

Compensation FAQs

1. How does the City and County determine compensation amounts?

A: Salary surveys are conducted every year to ensure proper classification of positions utilizing survey data from the Colorado Municipal League and Mountain States Employers Council. The Human Resources Department utilizes this information along with other factors (job value, private sector market conditions, similarities to other City and County positions, etc.) in setting minimum and maximum ranges by position.

2. What is merit-based pay?

A: Merit-based pay is pay for performance. The supervisor evaluates the employee's performance and the employee's contributions to mission, goals, objectives and performance indicators. Current and future compensation increases are linked to merit rather tenure.

3. How and by whom are compensation increases determined?

A: Merit adjustments are considered once a year as long as funds are budgeted to support the merit adjustment. The merit pool is determined during the budget process after conducting compensation surveys with other Front Range communities and considering the economic factors impacting the City and County's budget.

4. Is it exclusively correlated to performance evaluations?

A: Merit adjustments are based on the employee's performance considering the employee's contributions to mission, goals, objectives and performance indicators. Supervisors may use direct observation, auditing of work product, surveys, feedback from other employees, customers and others, and other methods when evaluating the employee's performance and determining the amount of the merit adjustment.

5. How is equity (across supervisor, departments, etc.) determined?

A: The department head is responsible for reviewing merit amounts and for complying with the guidelines outlined in the compensation program. The amount of merit adjustment for each employee must be justified by the performance evaluation and supervisors ensure consistency within their work groups. The Human Resources Department will review each performance evaluation and each merit recommendation to ensure consistent application.

6. Are there clear guidelines for supervisor/managers to designate merit-based increases?

A: Supervisors and managers may attend in-house training on the performance evaluation process.

7. How are supervisors trained on performance evaluation process?

A: Guidance can be found in the [Performance Evaluations Policy](#) located on the City and County's website. On-site training on performance management is accessible to all employees.

8. What are the differences across departments in performance evaluations?

A: Each department has the ability to tailor performance evaluation forms to reflect the mission, goals, objectives and performance requirements of its divisions and work units.

9. What is the purpose of the performance evaluation?

A: The purpose of the performance evaluation is to provide feedback, coaching and development plans for employees on a regularly scheduled basis. Generally, the annual performance evaluations are linked to merit adjustments. Because compensation is linked with performance and ongoing development, the performance evaluation serves as an indicator of both performance and development areas.

10. If all employees in a pool are performing equally, can they all receive the same percentage of merit raise?

A: Not necessarily. It depends on what method is used to calculate the merit increase. If the supervisor uses a flat dollar amount, an employee whose annual pay is higher than another employee may receive the same annualized dollar amount as a lower paid employee. The annualized dollar amount of increase may be at a lower percent for the higher paid employee than the lower paid employee.

For example, there are two employees in the same position and they are performing at the same level. The supervisor determines that the value provided by each employee equates to a merit adjustment of \$1,500 for the year. One employee's salary is \$45,000 and the other employee's salary is \$40,000. The merit adjustment provides an increase to \$46,500 (or 3.3%) and 41,500 (or 3.75%) respectively.

Merit-based increases are recommended by the supervisor and submitted by the department head to Human Resources. Departments are limited by the amount allocated each year through the budget process.

11. Is longevity a factor in the assignment of merit increases?

A: On its own, longevity is not a factor in the assignment of merit increases. Assignment of merit increases is based on performance. Longevity is not sufficient justification for a merit increase. It is the intention that employees are growing and innovating as they strive to better fulfill the Broomfield Mission [Statement](#) and Guiding Values. Each department has its own mission statement and performance may also be measured through goals and objectives.

12. Are the increases in costs associated with our benefits package (e.g. insurance cost increases, etc.) and taxes analyzed when examining merit-based increases?

A: Broomfield conducts yearly surveys to assess if benefits are competitive with public and private entities. The increases in benefits cost and taxes are not directly examined when determining merit-based increases for Broomfield employees; however, the annual pay increase survey data from the Colorado Municipal League (CML) and Mountain States Employers Council (MSEC), which is utilized by Broomfield to determine the merit pool, does account for merit, general, longevity, and cost-of-living increases.

