

**Department of Transformation and Shared Services**

Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders

Secretary Leslie Fiskin

Director Kay Barnhill

January 17, 2024

The Honorable Breanne Davis, Co-Chairperson
The Honorable Mark Berry, Co-Chairperson
Uniform Personnel Classification and
Compensation Plan Subcommittee
Arkansas Legislative Council
State Capitol Building, Room 315
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Senator Davis and Representative Berry:

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) submits a request from the Arkansas Department of Commerce (ACOM), Division of Workforce Services (DWS) for your review.

The Arkansas Department of Commerce (ACOM), Division of Workforce Services (DWS) is requesting twenty-three (23) pool positions from its internal growth pool established by Arkansas Code Annotated § 11-10-310 (e).

The director may establish new or additional full-time positions if:

- (1) The new or additional full-time positions are necessary to:
 - (A) Carry out the objectives of the Division of Workforce Services' programs; or*
 - (B) Meet federal requirements of new or expanded programs when such needs are financed by federal funds;**
- (2) The director receives the approval of the Office of Personnel Management;*
- (3) Prior to establishing the new or additional full-time positions, the director shall seek approval by the Legislative Council, or if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee;*
- (4) The director authorizes the employment of no more than two hundred (200) persons in new or additional full-time positions in addition to those positions authorized in the salary schedule; and*
- (5) The rate of pay for the new or additional full-time positions does not exceed those set out in the salary schedule for comparable positions as authorized under the regular salaries section of the division's appropriation act.*

Office of Personnel Management

501 Woodlane Street, Suite 205 * Little Rock, AR 72201 * 501.682.1753

The Honorable Breanne Davis, Co-Chairperson
 The Honorable Mark Berry, Co-Chairperson
 January 17, 2024
 Page 2

The classifications requested are listed below.

CLASSIFICATIONS REQUESTED

<u>CLASS CODE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>PAY GRADE</u>	<u>SALARY RANGE</u>
G110C	ACOM DWS Program Manager (1)	GS09	\$50,222 – \$72,822
G127C	ACOM DWS Program Operations Manager (3)	GS08	\$45,010 – \$65,265
G181C	ACOM DWS Program Monitor (15)	GS07	\$40,340 – \$58,493
D006N	State Systems Architect (1)	IT10	\$89,541 – \$129,835
D001C	State Database Administrator (3)	IT09	\$80,242 – \$116,351

JUSTIFICATION

The Division of Workforce Services' (DWS) goal is to streamline its processes across multiple programs, while providing a high level of oversight and efficiency. DWS requests additional positions to assist with accomplishing this objective.

- ❖ The agency needs one (1) position authorized as ACOM DWS Program Manager. It leads the team of monitors for workforce development boards throughout the state to which the agency provides funding for adult, dislocated worker, and youth employment and training programs. Its responsibilities include researching and interpreting federal and state laws and regulations, serving as a liaison between their agency and subrecipients, finalizing monitoring reports, developing technical assistance curricula, as well as working with federal project officers responding to issues throughout the state.
- ❖ The agency needs three (3) positions authorized as ACOM DWS Program Operations Manager. They are situated within their Employment Assistance Unit. Their responsibilities include ensuring compliance with federal and state laws and regulations, researching and interpreting applicable laws and policies, preparing monitoring reports, as well as providing technical assistance.
- ❖ The agency needs fifteen (15) positions authorized as ACOM DWS Program Monitor. They are situated throughout multiple sections. Their responsibilities include ensuring compliance with federal and state laws, issuing determinations, issuing re-determinations as required, reviewing fact finding forms and conducting additional fact finding, creating proper documentation to support determinations, as well as paying retroactive benefits to eligible claimants.

The Honorable Breanne Davis, Co-Chairperson
The Honorable Mark Berry, Co-Chairperson
January 17, 2024
Page 3

- ❖ The agency needs one (1) position authorized as State Systems Architect. Its responsibilities include managing information technology security projects, coordinating risk assessments and tests of data processing systems, as well as documenting computer security and emergency measures policies and procedures.
- ❖ The agency needs three (3) positions authorized as State Database Administrator. They facilitate operations for their unemployment insurance modernization project. Their responsibilities include directing the design of computer system processes as well as coordinating the development and modification of computer job specifications.

