix B – San Mateo County Compensation Philosophy
<https://hr.smcgov.org/sites/hr.smcgov.org/files/documents/files/Classification%20and%20Compensation%20Guideline.pdf>

Appendix A

Search...



HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES
The Right Career, Right Here



COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY

In 1989, Monterey County implemented a change in their "market survey" comparison agencies list, utilized for compensation comparison purposes. The new comparison agencies was based on the following considerations:

1. Coastal geographic location potentially reflecting similar living conditions and cost of living;
2. Neighboring counties;
3. Agencies which impact our ability to recruit, hire and retain employees;
4. Agencies which as a group would provide a common frame of reference for job comparisons; and
5. A group of agencies which would provide a common market survey base for the majority of both management and represented classes. Monterey County will retain the flexibility to use a special group of comparison agencies for highly specialized classes.

Based on the above criteria, the comparison agencies are the following:

- San Mateo
- Santa Clara
- Santa Cruz
- San Benito
- Fresno
- San Luis Obispo
- Santa Barbara
- Ventura
- City of Monterey
- City of Salinas

[BACK TO HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES HOME PAGE](#)

[BACK TO HUMAN RESOURCES HOME PAGE](#)

Appendix B



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY

General Information

The County's compensation strategy supports County beliefs and aims to maintain external competitiveness and internal equity. It takes into account the following:

- Compliance with County obligations as stated in the Charter and Ordinance Code
- Fair compensation to employees
- Competitive compensation to attract applicants
- Comparability to other jurisdictions and agencies
- Budget and organizational issues and projections
- Trends, cost of living and funding issues
- Union agreements and issues
- Classification versus compensation issues

The County's compensation strategy focuses on the Bay Area labor market and include public employers both at the County and City level, and which may also include specialized private and public sectors for a few select jobs. The strategy uses a combination of market pricing and job ranking approach to pay determination.

Labor Market Comparators

San Mateo County compares salary information with:

- The four larger Bay Area Counties: San Francisco, Contra Costa County, Alameda County and Santa Clara County, and
- The two largest cities in the four comparator Bay Area Counties: Oakland and San Jose.

For medical related classes, the following jurisdictions are used for comparisons:

- Alameda County Medical Center
- Contra Costa Regional Medical Center
- Santa Clara Valley Medical Center
- San Francisco General Hospital

These agencies are used as comparators due to their geographic proximity to the County. These employers will have a significant impact on the labor market within which the County competes for talent pool.



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

For select classifications, the County may consider jurisdictions other than those identified above. The use of data from other agencies is done on a case-by-case basis. For example, for airport-related technical positions, the County has historically used the counties of Contra Costa, Santa Clara, Napa, Sonoma, and the cities of Hayward, Livermore, Tracy and Watsonville as these agencies have airport operations most comparable to the County's airports.

Labor Market Position

It is the intent of the County compensation policy to have salary rates for County positions adjusted if found to be significantly behind market, so that the new salary upon implementation is at the mean of the data for the comparator agencies. Generally, any adjustments greater than a standard annual adjustment amount are considered equity adjustments and are spread over the term of the contract period.

Relevance of External Data

To be considered comparable, data must be available from at least three comparable agencies. Agencies may be excluded from the data if the standard deviation for the comparator agencies salaries is greater than 10% of the County current base salary.

Timing of Salary Adjustments

Salaries are generally adjusted only during term bargaining for represented classes. For most management classifications, salaries are generally adjusted after completion of term bargaining with the County's major unions.

During periods of limited financial resources, equity adjustments are generally limited to classifications that are both significantly behind comparator data and for which the County is experiencing significant recruitment and retention problems. Where both conditions do not exist equity adjustments are generally not made.

Salary adjustments for management positions - Salaries for management classifications are assigned to a band. The bands are in increments of 5%. When making equity adjustments for management classifications, salaries are adjusted to the next closest band.



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

CLASSIFICATION PHILOSOPHY

General Information

Rule IV of the San Mateo County Civil Service Rules requires that all positions covered by the CS Rules be "classified according to the duties and responsibilities assigned." Titles, qualifications, and selection criteria of these classes should be logical, consistent and fair. This required information is presented in the form of a classification specification (herein referred to as "class spec").

Class specs are core documents for the County's civil service system and include essential types of information as required by Civil Service Rule IV, Section 2:

SECTION 2. CONTENT: All classification specifications shall contain a title, the distinguishing characteristics of the work, illustrative examples of duties and the minimum qualifications required to perform the work. Classification specifications shall include only those educational, training, physical and experience requirements, which are essential to adequate job performance. The content is illustrative and shall not be construed to be comprehensive or to limit the authority of department heads to direct and control the work of employees. Classification specifications will be prepared so as to promote the goals of affirmative action, to encourage upward and lateral mobility of employees, and to avoid the creation of dead end jobs. The classification specifications shall constitute a guide for establishing minimum employment standards, for examinations, and for evaluating the qualifications of applicants. The title of the classification shall be the title of all positions in the classification and shall be used on all official records.

