

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES – CITY OF KNOXVILLE

2 – Classification and Compensation

2.01 **CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION AUTHORITY AND PLANS**

See [Knoxville City Charter §§ 1008-1010](#); [Knoxville City Code ch. 2, art. II, div. 14](#); [Knoxville City Code ch. 2, art. III, div. 2](#).

2.02 **CLASSIFICATION PLAN**

2.02.01 **Administration and Maintenance**

See [Knoxville City Code § 2-446](#); see also [Administrative Rule 16](#).

2.02.02 **Review and Approval of Requisitions**

All personnel requisitions shall be reviewed by the Director of Human Resources to verify that the duties and responsibilities ascribed to the position are properly assigned to the requested job classification. Approval of such requisition by the Director of Human Resources shall constitute an assignment of the position to the indicated job classification. If the requested job classification on the requisition is not appropriate for the duties and responsibilities of the position, the Director of Human Resources shall make appropriate recommendations for classification assignment.

2.02.03 **Creation of New Positions**

When a department, office, or agency desires to create a new position, the director or head thereof shall submit to the Director of Human Resources or designee appropriate justification, including a detailed description of the duties and responsibilities of the position to be filled and a statement of suggested minimum requirements. If approved, the Director of Human Resources or designee shall ensure that the minimum requirements for new positions are properly and fairly stated and:

- (A) Classify the position and determine consistent with [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(b\)](#) whether the position should be allocated to an existing job classification or to create a new job classification within the Classification Plan (and, if the latter, assign the new job classification to the appropriate pay grade/step);
- (B) Consult with the Director of Finance and Accountability or designee, as necessary;
- (C) Make recommendations to the Mayor; and
- (D) Coordinate with the Director of Law or designee to prepare amendments to the Classification and Compensation Plans for City Council approval.

2.02.04 **Abolishment of Positions**

Whenever a department, office, or agency intends to abolish a position, the director or head thereof shall notify the Director of Human Resources. As applicable, the Director

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of Human Resources shall coordinate with the Civil Service Merit Board consistent with [Article 29 of the Rules and Regulations of the Civil Service Merit Board](#). In no case will a position be abolished for the sole purpose of terminating an employee rather than appropriately filing disciplinary charges.

2.02.05 **Changes in Duties and Responsibilities of Positions**

Every department, office, and agency and the director or head thereof is responsible for maintaining the integrity of the Classification Plan by (A) limiting employees to the performance of duties and responsibilities within their classification or (B) promptly notifying the Director of Human Resources upon any change in the assignment of duties and responsibilities so as to enable the Director of Human Resources to determine whether such changes affect the job classification assignment of the position.

No portion of these (or any other) Rules shall be construed as permitting an employee to refuse to perform duties legally assigned by competent authority.

2.02.06 **Reclassification of General Government Positions**

(A) Requests for Study

Requests for a classification study of existing general government positions shall be submitted to the Director of Human Resources or designee in writing prior to January 1 or such other deadline as may be set from time to time by the Director of Human Resources for inclusion in the next fiscal year's budget, together with a statement of the reasons for requesting the study. Requests for study may be initiated by a director or head of an office or agency or by a general government employee; provided, however, that requests initiated by a general government employee shall be governed by [Knoxville City Code § 2-446\(c\)](#). In exceptional cases, reclassifications may take effect within a fiscal year.

(B) Determination of Reclassification

It is the intent of this Rule to provide guidelines for monitoring the reclassification of an employee to ensure that merit system principles are not circumvented. The basis for reclassification must be a gradual accretion of duties and not a sudden change occasioned by reorganization or the assignment of completely new duties and responsibilities. The process of placing an employee in an acting capacity in any position does not constitute a gradual accretion of duties.

(C) Status of Incumbent Employee

When a position is reclassified due to a change in duties and responsibilities of the position and is assigned to a different classification, such change shall be considered noncompetitive if the position is occupied and the reclassified employee shall not be subject to the conditions of the probationary period.

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(D) Posting of Reclassification Announcements

In order to ensure that all reclassifications are made in accordance with merit system principles, all proposed reclassifications will be posted by the Director of Human Resources or designee for at least 10 days prior to reclassification to provide an opportunity for appropriate comment.

(E) Time Restraint on Reclassifications

An employee who has been reclassified with their position shall not be eligible for subsequent reclassification with their position for a period of at least 2 years from the initial action.

2.03 COMPENSATION PLAN

2.03.01 Administration and Maintenance

See [Knoxville City Code § 2-447](#); see also [Administrative Rule 16](#).