13. What is COLA? Is COLA factored into compensation?

A: Cost of Living Adjustment is typically calculated by using the Consumer Price Index. Broomfield's annual compensation adjustment survey includes input from other Front Range communities. Some communities consider market adjustments and some consider merit adjustments only. Since Broomfield's compensation program is merit-based, Broomfield does not provide a separate COLA.

14. How frequently is compensation compared to the market? When are market adjustments done?

A: Compensation is compared to the market on an annual basis, utilizing salary data compiled by the CML and MSEC. The salary administration plan is reviewed and adopted by City Council through the annual budget process which may include market adjustments to salary ranges.

15. What have been the compensation increases/adjustments recently?

A: 2011: lump sum merit bonus (July/August)
2012: add-to-base merit-based increase and mid-point adjustments
2013: add-to-base merit-based increase and mid-point adjustments
2014 - add-to-base merit-based increase, exceptional merit and mid-point adjustments
2015 - add-to-base merit-based increase, exceptional merit and mid-point adjustments

16. How is the merit pool determined during budget?

A: Human Resources conducts a survey with communities within the Front Range to determine their compensation adjustments for the next year. Economic indicators and the fiscal health of the City are also considered. The Budget team and City and County Manager's office team reviews this information and recommends a merit pool for the next budget year. This recommendation is presented to City Council during the budget process.

17. Where are salary ranges published? How are salary ranges determined? How often are they adjusted?

A: Job descriptions and salary ranges are published on Broomfield's [website](#).

Salary surveys are conducted annually to ensure proper classification of positions utilizing survey data from the CML and MSEC. Surveys may also be conducted on individual positions at the discretion of Human Resources (HR). HR uses this information along with other factors (job value, private sector market conditions, similarities to other City and County positions, etc.) to set minimum and maximum ranges by position.

18. What is the maximum annual midpoint adjustment allowed?

A: An employee who has been in his/her position for at least seven years and who is fully competent in the position may be eligible for a midpoint adjustment. The midpoint adjustment can range from 0% to 7.5% depending on the employee's performance and placement in the range.

19. Does Broomfield give bonuses?

A: Employees may be awarded merit bonuses, training and wellness bonuses, or their supervisor may recommend a bonus. There is not a separate pool for bonuses and the bonus amount is covered within the department's budget, if available. See Recognition [Program](#) for more details.

20. What does it mean to perform at a fully competent level?

A: The supervisor determines the performance level of an employee. Fully competent would typically mean that the supervisor evaluates the employee as being fully functional in his/her position as demonstrated by a high level of knowledge, skills and abilities. Also, the supervisor would evaluate the employee as performing all tasks at a high level; the employee may be viewed as a subject matter expert and would perform all duties (including goals and objectives) effectively and efficiently with a high degree of independence.

21. If the employee is meeting or exceeding expectations, are merit adjustments guaranteed?

A: Merit adjustments are not guaranteed and are recommended by the supervisor and reviewed by the department head.

22. If an employee is consistently performing at a fully competent level, how many years before the employee can expect to be paid at the mid-point of the salary range?

A: The goal of the compensation program is to provide midpoint adjustments to employees who have been in their positions at least seven years and who are performing at a fully competent level. Midpoint adjustments may range from 0% up to 7.5% for the year and are subject to approval through the budget process.

23. Is a merit adjustment always a percentage of an employee's salary?

A: No, a merit adjustment may also be a flat dollar amount and is subject to approval through the budget process.

24. From what City and County funds are salaries paid?

A: Positions can be assigned to one account code or can be split out among multiple accounts. Salaries and benefits are paid out of personal services.

25. Under what categories can employees receive pay adjustments?

A: "Employees may receive pay adjustments as a result of the following:

- a. Annual performance evaluation;
- b. Merit bonus;
- c. Certification programs;
- d. Reclassification;
- e. Salary adjustment; or
- f. Promotion."

The complete policies are located in the "[Broomfield Salary Administration](#)" section of the [Policies and Employment Guidelines](#) and "[Pay Plan](#)" (2-14-060) in the [Broomfield Municipal Code](#).

Here are a few more resources:

General Employees Compensation [Program](#)

Exceptional Merit [Program](#) (General Employees)