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Personnel Management has reviewed this request from the Arkansas Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Services and recommends the establishment of twenty-three (23) pool positions from its internal growth pool authorized as the abovementioned classifications. The cost for these twenty-three (23) growth pool positions is approximately \$1,921,848.60. The agency guarantees our office that it possesses sufficient funding to support this growth pool position request.

Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated.



STATE PERSONNEL DIRECTOR

1/05/24
DATE

Positions Requested							
Business Area	# of Positions	Class Code	Title	Grade	Salary Range	*Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s) %
0810	1	G110C	ACOM DWS Program Manager	GS09	\$50,222 - \$72,822	\$86,130.80	Federal Revenue
0810	3	G127C	ACOM DWS Program Operations Manager	GS08	\$45,010 - \$65,265	\$231,575.40	Federal Revenue
0810	15	G181C	ACOM DWS Program Monitor	GS07	\$40,340 - \$58,493	\$1,037,736.00	Federal Revenue
0810	1	D006N	State Systems Architect	IT10	\$89,541 - \$129,835	\$153,563.20	Federal Revenue
0810	3	D001C	State Database Administrator	IT09	\$80,242 - \$116,351	\$412,843.20	Federal Revenue
Total Estimated Cost of the New Positions including 40% match						\$1,921,848.60	
Total Cost to General Revenue						\$0.00	

Positions Surrendered								
Business Area	Position Number	Class Code	Title	Grade	Date Vacated	Position Budgeted Y/N	**Estimated Savings	Funding Source(s) %
Total Estimated Savings							\$0.00	
Estimated Savings to General Revenue							\$0.00	

Total Estimated Cost to the Agency							\$1,921,848.60
Total Estimated Cost to General Revenue							\$0.00
Total Authorized Position Adjustment							23

* The Estimated Cost calculation is based upon the Midpoint of the salary range, plus 40% matching.

** The Estimated Savings calculation is based upon the exit salary plus 40% match, only if a position has been vacant less than 1 year from the date of the request.



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Sarah Huckabee Sanders
GOVERNOR

Hugh McDonald
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

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December 11, 2023

Kay Barnhill, Administrator
Office of Personnel Management
Department of Transformation and Shared Services
501 Woodlane Avenue, Suite 201
Little Rock, AR 72201

RE: Growth Pool Request

Dear Ms. ~~Barnhill~~ *Kay*:

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS) requests to utilize the ADWS agency Growth Pool to gain the positions listed below to support its effort to align positions with tasks and better meet the needs of the state. All twenty-three (23) positions are 100% federally funded. In addition, the division will surrender the equivalent number of positions during its Annual Operation Plan.

Requested	Classification Title	Grade	Class Code
(1)	State Systems Architect	IT10	D006N
(3)	State Database Administrator	IT09	D001C
(1)	DWS Program Manager	GS09	G110C
(3)	DWS Program Operations Manager	GS08	G127C
(15)	DWS Program Monitor	GS07	G181C

It is the goal of ADWS to streamline and revise its processes to better serve Arkansans, while providing a high level of oversight and efficiency. ADWS has identified how to implement this from a task, organizational, and knowledge perspective across multiple programs. These positions will allow ADWS to gain the skill set required for its complex federal programs' needs to attract and retain individuals, with a higher level of management and analytical skills.

These skills and knowledge require years of experience and are difficult positions to fill. The inability to attract and retain highly qualified candidates will put the State of Arkansas at risk of disallowed costs and audit findings.

The State Systems Architect position (IT10) is needed to manage the process of identifying and implementing a streamlined approach for integrating all cyber security policies and requirements down to one role. The State Systems Architect role will act as a single contact for planning, reviewing, and verifying security requirements for network changes, data accessibility, software deployments, and account policies. The State Systems Architect will

Kay Barnhill

Page 2

December 11, 2023

also act as a liaison between ADWS and other state agency information security personnel to continuously improve the safeguards and protections of the ADWS infrastructure and services.

The three (3) State Database Administrator positions (IT09) will be used to facilitate the UI Modernization project. Planning is in process to use in-house resources while partnering with Department of Information Systems (DIS) to update our UI system to a scalable solution. This will benefit both employers and claimants and be more efficient to maintain. It is imperative for ADWS to attract highly qualified individuals with extensive technical knowledge and experience in Federal and State Unemployment Insurance laws/requirements.