The implementation and ongoing administration of pay within the pay grades shall be conducted in a manner that promotes equitable pay relationships and the efficient and effective practice of personnel administration. Directors and the heads of offices and agencies shall exercise the discretion included in these Rules in a manner that avoids inconsistent, arbitrary, or discriminatory pay actions.

2.03.02 Starting Base Pay Rate

(A) General Government Employees

Starting or entry base pay rates for general government employees are to be set at rates that properly relate qualifications to job requirements. Consistent with [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), all base pay rates must be at least the minimum rate and not more than the maximum base pay rate of the pay grade to which the job classification is assigned.

The default starting or entry base pay rate for general government employees who meet at least the minimum job requirements shall be the minimum base pay rate for the job classification's assigned pay grade.

The Director of Human Resources in consultation with the Director of Finance and Accountability and the relevant director or head of an office or agency may set the starting or entry base pay rate for general government employees who meet at least the minimum job requirements and who have additional experience directly relevant to the employee's position at 3 percent above the minimum pay rate for the job classification's assigned pay grade for each full year of directly relevant experience up to a maximum of 15 percent above the minimum base pay rate for the job

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classification's assigned pay grade; provided, however, that if (1) the qualifications and/or directly relevant experience of the applicant(s) significantly exceed the minimum requirements for the job classification and/or (2) there is demonstrated difficulty in recruitment or retention efforts for that job classification, then the Director of Human Resources in consultation with the Director of Finance and Accountability and the relevant director or head of an office or agency may set the starting or entry base pay rate for a general government position at any rate between the minimum and the maximum base pay rates of the pay grade to which the job classification is assigned.

In the event of any disagreement between an employee and the employee's director or office/agency head as to the employee's starting base pay rate, the matter shall be referred to the Director of Human Resources or designee, and the decision of the Director of Human Resources or designee shall be final.

The Department of Human Resources shall make every effort to avoid inverted pay relationships among general government employees caused by newly-hired employees' starting or entry base pay rates exceeding the base pay rates of comparable current employees assigned to the same or similar job classifications. Consequently, notwithstanding any Rule to the contrary, before any salary offer is made to a prospective general government employee, the Director of Human Resources or designee will consider the current pay rates, educational attainment, certifications/licenses, length of service, and other relevant factors of current employees in the same or similar job classifications and, on the basis of such consideration, may adjust the starting or entry base pay rate for such prospective employee for internal equity purposes.

(B) Fire Department and Police Department Uniformed Employees

A uniformed employee hired as a Police Officer Recruit or a Firefighter Recruit shall be placed at the first pay step associated with such classification; provided, however, that in the event a current City employee is hired as a Police Officer Recruit or a Firefighter Recruit, and where the employee's current base pay rate is higher than the first pay step associated with such classification, the Police Chief or Fire Chief may provide to the Director of Human Resources a written recommendation and detailed justification of the starting pay step that should be offered to the employee. Should the Director of Human Resources determine that such an advanced starting pay step is justified, the Director of Human Resources shall consult with the Director of Finance and Accountability to verify available funds. Should the Director of Human Resources determine that an advanced starting pay step is not justified, the Director of Human Resources will provide a written response detailing the reason the recommendation was denied.

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2.03.03 **Annual Pay Increase**

See [Knoxville City Code § 2-454\(a\)](#).

As between compensation adjustments that are granted at the beginning of each fiscal year, the annual pay increase shall be applied first.

2.03.04 **Performance Pay**

Consistent with [Knoxville City Code § 2-454\(b\)](#) and subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), general government employees and, in exceptional circumstances approved by the Mayor, Fire Department and Police Department uniformed employees may be considered for a pay increase and/or bonus based upon above-average job performance.

Pay increases of up to 10 percent of an employee's base pay rate may be granted in recognition of ongoing outstanding performance.

Bonuses of up to 5 percent of an employee's base pay rate may be granted in recognition of a significant job-relevant achievement, for completion of an extraordinary project, or for taking on new tasks or projects that are part of the employee's job description but that the employee has not performed previously.

Requests for a performance pay increase or bonus must be submitted in writing by the employee's director or office/agency head to the Director of Human Resources or designee with detailed justification supporting the request. Upon review and determination that the request meets the criteria in this Rule by the Director of Human Resources, the Director of Human Resources or designee shall consult with the Director of Finance and Accountability or designee to verify available funds.

Each department, office, and agency may make requests in an amount up to an annual amount determined by the Director of Finance and Accountability or designee. Amounts exceeding 0.5 percent of the department's, office's, or agency's base pay budget for the fiscal year must be approved by the Director of Finance and Accountability. This threshold shall apply to the amount that may be requested each fiscal year and does not guarantee that all requests will be approved. Approval will be determined on a case-by-case basis based upon the request's compliance with this Rule and the justification provided.