In addition to these specifications, departments should establish performance standards and may develop more detailed job descriptions to assist employees in understanding their specific positions' responsibilities and level of performance expected.

Class Concepts

- ▶ San Mateo County prefers broad class concepts. Broad class concepts describe highly similar positions in one class concept, which usually results in a lesser number of class specifications.

Broad classes focus on broader knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) common to a large number of positions. There is a less exact fit of the employee to the position in this design but management flexibility is greatly expanded.



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

- San Mateo County employs multi-level classifications. The County groups similar duties under one classification but also recognizes that duties within these classifications are performed at varying levels of responsibilities.

The most common example of multiple-level classification is the entry/journey combination (e.g., Park Ranger I-II) in which employees are performing exactly the same types of duties though the I-level is learning and performing them as a trainee. Another common pattern is entry through advanced journey (e.g., Biologist Standards Specialist series). In these cases, the class spec makes clear the difference in duties and KSAs between each level.

Role of HR and the County Manager's Office in Classification

The Human Resources Department works very closely with the County Manager's Office (CMO) on classification issues that impact organization structure, budgeted positions, compensation, and all changes to the annual salary ordinance (i.e., periodic salary ordinance amendments).

On classification issues, the HR Director serves as the HR Director and the Executive Officer to the Civil Service Commission and is the final decision-maker on class issues affecting classified employees. When a classification action in any way impacts on the salary ordinance/budgeted positions, however, (e.g., a reclassification, a reorganization, or a salary range change), this requires review and approval by the County Manager prior to any action on the part of HR to evaluate the request.

Due to the potential fiscal impact of classification requests and the CMO's in-depth knowledge of current and potential organization/budget issues, all reclass requests are reviewed and approved for review by the CMO prior to HR undertaking a study.

In all cases, departments should be encouraged to discuss proposed classification actions with HR prior to submittal to the CMO so that various alternatives and solutions to perceived issues or problems could be explored in depth.



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

Definition and Purpose of a Class Study

A classification study is the process of thoroughly researching, analyzing, determining, and documenting the responsibilities, duties, knowledge, skills, and abilities related to a position (not a person) for classification, organizational or related purposes.

Classification studies are conducted to insure that a classification system is equitable and consistent within an organization, and that employees are fairly classified. Common types of classification studies are:

- Reclassification
- Reorganization
- Classification of newly budgeted positions
- Compensation review
- Establishment of new classifications

Who Can Initiate a Class Study?

- ▶ Department Managers
- ▶ Unions and Management (through contract negotiations)
- ▶ Human Resources (typically countywide studies or as a result of a reorganization or implementation of new technology or system)
- ▶ Board of Supervisors (as part of approving funding for new positions)

Employees may request classification studies through department managers. If denied, they may contact their representation group for further action.

Reclassification Studies

Reclassification is the process of reviewing the classification of a position for possible reallocation to another classification. Reclassification studies could result to the any of the following:

- Reclassification upward to a class with a higher salary and/or level.
- Reclassification downward to a class with a lower salary and/or level.
- Lateral reclassification to a class in the same salary range/level.

Reclassification should only be considered when there is substantial change in job duties over a period of time.



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

Factors Considered in Reclassification Studies

The following factors are considered when reviewing requests for reclassification studies and when conducting analysis in the course of reclassification study:

1. Nature, variety and scope of work
2. Complexity of work
3. Supervision or guidance received and exercised
4. Consequence of errors
5. Nature and finality of decisions

Factors NOT Considered in Reclassification Studies

The following factors are not considered when reviewing requests for reclassification studies and when conducting analysis in the course of reclassification study.

1. Person's length of service in the position or in the department and his/her loyalty to the department
2. Quality of incumbent's performance
3. Volume of work or changes to the volume of work
4. Person's current salary step
5. Person's dependability
6. Personal qualifications and experience (if not directly related to or required of the position)

Reclassification study is not to be used as a method for rewarding good performers or addressing poor performance.

Steps – Reclassification of a Filled Position to Existing Class

1. Department sends Reclassification Request Form to CMO with a copy to HR.
2. CMO and HR review requests during monthly Class/Comp Meetings.
3. If request is approved, Class/Comp Manager (CC Mgr) notifies department head, direct manager and union (if represented class).
4. If denied, CMO returns denied request to the manager requesting the study.
5. CC Mgr assigns study to an HR Analyst.



