



Department of Shared Administrative Services Office of Personnel Management

Policy Title: Classification and Compensation Overview

Policy Number: 1

Authority: Ark. Code Ann. §§ 21-5-201 through 207; § 21-5-214

Effective Date: July 1, 2025

The Uniform Classification and Compensation Act (Class and Comp Act) governs all positions within the fifteen (15) cabinet-level departments and the eleven (11) independent state agencies, boards, and commissions of the state supported by appropriation of state or federal funds. The Class and Comp Act establishes the classifications and the pay system, including salary eligibility and differentials. Cabinet-level departments and state agencies must follow the Class and Comp Act unless they have special language or other legislative approval that allows for deviation from the Class and Comp Act. The Class and Comp Act is administered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) within the Department of Shared Administrative Services acting under the authority granted in Arkansas law and subject to the direction of the Secretary of the Department of Shared Administrative Services.

The following definitions apply to the terms used throughout OPM policy, unless otherwise defined:

1. **Department Secretary (or Secretary):** Executive head of a cabinet-level department appointed by the Governor and subject to Senate confirmation.
2. **Agency director:** The head of an independent executive state agency who has autonomous authority over the administration and operations of the state agency.
3. **Apprenticeship:** An employee who is learning a trade or obtaining other job skills and knowledge from a state agency.
4. **Cabinet-level department or department:** One of the following 15 executive agencies designated to provide state services and provide direct reports to the Governor:
 - a. Department of Agriculture
 - b. Department of Commerce
 - c. Department of Corrections
 - d. Department of Education
 - e. Department of Energy and Environment
 - f. Department of Finance and Administration
 - g. Department of Health
 - h. Department of Human Services
 - i. Department of Inspector General
 - j. Department of Labor and Licensing
 - k. Department of the Military
 - l. Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism
 - m. Department of Public Safety
 - n. Department of Shared Administrative Services; and
 - o. Department of Veteran Affairs.
5. **Class or classification:** A group of positions sufficiently similar as to duties performed, scope of discretion and responsibility, minimum requirements of training and experience or skill, and other characteristics that



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the same title, the same test of fitness, and the same scale of compensation have been or may be applied to each position in the group.

6. **Classification realignment:** A temporary change of a position to a classification within a different job series or job family.
7. **Demotion:** The change in duty assignment of an employee from a position in one classification to a position in another classification of a lower pay grade within the same pay table.
8. **Employee:** A person employed in a legislatively authorized position either on a full or part-time basis by a cabinet-level department or state agency. A class title and pay grade must be established in the cabinet-level department's or state agency's appropriation act.
9. **Entry pay level:** The minimum entrance salary rate for a grade established on a pay table.
10. **Extra help employee:** A person employed in an extra help position. Extra help employees may not exceed 1,500 hours worked in a fiscal year unless otherwise specified in an appropriation act or law.
11. **Grade:** An authorized pay range established in the Class and Comp Act.
12. **Job description:** A written document developed by OPM that identifies a group of positions that have the same type of work and responsibility and states the general components by providing a class title, class code, distinguishing features and examples of work, knowledge, skills, and abilities. The job description also provides the necessary minimum education and experience requirements to perform the assigned duties.
13. **Job family:** A category designation that identifies a group of related occupations.
14. **Job series:** a subcategory within a job family that identifies classifications with similar types of work or similar skills and knowledge.
15. **Job sharing:** A form of employment, approved by OPM, in which the hours of work of two (2) or more persons are arranged in which the work hours of two (2) people are arranged to cover a single, regular, full-time position.
16. **Maximum pay level:** The highest authorized salary rate for a grade established on a pay table.
17. **Midpoint pay level:** The rate of pay midway between the entry pay level and the maximum pay level established for each pay table.
18. **Pay table:** The grades and pay ranges assigned to the State Government Services, Information Systems and Technology, Medical, Law Enforcement and Safety, Specialized Services, and Executive pay tables.