2.03.05 **Annual Pay Step Increases for Fire Department and Police Department Uniformed Employees**

Effective July 1 of each year, Fire Department and Police Department uniformed employees shall advance to the next pay step for their assigned classification. Such advancement shall include the application of Administrative Rule 2.03.03.

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2.03.06

Incentive Pay

Consistent with [Knoxville City Code § 2-454\(c\)](#), this Rule governs incentive pay.

(A) Educational Development Incentive Pay for Permanent Fulltime Employees

After satisfactorily completing their initial probationary period, permanent fulltime employees awarded their first associate's degree, first bachelor's degree, or first master's degree by a university or college accredited at the time the degree was awarded by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or other similar accrediting organization recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation while currently employed by the City are eligible for one-time educational development incentive pay as set forth in the below table if the awarded degree (1) is the employee's highest degree to date, (2) is not a minimum requirement for the employee's current position, and (3) is in the opinion of the employee's director or office/agency head directly relevant to the employee's current position.

Awarded Degree	One-Time Incentive Pay Amount
Master's degree	\$3,000
Bachelor's degree	\$2,500
Associate's degree	\$1,000

In the event of any disagreement between an employee and the employee's director or office/agency head as to the employee's eligibility, the matter shall be referred to the Director of Human Resources or designee, and the decision of the Director of Human Resources or designee shall be final.

Fully executed applications and a certified copy of the employee's college transcript(s) evidencing such degree must be received by the Director of Human Resources or designee in May or December of the year for which the one-time incentive amount is requested. Employees shall be certified eligible for such incentive by the Director of Human Resources or designee upon receipt and review of said transcript(s) and such further investigation as may be necessary to establish eligibility. To further any such investigation, the employee shall be required to submit a duly executed release to obtain educational records, which release shall be part of the application for the one-time incentive amount.

Upon certification of eligibility, the Director of Human Resources or designee shall submit a list of such certified employees to the Director of Finance and Accountability, who shall pay the certified employees the one-time incentive pay as set forth in the above table.

Documentation reflecting an employee's eligibility for this one-time incentive pay, including a certified copy of the employee's transcript(s), shall be maintained as part of the employee's personnel file.

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An employee eligible for both the educational development incentive pay authorized by this Rule and the educational development incentive pay for sworn officers of the Police Department hired before July 8, 2022 (see Administrative Rule 2.03.06(B)) shall elect to receive only one form of educational development incentive pay for the qualifying degree.

For the avoidance of doubt, the educational development incentive pay authorized by this Rule is available only to eligible employees awarded degrees on or after the effective date of this Rule.

(B) Educational Development Incentive Pay for Sworn Officers of the Police Department Hired Before July 8, 2022

See [Knoxville City Code § 2-490](#).

(C) Special Assignment Incentive Pay for Permanent Fulltime Police Department Uniformed Employees and Permanent Fulltime General Government Employees Assigned to the Police Department

Permanent fulltime Police Department uniformed employees and permanent fulltime general government employees assigned by the Police Chief to certain special assignments are eligible for annual special assignment incentive pay as set forth in the below table.

Special Assignment	Annual Incentive Pay Amount
Crisis Negotiation Unit commander	\$2,400
Explosive Ordnance Detail commander	\$2,400
Internal Affairs Unit	\$2,400
K-9 Unit commander	\$2,400
Mobile Field Force commander	\$2,400
Special Operations Squad commander	\$2,400
Violent Crimes Unit	\$2,400
Advanced command	\$1,200
Bilingual	\$1,200
Crisis Negotiation Unit member	\$1,200
Explosive Ordnance Detail member	\$1,200
Head driving instructor	\$1,200
Head firearms instructor	\$1,200
Honor Guard commander	\$1,200
K-9 Unit member	\$1,200
Mobile Field Force member	\$1,200
Search and Rescue commander	\$1,200
Special Operations Squad member	\$1,200
Traffic reconstructionist	\$1,200
Driving instructor	\$600
Firearms instructor	\$600

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Honor Guard member	\$600
Search and Rescue member	\$600

Employees shall be certified eligible for such incentive by the Director of Human Resources or designee upon receipt and review of appropriate documentation from the Police Chief or designee.

Upon certification of eligibility, the Director of Human Resources or designee shall submit a list of such certified employees to the Director of Finance and Accountability or designee, who shall pay the certified employees the annual incentive pay as set forth in the above table in equal biweekly installments.