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

6. HR Analyst contacts incumbent(s) and respective manager(s) and sends out a Job Description Questionnaire (JDQ). Incumbent, his/her direct manager/supervisor and the department head must complete the JDQ.
7. JDQ is sent to HR Analyst who will prepare a reclassification study workplan. Workplan is sent to the incumbent, his/her direct manager/supervisor, manager requesting the study (if different from direct manager/supervisor), and CC Mgr.
8. HR Analyst reviews JDQ and schedules a desk audit, if necessary.
9. HR Analyst conducts desk audit and additional interviews as needed.
10. HR Analyst confers with CC Mgr on findings and possible recommendations.
11. HR Analyst prepares a report of findings and recommendations (Reclass Study Report) and submits to CC Mgr.
12. CC Mgr reviews the study and makes changes as necessary.
13. If report and recommendation is approved, CC Mgr forwards the report to the manager requesting the study.
14. Manager, HR Analyst and CC Mgr discusses recommendations and modifies report and/or recommendation as necessary.
15. HR Analyst prepares letter to Union(s) and gives union two weeks notice to request a meet-and-discuss regarding the matter.
16. Union representative and/or department manager discusses findings and recommendations with the incumbent(s).
17. After meeting all union obligations, HR Analyst prepares and submits to the CC Mgr a Salary Ordinance Amendment (SOA) entry.
18. CC Mgr incorporates SOA entry to the monthly SOA submitted to the Board of Supervisors.
19. SOA goes through 2 readings by the Board.
20. Upon adoption, reclassifications are effective 30 days after receipt of JDQ by HR for positions represented by SEIU and AFSCME. For all other positions,



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

reclassifications are effective at the start of the pay period, 30 days following Board adoption.

Steps – Reclassification of a Filled Position to a New Class

1. Follow steps 1 through 10 of Reclassification to Existing Classification.
2. HR Analyst conducts survey of comparable agencies, reviews similar internal classifications, interviews subject matter experts, and researches other sources for information regarding the new classification.
3. HR Analyst and CC Mgr discuss the new classification and determine appropriate salary range to propose to department.
4. Department reviews draft class spec and proposed salary and offers comments and suggestions.
5. Upon department agreement to classification and compensation, HR Analyst completes report of findings and recommendations (Reclass Study Report) and submits to CC Mgr.
6. CC Mgr reviews the study and makes changes as necessary.
7. If report and recommendation is approved, CC Mgr forwards the report to the manager requesting the study. Report includes information regarding the new classification. A cover letter from the CC Mgr accompanies the report with details regarding the proposed salary.
8. Manager, HR Analyst and CC Mgr discusses recommendations and modifies report and/or recommendation as necessary.
9. HR Analyst prepares letter to Union(s) and gives union two weeks notice to request a meet-and-discuss regarding the matter.
10. Union representative and/or department manager discusses findings and recommendations with the incumbent(s).
11. After meeting all union obligations, CC Mgr prepares and submits a Civil Service Commission Agenda item. Item includes a brief description of the classification, rationale behind its creation, proposed bargaining unit allocation and probationary period.



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

12. Civil Service Commission rules on the classification and CC Mgr notices appropriate department of its ruling.
13. Upon approval of the Civil Service Commission, HR Analyst prepares and submits to the CC Mgr a Salary Ordinance Amendment (SOA) entry.
14. CC Mgr incorporates SOA entry to the monthly SOA submitted to the Board of Supervisors.
15. SOA goes through 2 readings by the Board.
16. Upon adoption, reclassifications are effective 30 days after receipt of JDQ by HR for positions represented by SEIU and AFSCME. For all other positions, reclassifications are effective at the start of the pay period, 30 days following Board adoption.

Steps – Reclassification of a Vacant Position

1. Department prepares a description of the duties and responsibilities of the position.
2. CC Mgr reviews the duties and proposes appropriate classification.
3. Once appropriate classification is determined (and established, in the case of new classifications), CC Mgr prepares and submits an SOA to the Board.

If above action requires creation of a new classification, steps 2-12 of Reclassification to a New Classification.

Y Rating for Downward Reclassifications

Y Rating is the practice of continuing an employee's salary at a higher rate when the position has been reclassified to a classification that has a lower rate of compensation through a reclassification study. This is also referred to as "red lining."

The County's policy with respect to Y Rating is to provide an employee with the salary increases, if any, that the old classification would have received for a two-year period; and then freeze the salary until the salary for the new classification equals or exceeds the salary that the employee is receiving. At that point, the employee would again receive salary increases.



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

Definitions of Commonly Used Terms

Listed below are terms and phrases commonly used in connection with classification studies:

Classification: A collection of related duties and responsibilities that are grouped into a single body of work.

