

# Livingston County Human Resources Policy Manual

<b>Section: Compensation</b> <b>Subject: Step Increases / Merit Step Increases</b>
---

## A. POLICY

### 1. PURPOSE:

To establish policy and procedure that will develop and maintain a clear structure of job responsibility and work activity to ensure employees are aware of expectations for their position and determine eligibility requirements for step and merit adjustment steps. Will identify criteria by which employee's performance will be evaluated.

### 2. POLICY STATEMENT:

Job descriptions will identify criteria (eligibility requirements) that need to be attained prior to employees becoming eligible for merit increase steps.

For non-senior management employees eligible for step increases from step 2 to step 7, the criteria used will include the following (see PAR form):

- Quality of Work
- Quantity of Work
- Attendance / Punctuality
- 

For non-senior management employees eligible for merit steps 8 & 9, the criteria will include the following (see Performance / Merit Form):

- Job / Skill Knowledge
- Initiative / efforts in improving skills, department efficiencies.
- Judgment & Analytical Ability
- Productivity
- Teamwork and Flexibility
- Communication
- Efficiency / strives for simpler, faster or less costly ways to produce results.
- Customer Service
- Attendance / Punctuality

### Senior Management:

Before authorizing an increase, the Elected Official/Department Head/County Administrator will evaluate the senior management employee based on the following criteria (for all steps). Criteria for senior management employees, at a minimum, will include:

- Job / Skill Knowledge
- Initiative / efforts in improving skills, department efficiencies.
- Judgment & Analytical Ability
- Productivity
- Teamwork and Flexibility
- Communication

- Efficiency / strives for simpler, faster or less costly ways to produce results.
- Customer Service
- Attendance / Punctuality

The total amount of a step/merit award cannot exceed the annual budget allocation. Step/merit awards are subject to availability of funds. The new base salary of any employee may not exceed the maximum of the range for that classification.

The determination to award a step/merit step in no way affects an employee's at will employment relationship with the County. An employee is not guaranteed employment or compensation for a specified period of time. An employee or the County can terminate this at will relationship at any time.

3. APPLICABILITY:

Applies to all non-union employees excluding temporary, interns and elected officials.

4. DEFINITIONS:

Merit Increases – Salary advancement within a salary range to step 8 or step 9 based on meritorious performance. Meritorious job performance is defined as a consistently high level of job performance over a sustained period of time or the successful completion of a significant assigned project that had a major impact on the department or the County.

Cost of Living Adjustments – This is an across-the-board salary adjustment based on economic/market changes to the general level of wages to County employees to the pay structure. This adjustment is granted to every employee whose current rate of pay is at or below the salary range maximum of their assigned pay grade.

Step Increases – indicated on the Livingston County Salary progression plan and are not automatic. Employees may receive a one-step pay increase on their anniversary date after each year of employment. All wage step increases for *non-senior management employees from the 2<sup>nd</sup> step through the seven year step require evaluation at or above "good" performance level as noted on the PAR form.*

For senior management employees, all wage step increases from the 2<sup>nd</sup> step through Step 9 require evaluation at or above the "Exceeds Expectation" level when evaluated on a whole based on the individual criteria as listed on the Performance / Merit Evaluation Form.

Senior management employees are identified as:

Airport Manager  
 Animal Control Director  
 Building Official  
 Facility Services Director  
 EMS and Central Dispatch Director  
 Equalization Director  
 Financial Officer  
 Health Officer  
 HR / Labor Relations Director  
 Chief Information Officer  
 LETS Director  
 Planning Director  
 Veterans Affairs Director

5. REFERENCE AND LEGAL AUTHORITY:

6. SEE ALSO:

Policy: Position (Job) Description  
Policy: Compensation/Classification Administrative Guidelines  
Form: Performance / Step / Merit Evaluation Form  
Form: Personnel Action Request

7. SUPERSEDES:
8. APPROVED BY:  
Personnel Committee 12/21/2016  
Finance Committee 1/11/2017  
Livingston Board of Commissioners: 1/17/17
9. RESOLUTION: 2017-01-022
10. REVIEW HISTORY: Rescinds Resolution No. 2009-05-156

**B. PROCEDURE**

Human Resources, with the aid and assistance of supervisors and employees, will be responsible for preparing and maintaining thorough position descriptions on all employees.

Each employee shall receive a written position description at time of hire and at every change thereafter. Each employee will review, sign and date their position description or may receive and acknowledge receipt electronically. Copies of the description will be kept in individual personnel files.

All position descriptions will be reviewed regularly by the immediate supervisor along with Human Resources to determine their continued accuracy, completeness, relevance and compliance with applicable laws. Position descriptions may be revised or altered at the sole discretion of Livingston County or appropriate elected official as a means of operational efficiency and the changing nature of conducting business.

All wage step increases require evaluation at or above 'Good' performance for non-senior management employees as evaluated on their PAR form.

Merit increases (Steps 7 & 8) may be initiated by the Elected Official/Department Head/County Administrator or the employee. The employee may petition their superior for a merit increase through a written narrative request or by filling out the Performance / Merit Evaluation Form as a self-evaluation. This request must be dated and signed by the employee. The employee may use the Performance / Merit Evaluation Form as a guideline for content to be included in the narrative submitted; however, the employee should feel free and is encouraged to include all relevant detail that would be considered favorably in awarding a merit step.

If their performance does not warrant a merit adjustment, in the discretion of the elected official, department head, or county administrator, their rate will be frozen until sufficient justification is documented. Merit adjustments may be granted by the elected official, department head or county administrator any time during the calendar year, generally on the employee's anniversary date. However, retro-activity will not usually be awarded, but is at the discretion of the elected official, department head, or County Administrator.

Merit increases (at steps 8 and 9) are not guaranteed and are based on meritorious performance. Meritorious job performance is defined as a consistently high level of job performance over a sustained period of time or the successful completion of a significant assigned project that had a major impact on the department or the County.

Merit increases will not be awarded unless evidence of additional criteria has been identified and communicated to the employee. Additional criteria should be specific to the position being evaluated and go beyond the general expectations for the classifications. The Elected Official/Department Head/County Administrator will complete a recommendation to support the merit award using the Performance Merit Evaluation Form.

If the merit step is denied, by the elected official, department head, or county administrator, the employee may reapply once additional criteria for eligibility are met. All requests for merit increases will be reviewed by Human Resources to ensure compliance with Board policy.

Senior Management Step Increases

Senior management employees will be evaluated once a year, generally on their anniversary date. The County Administrator will evaluate the employees on criteria as listed on the Performance Merit Evaluation Form. Annual step increases will not occur automatically without evidence that this occurred.