Upon termination of a special assignment, the Police Chief or designee shall promptly notify both the Director of Human Resources or designee and the Director of Finance and Accountability or designee, and upon such notification the latter shall stop payment of the annual incentive pay.

Documentation reflecting an employee's eligibility for this annual incentive pay shall be maintained as part of the employee's personnel file.

(D) Emergency Medical Services Licensure Incentive Pay for Permanent Fulltime Fire Department Uniformed Employees

Permanent fulltime Fire Department uniformed employees licensed by the State of Tennessee as an emergency medical technician, advanced emergency medical technician, or paramedic are eligible for annual emergency medical services licensure incentive pay as set forth in the below table if the license is, in the opinion of the Fire Chief, directly relevant to the employee's current position.

License	Annual Incentive Pay Amount
Paramedic	\$5,250
Advanced emergency medical technician	\$2,250
Emergency medical technician	\$1,000

In the event of any disagreement between an employee and the Fire Chief as to the employee's eligibility, the matter shall be referred to the Director of Human Resources or designee, and the decision of the Director of Human Resources or designee shall be final.

Employees shall be certified eligible for such incentive by the Director of Human Resources or designee upon receipt and review of a copy of the employee's valid license from the Fire Chief or designee.

Upon certification of eligibility, the Director of Human Resources or designee shall submit a list of such certified employees together with the expiration date of each such certified employee's license to the Director of Finance and Accountability or designee,

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who shall pay the certified employees the annual incentive pay as set forth in the above table in equal biweekly installments until such license expires.

If a certified eligible employee's license is rescinded, revoked, or otherwise terminated prior to its expiration date, the employee shall promptly notify the Fire Chief or designee, the Director of Human Resources or designee, and the Director of Finance and Accountability or designee, and upon such notification the latter shall stop payment of this annual incentive pay.

Documentation reflecting an employee's eligibility for this annual incentive pay, including a copy of the employee's license, shall be maintained as part of the employee's personnel file.

2.03.07 **Longevity Payments**

See [Knoxville City Code § 2-461](#).

2.03.08 **Other Compensation Adjustments**

(A) Adjustments Due to Substantial Changes in Duties and Responsibilities of General Government Employees

Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), pay increases of up to 10 percent of an employee's base pay rate may be granted to general government employees whose position undergoes a substantial change in duties and responsibilities that exceed the duties and responsibilities of the employee's position description.

Adjustments due to substantial changes in duties and responsibilities of general government employees may be initiated by the Director of Human Resources or requested by a director or head of an office or agency. Requests by a director or head of an office or agency shall be submitted in writing to the Director of Human Resources or designee with detailed justification supporting the request. Upon review and determination that the request meets the criteria in this Rule by the Director of Human Resources, the Director of Human Resources or designee shall consult with the Director of Finance and Accountability or designee to verify available funds.

(B) Adjustments Due to Interim/Temporary Assignments to Vacant Positions

Interim/temporary assignments occur when a director or head of an office or agency and the Director of Human Resources determine that a vacant classified position cannot be satisfactorily or timely filled through normal recruitment, transfer, or promotion processes. In such cases, an employee assigned to another classified position may be appointed to perform the duties and responsibilities of the vacant classified position on an interim/temporary basis, generally for at least 30 days and generally not more than 6 months.

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Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), when an employee is temporarily appointed to perform the duties and responsibilities of a vacant classified position assigned to one higher pay grade, the employee so appointed shall receive for the duration of the interim/temporary assignment the greater of either (1) a temporary pay increase sufficient to make the appointed employee's base pay rate equal to the minimum base pay rate established for the classification of the appointed position or (2) a temporary pay increase of 5 percent of the employee's base pay rate.

Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), when an employee is temporarily appointed to perform the duties and responsibilities of a vacant classified position assigned to two or more higher pay grades, the employee so appointed shall receive for the duration of the interim/temporary assignment the greater of either (1) a temporary pay increase sufficient to make the appointed employee's base pay rate equal to the minimum base pay rate established for the classification of the appointed position or (2) a temporary pay increase of 5 percent for the first higher pay grade and one or more additional pay increases of 2.5 percent for each additional higher pay grade up to a maximum of 15 percent of the employee's base pay rate.

Employees who receive an interim/temporary assignment adjustment shall sign an acknowledgment that such adjustment shall stop when the interim/temporary assignment ends.

(C) Internal Equity Adjustments for General Government Employees

Consistent with [Knoxville City Code § 2-450\(c\)](#) and subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), the Director of Human Resources may adjust general government employee pay rates based upon internal equity. Such internal equity adjustments result from the consideration of relevant factors, which may include hire dates, promotion dates, pay ranges, pay grades, target salaries, and other factors, to ensure general government employees' pay rates are internally equitable.

