

# CHAPTER 5 - CLASSIFICATION

## SECTION A APPLICABILITY

The Board of County Commissioners has the sole authority to approve or modify classifications for all positions within elected and appointed departments. This section applies to positions established within the budgets of elected offices and appointed departments.

## SECTION B CLASSIFICATION PLAN

### Development and Maintenance:

The Human Resources Department maintains a classification plan for all positions of employment within the County subject to preliminary approval by the County Administrator, and final approval by the Board of County Commissioners. The placement of each position in the classification plan is determined in accordance with the qualifications required, difficulty and responsibility of its designated duties.

## SECTION C CLASS SPECIFICATIONS

The Human Resources Department maintains a class specification for each class of positions and may add, combine, abolish or revise the class specifications. Each class specification includes the class title, a description of representative duties and responsibilities of positions included in the class, and a statement of the required, desirable and/or preferred qualifications for positions in the class.

Vested Rights: Kitsap County may review and revise the classification of any position. While a classification may attach to a position, an employee filling the position has no vested right in any existing job classification. Modification or abolishment of a classification description is not a personnel action subject to the grievance procedure described in this Personnel Manual.

## SECTION D NEW POSITIONS AND RECLASSIFICATION OF EXISTING POSITIONS

1. New positions or reclassification requests can be submitted under the following circumstances:
  - a. In preparation for submission of the annual budget
  - b. Initiation of position changes during the budget year due to changes in service demands, funding, legal, technical, organizational or programmatic requirements
  - c. As a result of a need to reorganize departmental functions or a gradual accretion of higher-level duties to an existing position; and
  - d. Pursuant to collective bargaining agreements

2. Whenever an Employing Official has a need to either add a new position or reclassify an existing position to a higher level job classification within the County's classification system, the Employing Official shall submit to the County Administrator, through Human Resources, a request to reorganize, or to request a classification study, in the format as established and maintained by the Human Resources Department. The information submitted shall include documentation explaining the need for the requested change and an analysis of the immediate and long-term budget impact. The County Administrator will submit the request to the Board of County Commissioners for preliminary approval. Upon preliminary approval by the Board, the Human Resources Department will complete a formal review and submit recommendations regarding the proper classifications to the County Administrator.
  - a. If the proposed new position or reclassification is due to a prospective reorganization, the Employing Office/Department will absorb both the current year's increased costs and subsequent years' costs through other personnel reductions or increased revenues. In the event the office/department is unable to absorb the increased costs, the reorganization will be submitted as part of the next year's budget request and will not be considered in the current year.
  - b. If changes are due to the gradual assumption of new duties and the employee is in fact performing higher-level duties, the reclassification may go forward, provided the department/office can absorb through other salary/benefit reductions or new revenues, the increased costs associated with the reclassification. If the department/office cannot absorb the increased costs, the department may request working out-of-class compensation, in accordance with Chapter 6 Section C, to compensate the employee for the higher-level duties. Compensation will be equal to the rate they would receive if reclassified (set forth in Section E (3) of this Chapter) and the department/office will put forward the request for the longer-term reclassification as part of the next year's budget request. If the out of class compensation or the reclassification is not approved, the higher-level duties must be reassigned and the working out-of-class wages will cease.
3. **Effective Date of Compensation Change:** Any change in classification or compensation will become effective on the first day of the first full pay period following the date that the study is given preliminary approval from the Board of County Commissioners. No retroactive pay will be given unless action has been taken by the Board of County Commissioners prior to the date the increases become effective.
4. **Final Approval:** A County Resolution relative to creation and reclassification of positions shall be prepared and submitted by the Human Resources Department for final approval.

## **SECTION E CLASSIFICATION STUDIES**

1. **Classification Upgrade:** A classification upgrade is the result of an increase in the scope of responsibilities and duties of a position which changes the level of influence and consequences of actions required in the current position. The reclassification of a job involves an analysis of the essential functions of the position and the appropriate placement in the County's classification/pay scale.

- a. A classification upgrade may not be used as a merit raise, or as a reward for employment longevity, or as a means to recognize excellent employees. An increased volume of work at the same level of responsibility that the incumbent is currently performing is also not a classification issue.

As a result of reclassification, and due to an overall increase in the responsibilities of a position, compensation for the position may increase.

- 2. Classification Downgrade: A classification downgrade is the result of a decrease in the scope of responsibilities, tasks, and duties of a position which changes the level of influence and the consequences of actions required in the current position.
  - a. A position may be reclassified to a lower level if the responsibilities of the job are determined to be less than originally indicated, or if essential responsibilities are removed from the job. The Employing Official may request a formal review and recommendation by the Human Resources Department.
  - b. All classification downgrade reviews affecting an incumbent employee shall be discussed with the employee before implementation. The employee will be offered the opportunity to meet with the Director of Human Resources or the Employing Official to discuss the results of the review, prior to approval and adoption by the Board of County Commissioners.
  - c. An incumbent affected by a classification downgrade shall not be paid less than his/her present salary, but any future salary increases are pursuant to County policies for employees whose wages are considered frozen. A classification downgrade is not considered a demotion.
- 3. Effect of Classification Changes on Employees: Whenever a position is reclassified to another class, the employee shall maintain the credit for service as he/she had prior to reclassification, except as noted below:
  - a. Whenever a position is reclassified to a higher class, the incumbent shall be promoted. Promotions that result from a classification review that concludes the position's duties have evolved to a higher level over time are not subject to a promotional probation.
  - b. If a position is reclassified up to a higher classification, see Chapter 6, Section C.6 for compensation guidelines.
  - c. The date of reclassification becomes the new anniversary date for future step increases, unless the employee has been in an Out-of-Class assignment pending approval during budget cycle. Under the Out-of-Class assignment process, the date for future step increases becomes the date that the employee was approved for Out-of-Class pay.