

Recruitment Incentives

A. Introduction

This plan outlines the procedures for administering recruitment incentives to Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System (APERS) prospective employees. These incentives aim to ensure APERS can recruit top talent and address skill gaps within the agency to support our mission to deliver secure retirement benefits and exceptional service to our members.

B. Implementation of Recruitment Incentives

Recruitment incentives will be implemented as follows:

1. **Identification of Eligible Prospective Employees:** Prospective employees will be proposed for a recruitment incentive award based on clear and objective criteria: experience, degree(s) held, and professional licensures relevant to the position. This ensures that the process is fair and transparent and that potential employees understand why recruitment incentives may be offered.
2. **Approval Process:** Awards may be proposed by hiring managers or the HR manager. The Executive Director must approve each recruitment incentive before it is sent to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for approval. The recruitment incentive may only be offered after approval from OPM is received. Any recruitment incentive proposed for the Executive Director must come from the APERS Board of Trustees and be submitted directly to the Office of Personnel Management and the Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee as required.
3. **Incentive Types:** The incentive may be a lump-sum bonus payment or the granting of incentive leave, as outlined in Act 172 of 2024, Section 5. If a recruitment incentive is approved by OPM, the nominated employee may choose between award types offered by the Executive Director.

C. Classifications Eligible for Recruitment Incentives

All classifications, except extra help, authorized within the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System appropriation acts passed by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas each year are eligible for recruitment incentives.

D. Objective, Measurable Standards for Selection

Employees within the eligible classifications will be selected based on the following standards:

1. **Experience:** Substantial experience that meets or exceeds the required experience in the job posting.
2. **Degrees Held:** Degrees from accredited institutions that closely align with those listed in the job posting. Degrees from accredited institutions which are considered more than those required for the position.

3. **Professional Licensure:** Professional licenses held by the candidate, required, or preferred in the job posting, or considered more than those required for the position.

E. Description of Types of Recruitment Incentives

1. Lump-Sum Bonus Payment:

- Up to \$5,000 per award.
- One-half is to be paid in the employee's first eligible payroll period, and the balance will be paid in the first eligible payroll period after the employee completes the agency's probationary period (six months).
- Should the employee separate from employment with APERS for any reason before one year from the date of employment, the employee must repay APERS any payments received before the employee separates from APERS.
- Bonus incentives will be subject to applicable state and federal tax withholding.
- Bonus incentives will not change the employee's base salary but will be included in retirement benefit calculations as stipulated in Act 172 of 2024, Section 5.

2. Incentive Leave:

- Up to 40 hours of leave.
- Must be used by the end of the calendar year following the calendar year the prospective employee begins employment with APERS.
- Should the employee separate from employment with APERS for any reason before one year from the date of employment, leave hours will expire when the employee resigns or is terminated and will not be liquidated by a lump-sum payment to the employee when they separate from APERS.
- Shall not be carried forward to subsequent years and shall not be paid out upon separation from the agency.

F. Request Submission for Recruitment Incentives

Each request for a special compensation award must include the following:

1. Name of the prospective employee.
2. Description of the position the prospective employee would fill and their qualifications for the position.
3. Description of the recruitment incentive to be provided.
4. Specification of the required period of employment for the prospective employee to retain the recruitment incentive.

G. Funding Certification

The agency must certify that existing funding is available for the recruitment incentives.

H. Limitation on Incentives

1. A person employed by the executive branch at the time of the offer of employment is not eligible for a recruitment incentive.
2. A recruitment incentive may be awarded to prospective employees even if the recruitment incentive would result in the salary for the employee exceeding the maximum pay level or the grade assigned to the employee's classification.
3. A person receiving a recruitment incentive shall commit to the required period of employment of one year with APERS.

I. Conclusion

This plan ensures that recruitment incentives are administered fairly, transparently, and in accordance with the requirements set forth in Act 172 of 2024, Section 5. The process will help APERS recruit and hire the appropriate personnel to support the agency's mission and goals.



Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System Plan for Administering Special Compensation Awards

A. Introduction

This plan, crucial for the recognition of exceptional performance, outlines the procedures for administering special compensation awards to Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System (APERS) employees. These awards, a testament to our commitment to excellence, aim to acknowledge outstanding performance, successful completion of significant projects or job assignments, or temporary job responsibilities that enhance the mission and goals of APERS - to deliver secure retirement benefits and exceptional service to our members.