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19. **Position:** Employment that is legislatively authorized in a cabinet-level department or state agency, occupied or vacant, requiring the services of one (1) full-time equivalent employee.
 20. **Promotion:** The change in duty assignment of an employee from a position in one classification to a position in another classification of a higher salary grade within the same pay table or the same job series.
 21. **Reclassification of a position:** A change in the assignment of a position from one classification title to another, or when an employee is assigned to a title that more accurately reflects his/her job functions and responsibilities.
 22. **Reduction in force:** A procedure that eliminates positions due to a cabinet-level department's or state agency's change in organizational structure, budgetary reductions, loss of functional responsibility, loss of federal funding, grants, or other special funds.
 23. **Special entry rates:** Rates of pay approved above the entry level of a pay grade.
 24. **State agencies:** All agencies, authorities, departments, boards, commissions, bureaus, councils, or other agencies of the state supported by appropriation of state or federal funds.
 25. **State Personnel Administrator:** The Director of OPM.
 26. **Transfer:** A change in the duty assignment of an employee from one position to another position in the same classification or between pay tables.

Exemptions from the Class and Comp Act

The following entities are exempt from the Class and Comp Act:

1. Constitutional Officers and their employees;
2. The General Assembly and its employees, including employees of the Bureau of Legislative Research and the Division of Legislative Audit;
3. Members and employees of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, circuit courts, prosecuting attorneys, and the Administrative Office of the Courts;
4. The Arkansas Department of Transportation;
5. Federal military technicians, military training support personnel, federally funded personnel of the Arkansas National Guard, and other military personnel who are paid directly by the federal government;
6. The Arkansas State Game and Fish Commission;
7. State-supported institutions of higher education; and
8. Arkansas Development Finance Authority.

During each legislative session, the General Assembly authorizes cabinet-level departments and state agencies with a specified number of positions in their appropriation act. Each position is assigned a job title,



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classification code (job code), and grade. Unless otherwise provided, salaries for each position must be made in accordance with the Class and Comp Act. The pay tables can be found at [OPM Policy #3](#).

Positions in the classification system are generally described by a class specification which includes a summary of the overall job functions, a listing of typical job functions, a list of knowledge, skills and abilities, and minimum qualifications. The class specification will also contain any required licensures or certifications.

Duties of Legislative Council

1. Review the establishment and implementation of new classification titles proposed between legislative sessions due to program changes;
2. Review the staffing levels of all agencies and submit to the General Assembly for revisions, modifications, or additions;
3. Conduct salary surveys of the private and public sector for comparable jobs to establish equitable and competitive rates for employees; and
4. Review the job evaluation system used to set salary grade levels and recommend changes to OPM.

Duties of OPM

OPM is responsible for administering and maintaining the statewide classification and compensation plan including:

1. Developing and maintaining the written job descriptions for each position including the duties and responsibilities for the position and the requirements necessary to satisfactorily perform the duties;
2. Reviewing a department's or agency's functional job description and functional job title;
3. Assuring all positions assigned to departments and state agencies adhere to the laws governing the statewide classification and compensation system;
4. Assisting all other state agencies that are not covered by the statewide classification and compensation system who choose to voluntarily establish its positions into classifications and grades in accordance with the statewide system;
5. Establishing a career-path for classifications within a job series;
6. Reviewing and monitoring the effectiveness of the statewide classification and compensation plan and submitting recommendations for revisions, modifications, or additions to the Governor and the Joint Budget Committee of the Legislative Council in advance of the general and fiscal sessions;
7. Developing and implementing uniform personnel policies and procedures;
8. Establishing a procedure for reviewing an applicant's qualifications that do not meet or exceed the position's required minimum qualifications, but that may substitute for the required qualifications;
9. Monitoring agency's personnel transactions;
10. Reviewing and processing the payroll of departments and state agencies;
11. Establishing new classifications at an appropriate grade level to meet new or changed conditions;
12. Periodically reviewing the job descriptions to ensure accuracy of the description to maintain a valid relationship between the requirements and the duties and responsibilities of the job;
13. Administering and maintaining the performance evaluation system;
14. Administering state training and outreach programs;



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15. Developing and implementing rules, as needed, to ensure a uniform personnel administration system;
 16. Reviewing and approving both the classification and number of positions for each agency on a biennial basis and providing a recommendation to Legislative Council;
 17. Reviewing and recommending changes to a department's or agency's personnel policies, including disciplinary policies;
 18. Establishing the state training program, including developing course material and presenting to state employees;
 19. Reviewing and approving a department's apprenticeship program;
 20. Determining the delivery of human resources and personnel services within departments and agencies to ensure efficient use of taxpayer funds; and
 21. Approving a department's request to reassign positions from one business area to another.