The Program Manager position (GS09) is requested to supervise and lead the USDOL funded monitoring section of Title I and Title III Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) at ADWS. This position is responsible for leading and mentoring the team of monitors for the ten workforce development boards across the state to which we provide funding for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth employment and training programs. This position requires a specific skill set to present program findings, provide technical assistance, and resolve issues professionally in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) to reduce the state's risk of disallowed cost.

The three (3) Program Operations Manager positions (GS08) will be utilized in the Employment Assistance unit. The need for higher graded positions arises from the specialized nature of tasks, such as developing monitoring tools, conducting comprehensive oversight and monitoring reviews, preparing detailed reports, performing special audits, and providing technical assistance. An intensive knowledge of law, regulations, and policy is necessary to be successful in this role. The duties associated with the Program Operations Manager are critical for ensuring compliance, effectiveness, and proper functioning of workforce development programs. Turnover in this unit has been high due to the salary rate not being comparable to similar positions within the division and externally. Training for a successful incumbent could range from 2-3 years; the average time for a candidate to remain in this position is less than three years under the current conditions. Upgrading the positions will ensure retention of qualified employees who will ultimately be the perfect candidates for advancement in the division.

Two (2) of the Program Monitor positions (GS07) will be utilized in the Employment Assistance unit under the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) program. Arkansas has been designated as a Significant MSFW State by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) because Arkansas is among the top 20 states with the highest number of Wagner-Peyser Employment Service participants who were reported to be MSFWs, as defined by 20 CFR 651.10. Significant MSFW States must meet seven minimum service level indicators outlined in Training and Employment Guidance Letter 14-18. The minimum service level indicators include reviews of significant one-stop centers in Forrest City and West Memphis, as well as 520 outreach contacts per quarter. Arkansas has been unable to conduct any required MSFW outreach due to inability to attract outreach staff. The caseload for this program has steadily increased since 2021 by 20%, and projections for 2023 are on track to exceed that. USDOL has given Arkansas until April 1, 2024, to start meeting the service level indicators.

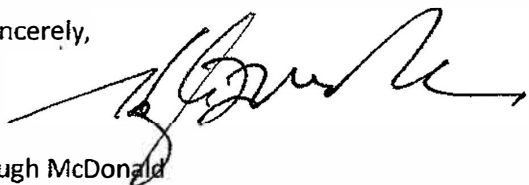
Thirteen (13) of the Program Monitor positions (GS07) will be utilized in the Unemployment Insurance Benefits, Field Tax section of Contributions, and UI Administration departments. The objective is to streamline the administrative functions and allow staff to focus on the audit requirements by USDOL. Also, these positions will

Kay Barnhill
Page 3
December 11, 2023

provide direct assistance to the public applying for UI benefits, as well as handle escalation issues in the UI program. See Exhibit 1 for further details.

Thank you for your consideration of this request as we continually strive to improve our operations to meet the current needs of our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hugh McDonald", written over a horizontal line.

Hugh McDonald
Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Charisse Childers, Ph.D., Director, Arkansas Division of Workforce Services
DeCarlia Smith, Director of Human Resources, Arkansas Department of Commerce

Exhibit 1: Daily Duties of UI Positions Requested:

6 GS07 Field Tax Audit:

These positions will conduct DOL required employer audits to ensure compliant with SUTA laws, and to maintain the solvency of the UI trust fund. This includes but is not limited to, requesting, and analyzing payroll documents including general ledgers, payroll ledgers, 1099 forms etc. processing any adjustments to wages previously report or adding additional wages for misclassified workers. These are DOL and TPS (Tax Performance System required positions, that are expected to handle 2 audits of employers each week to maintain the penetration percentage of 1% of the roughly 76,000 employers in the state each year.

5 GS07 Adjudication:

These positions make UI decision based on information required from the claimants, and employers to correctly apply Arkansas law and DOL requirements for the UI program. This is required for compliance and assists in the improper payment percentage which is a measure used to ensure trust fund solvency within 21 days from the detect date.

2 GS07 UI Services Center

These positions handle escalated phone calls, and email correspondence from the front-line staff, Legislators and Governor's office as well as grade phone calls to ensure we are providing excellent customer service as expeditiously as possible.