

Number 12.1 - STEP MOVEMENT

Effective Date: March 1, 1996

Applicable To: All classified employees, as well as Exempt employees assigned to the classified pay plan, with the Executive Branch of the State of Vermont.

Issued By: Department of Personnel

Approved By: William H. Sorrell, Secretary of Administration

PURPOSE AND POLICY STATEMENT

Step movement to the next higher pay rate within the salary range for a particular pay grade is a function of the length of time spent at the previous rate of pay rather than on overall length of State service. Step advancement is contingent upon satisfactory performance.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the manner in which employees may advance to the next higher step rate within their pay grade.

DEFINITIONS

STEP - an interval that separates one level of salary from another within a pay grade.

STEP DATE - The day, month, and year that employees are eligible for advancement to the next higher rate of pay (step) within their pay grade. Assuming no changes in an employee's pay grade, it represents the amount of time required at one rate of pay before becoming automatically eligible for the next rate of pay within the range.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The State classified pay plan consists of twenty-eight (28) pay grades. Positions are assigned to a pay grade according to the criteria outlined in the classification plan and the point factor system for position evaluation.

Each pay grade contains fifteen (15) rates of pay (steps). Steps 1 and 15 are the minimum and the maximum rates for the salary range. All employees in positions covered by the classified pay plan are assigned to a step in accordance with the current contract. Usually, the salary for newly hired employees is step 1 (the probationary rate). The next step is known as the end-of-probation rate (EOP).

The Salaries and Wages Article of the current Agreements between the State of Vermont and the Vermont State Employees' Association, Inc. (VSEA) must be adhered to when implementing this policy.

The Appendices to the contract contain the rates of pay for each of the fifteen (15) steps within each of the twenty-eight (28) pay grades.

REQUIRED TIME ON STEP

Eligibility for advancement within the pay grade (step date) is contained in and governed by the terms of the contract. The current schedule is as follows:

Step 1 - (probation) - normally six months*
Step 2 - (end of probation) - one year
Step 3 - one year
Step 4 - one year
Step 5 - one year
Step 6 - two years
Step 7 - two years
Step 8 - two years
Step 9 - two years
Step 10 - two years
Step 11 - two years
Step 12 - two years
Step 13 - three years
Step 14 - three years
Step 15 - final step

* Employees who are in job classes with probationary periods that are longer than (6) months may be eligible for step movement at the end of six (6) months without regard to their probationary status.

Employees who are hired-into-range (See Number 12.2, Hire-Into-Range) above step 1, do not qualify for advancement upon completion of probation.

ADVANCEMENT

Step Date - After completing the required time on a step, the employee advances to the next higher step in the pay grade.

Though step dates can occur in the middle of a pay period, an employee's pay can change **only** at the beginning of the next full pay period. The employee's new step date is calculated by adding the requisite time requirement for the new step (one, two or three years) to the old step date. The new step date identifies when the employee is eligible for advancement to the next higher rate.

The effective date of a step increase for an employee whose step date is the first day of a pay period shall be the beginning of that pay period.

Changing Step Dates - Changes in step dates occur whenever there is a change in pay resulting from reclassification, reassignment of pay grade, promotion, or demotion. Step dates are calculated and adjusted based on the effective date of such changes in pay or status.

When employees move to another pay grade on a temporary assignment, the step date also changes. However, when employees are returned to their previous pay or status, the previous step date is reinstated.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CRITERIA

Satisfactory or Higher Rating - Movement to a higher step is contingent upon satisfactory performance and the required time specified in the contract.

Unsatisfactory Rating - Employees who fail to achieve at least a satisfactory rating on their annual performance evaluation will lose credit for that year's service, and will have one (1) year added to their step date.

Extension of Original Probation - Employees whose original probationary period is extended will have their step date adjusted to correspond to the length of the extension of probation.

Warning Period - Employees whose step date falls during a performance warning period will not move to a higher step until they receive an overall performance rating of at least satisfactory. An employee's next step date will not change as a result of this delay in step movement.