B. Implementation of Special Compensation Awards

Special compensation awards will be implemented as follows:

1. **Identification of Eligible Employees:** To be eligible for special compensation awards, employees must have received at least a three (3) on the most recent performance evaluation and must not be on a corrective-action plan. Eligible employees will be identified and nominated for special compensation awards based on the clear and objective criteria outlined in Section D below to ensure that the process is fair and transparent and that all employees clearly understand the expectations.
2. **Approval Process:** An employee's manager/supervisor may nominate an employee for a special compensation award to their deputy director. The deputy director and the Executive Director will determine whether to seek approval by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for the award and, if so, which award type(s) to offer the nominated employee. The Executive Director must approve each award before submitting it to OPM for approval. Any special compensation award proposed for the Executive Director must come from the APERS Board of Trustees and be submitted directly to OPM.
3. **Award Types:** The special compensation awards include lump-sum bonus payments, incentive leave, or lump-sum payments of existing accrued annual leave, as outlined in Act 172 of 2024, Section 5. If a special compensation award is approved by OPM, the nominated employee may choose between award types offered by the Executive Director.

C. Classifications Eligible for Special Compensation Awards

All classifications, except extra help, authorized within the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System appropriation acts passed by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas each year are eligible for special compensation awards.

D. Objective, Measurable Standards for Selection

Employees within the eligible classifications will be selected based on the following criteria:

1. **Project Completion, job assignment, or major project milestone:** Successful completion of significant projects, job assignments, or major project milestones within budget and timeline.

Success will be measured in the areas of customer service, communication, accountability, professionalism, agency efficiency, and initiative. The project, assignment, or milestone should have substantially impacted at least one of these areas.

2. **Completion of Temporary Assignment:** Successful completion of a temporary job assignment, not to exceed six months, beyond the scope of work typically performed by the employee that produced measurable results that enhance the mission and goals of APERS. Success will be measured in the areas of customer service, communication, accountability, professionalism, agency efficiency, and initiative. The project, assignment, or milestone should have substantially impacted at least one of these areas.

E. Description of Special Compensation Award Types

1. Lump-Sum Bonus Payment:

- Up to \$5,000 per award.
- Is subject to withholding of applicable state and federal taxes.
- Will not change the employee's base salary but will be included in retirement benefit calculations as stipulated in Act 172 of 2024, Section 5.

2. Incentive Leave:

- Up to 40 hours of additional leave.
- Must be used by the end of the calendar year following the award.
- Shall not carry forward to subsequent years and shall not be paid out upon separation from the agency.
- May not be offered unless the employee has a minimum combined balance of 40 hours of annual, birthday, and holiday leave.

3. Lump-Sum Payment of Annual Leave:

- Not to exceed 40 hours.
- Paid at the employee's hourly rate.
- Must not bring the employee's minimum combined balance of annual, birthday, and holiday leave below 80 hours.
- Is subject to withholding of applicable state and federal taxes.
- Will not change the employee's base salary but will be included in retirement benefit calculations as stipulated in Act 172 of 2024, Section 5.

F. Request Submission for Special Compensation Awards

Each request for a special compensation award must include the following:

For a special compensation award based on completing a significant project, job assignment, or completing a major project milestone:

1. Name of employee nominated to receive the award.
2. Description of the project, assignment, or project milestone prompting special compensation.
3. Description of the work that was completed as part of the project or assignment.
4. Description of how the employee was selected for the project or assignment.
5. Description of the award provided.

For a special compensation award based on completion of a temporary assignment:

1. Name of the employee nominated for the award.
2. A list of the regularly assigned job responsibilities.
3. A list of the temporary job responsibilities assigned to the employee.
4. Description of how the employee was selected for the temporary job responsibility.
5. Description of the award provided.

G. Funding Certification

The agency must certify that existing funding is available for the awards.

H. Limitation on Awards

1. Employees shall not receive more than two awards per biennium.
2. Total compensation from lump-sum payments shall not exceed \$10,000 per biennium.
3. Awards may be given even if they result in the employees' salary exceeding the maximum pay level for the grade.

I. Conclusion

This plan ensures that special compensation awards are administered fairly, transparently, and in accordance with the requirements set forth in Act 172 of 2024, Section 5. The process will recognize exceptional employee contributions and support the agency's mission and goals.