Internal equity adjustments may be initiated by the Director of Human Resources or requested by a director or head of an office or agency. Requests by a director or head of an office or agency shall be submitted in writing to the Director of Human Resources or designee with detailed justification supporting the request. Upon review and determination that the request meets the criteria in this Rule by the Director of Human Resources, the Director of Human Resources or designee shall consult with the Director of Finance and Accountability or designee to verify available funds.

(D) Reclassification Adjustments for General Government Employees

Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), if a reclassification results in upgrading a general government position by one pay grade, the employee(s) occupying such position shall receive the greater of either (1) a pay increase sufficient to make the reclassified employee's base pay rate equal to the minimum base pay rate established for the classification of the reclassified position or (2) a pay increase of 5 percent of the employee's base pay rate.

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Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), if a reclassification results in upgrading a general government position by two or more pay grades, the employee(s) occupying such position shall receive the greater of either (1) a pay increase sufficient to make the reclassified employee's base pay rate equal to the minimum base pay rate established for the classification of the reclassified position or (2) a pay increase of 5 percent for the first new pay grade and one or more additional pay increases of 2.5 percent for each additional new pay grade up to a maximum of 15 percent of the employee's base pay rate.

Under no circumstances shall a pay increase following reclassification have retroactive effect.

2.03.09

Promotion Pay Rate

(A) General Government Employees

Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), when an employee is promoted to a position assigned to one higher pay grade, the promoted employee shall receive the greater of either (1) a pay increase sufficient to make the promoted employee's base pay rate equal to the minimum base pay rate established for the classification of the promotional position or (2) a pay increase of 5 percent of the employee's base pay rate.

Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), when an employee is promoted to a position assigned to two or more higher pay grades, the promoted employee shall receive the greater of either (1) a pay increase sufficient to make the promoted employee's base pay rate equal to the minimum base pay rate established for the classification of the promotional position or (2) a pay increase of 5 percent for the first higher pay grade and one or more additional pay increases of 2.5 percent for each additional higher pay grade up to a maximum of 15 percent of the employee's base pay rate.

(B) Fire Department and Police Department Uniformed Employees

Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), upon promotion to a non-supervisory rank, defined as Firefighter, Senior Firefighter, or Master Firefighter for Fire Department uniformed employees and as Police Officer, Police Officer I, Police Officer II, Police Officer III, or Police Officer IV for Police Department uniformed employees, the promoted employee shall receive the greater of either (1) a pay increase sufficient to make the promoted employee's base pay rate equal to the minimum base pay rate established for the classification of the promotional position or (2) a pay increase of 3.5 percent of the employee's base pay rate.

Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), upon promotion to a supervisory rank, defined as Fire Officer, Fire Assistant Chief, or Fire Assistant Chief Senior for Fire Department uniformed employees and as Police Sergeant, Police Lieutenant, or Police Captain for Police Department uniformed police employees, the promoted employee shall receive the greater of either (1) a pay increase sufficient to make the promoted employee's base pay rate equal to the minimum base pay rate established for the

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classification of the promotional position or (2) a pay increase of 5 percent of the employee's base pay rate.

2.03.10 **Demotion Pay Rate**

Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), when a classified employee is demoted pursuant to the lay-off procedures for economic reasons, the demotion pay rate will be set at the rate in the new job classification which provides the smallest decrease in pay, if any.

Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), when a classified employee is demoted for cause (and, if reviewed, sustained in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Civil Service Merit Board), the demotion base pay rate shall be at least the minimum and not more than the maximum base pay rate for the pay grade to which the job classification is assigned, provided that there shall be at least a 2.5 percent per pay grade or a minimum of 5 percent reduction from the employee's pre-demotion base pay rate.

Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), if the demotion is as a result of a voluntary request by an employee, then the base pay rate may be set at any appropriate rate in the lower job classification that is at least the minimum rate and not more than the maximum base pay rate of the pay grade to which the lower job classification is assigned. In setting the base pay rate, the Director of Human Resources in consultation with the Director of Finance and Accountability and the relevant director or head of an office or agency shall give due regard to internal equity.

2.03.11 **Retreat/Reinstatement Pay Rate**

Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), a classified employee who retreated during a lay-off situation and is reinstated within 2 years to the employee's original job classification shall be paid at the same base pay rate as was received at the time of retreat or the employee's current base pay rate, whichever is greater.

Subject to [Knoxville City Code § 2-447\(f\)](#), a classified employee who is laid-off and re-employed within 2 years to the employee's original class shall be paid at the same base pay rate as was received at the time of lay-off.