Classification Family: A group of classification series that are related by the similarity of functions performed. Examples include Management, Office Support, Paraprofessional, Technical, Skilled Crafts, and Professional.

Classification Plan: A document that generically defines levels of related classifications, forms a basis on which to classify future positions, and maps out their relationships to one another. Classification Plans are developed for classification families and when all of the classification plans are grouped together, they form the comprehensive listing of all County classifications. Classification plans assist in determining classifications and their levels within the County system.

Classified Position: A position in which the incumbent is covered by the provisions of the Civil Services Rules.

Classification Definition: A brief statement (two to four sentences) that describes the essential nature of the classification.

Classification Series: A group of classifications that are related by the performance of similar duties and responsibilities requiring the same knowledge, skills and abilities, but requiring them at increasingly higher levels of command. Examples include: Office Assistant I, Office Assistant II, Office Specialist, Lead Office Assistant, and Office Services Supervisor; and Management Analyst I, Management Analyst II, Management Analyst III, and Principal Management Analyst.

Classification Specification: A document that broadly describes the responsibilities, duties, and qualifications related to a particular type of job or similar group of jobs. May also be known as Classification Descriptions.

In a merit system, this document is essential in that it forms a basis to ensure that employees and potential employees are being treated fairly. The list of qualifications in each specification is used both for evaluation and formal testing purposes (components in tests are related to the qualifications listed). This



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

protects the County from evaluating or testing individuals on what might appear to be unfair or irrelevant items.

Also known as Job Specification.

Classification Study: The process of thoroughly researching, analyzing, determining, and documenting the responsibilities, duties, knowledge, skills, and abilities and other requirements related to a position (not a person) for classification, organizational or related purposes. For example, a study may be conducted in response to a reclassification request, to develop/revise a classification specification, or to assist in reorganization.

Classification Title: A brief and descriptive designation of the type of work performed. The classification title on payrolls, budgets, personnel reports and other official forms and reports dealing with positions or personnel will provide a common reference to the position. The classification title is selected to serve this purpose and does not limit the use of working titles.

Dictionary of Occupational Titles: A document printed by the U.S. Department of Labor that lists thousands of commonly used classification titles. Used as a reference document in creating new classification titles.

Distinguishing Characteristics: A section of the classification specification that differentiates the specific classification from all other related classifications in the County structure with emphasis on the differentiation between classifications in the same classification family and series. This is used when the **Definition** section cannot make an adequate differentiation between classifications. This section includes statements that clarify the essential nature of the work and the level of difficulty and responsibility involved. Distinctions as to level are expressed through statements about the difficulty and complexity of the work, the nature and extent of specific non-supervisory, supervisory or administrative duties and responsibilities, special hazards and the nature and method of supervision received.

EEOC Category: The occupational category defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for job titles. It is used for statistical reporting.

Established Date: A section of the classification specification that identifies the date that the classification specification was approved by the Civil Service Commission.

Examples of Duties: A section of the classification specification that lists typical duties performed by incumbents in the class. Duties are written in general terms, but enable the reader to obtain a more complete concept of the actual work performed.



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

The list is not intended to describe all the work performed in all positions in the class, nor do all examples apply to all positions allocated to the class. In the more populated classes only one portion of one work example may apply to a given position. The content is illustrative and is not comprehensive or meant to limit the authority of department heads to direct and control the work of employees. This section is not a substitution for the Distinguishing Characteristics section.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Status: The status that identifies whether or not the classification is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act. The FLSA status is exempt or non-exempt, or FLSA may not apply.

Job Class Code: The four-digit code that identifies the payroll code for the classification.

Knowledge and Skills/Abilities: A section of the classification specification that identifies of the attributes that an applicant must have in order to be successful in performing the tasks and responsibilities of a particular classification. A statement is considered knowledge if it describes the command of facts, rules, standards, practices, principles, etc. (what is to be known). A statement is a skill/ability if it describes the application of knowledge or understanding to the required activity (what is to be done).

Qualifications: A section of the classification specification that lists the typical or required education and experience for the job; the licenses, certificates and registrations required by law; the knowledge, skills, abilities and physical attributes needed to do the work; and the special requirements that may apply to specific positions.

Revised Date: A section of the classification specification that identifies the date that the most recent classification specification revision was approved by the EPS Director.

Supervision Received and Exercised: A section of the classification specification that describes the level of supervision received and exercised by positions in the class. This is usually provided only in management classifications.

Unclassified Position: A position in which the incumbent is not covered by the provisions of the Civil Services Rules.

Union Agreement: An agreement reached between a union/association with the County through formal contract negotiations/meet and confer processes. May also



San Mateo County Classification and Compensation Guidelines

be known as a union contract, memorandum of understanding, or memorandum of agreement.