



Department of Shared Administrative Services
Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders
Secretary Leslie Fiskens

August 19, 2026

The Honorable Breanne Davis, Co-Chairperson
The Honorable Les Warren, 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 Warren:

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) submits a request for the establishment of compensation differentials for FY26. The requested differentials for establishment are listed below.

Education or Professional Certification

The establishment of the Education or Professional Certification differential of up to ten percent (10%) has been requested by the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage & Tourism (ADPHT, Division of Parks. This differential is utilized for job-related education or certifications beyond what is established in the minimum qualifications of the job description and is directly related to the predominant purpose of the employee's position. The department requests the certification differential for those obtaining a Class A (up to 10%) or Class B (up to 7.5%) Commercial Driver's License.

Class Code	Titles	Pay Grade	Percentage	Anticipated Cost
RPA16P	Park Specialist	SGS02	Up to 10%	\$73,994
TMA03P	Maintenance Specialist	SGS04		
TMA01P	Maintenance Coordinator	SGS05	Class A:	
TMA04P	Maintenance Supervisor/ Expert	SGS06	10%	
TAT05I	Heavy Equipment Operator	SGS04		
RPA22P	Parks Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	SGS04	Class B:	
RPA23P	Parks Heritage & Tourism Interpreter II	SGS05	7.5%	

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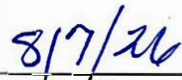
ADPHT is making this request because staff regularly operate and transport heavy machinery and equipment such as dump trucks, backhoes, bulldozers, excavators, trenchers, etc. across the state to various parks. Due to the size and weight of this equipment, transportation may require a CDL. Additionally, Blanchard Springs and Ozark Folk Center operate buses that carry visitors from the trails to the Visitor Centers, which also require a CDL.

OPM submits for review the establishment of the above listed differential for FY27.

Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated.



STATE PERSONNEL DIRECTOR



DATE

KB/sd: 1-2

2788

Received 7/24/26



Sarah Huckabee Sanders
Governor

Shea Lewis
Secretary

July 28, 2026

Director Kay Barnhill
Office of Personnel Management
501 Woodlane, Suite 201
Little Rock, AR 72201

Director Barnhill,

The Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism respectfully requests approval of a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Certification Pay Differential for designated Arkansas State Parks positions where a Class A or Class B CDL is required to perform assigned duties but is not a minimum qualification of the classification.

Arkansas State Parks is requesting a 10% certification differential for employees required to maintain a Class A CDL and a 7.5% certification differential for employees required to maintain a Class B CDL. This request recognizes the additional licensing, training, testing, and regulatory requirements associated with maintaining a CDL and supports the recruitment and retention of qualified employees in these critical operational roles.

Enclosed are the supporting justification and the positions identified for eligibility.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please let us know if any additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

Shea Lewis
Secretary

**Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism
Request for Certification Pay Differential
for Commercial Driver's License**

The following contains required Office of Personnel Management information necessary to justify and process Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism's (ADPHT) request to provide a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) certification differential for regular salary and extra-help positions within the Division of Arkansas State Parks (ASP). This request is necessary to maintain operational efforts in the transport of materials, equipment, and passengers to various locations throughout the state. All CDL certification differentials will require the approval of an ASP Director or the Manager of Operations (Park Administrator).

I. The professional certification must be above the required minimum qualifications for position titles and directly relate to the job function and duties being performed.

- a. Currently, there are extra-help and regular salary positions at Ozark Folk Center State Park, Blanchard Springs State Park, and within the Parks Operations Section that may require CDLs necessary in the performance of their duties. It should be noted that these licenses for the same position titles are not required at other park locations.
- b. During an Internal review of the position titles (listed below), it was determined that the job-required professional certifications exceeded the required minimum qualifications for each position title.

Position Title	CDL Class with Endorsements (If needed)
Park Specialist	Class B with Passenger & Air Brake Endorsements
Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Class B with Passenger & Air Brake Endorsements
Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter II	Class B with Passenger & Air Brake Endorsements
Maintenance Supervisor/Expert	Class B with Passenger & Air Brake Endorsements
Maintenance Coordinator	Class B with Passenger & Air Brake Endorsements
Maintenance Specialist	Class B with Passenger & Air Brake Endorsements
Heavy Equipment Operator	Class A with Air Brake Endorsements

II. The professional certification must be from a recognized certifying organization.

- a. All CDL classifications are issued and regulated by the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration (DFA), Office of Driver Services, which administers both the written and skills tests in accordance with federal Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act standards. As the state's certifying authority, the DFA ensures that all applicants meet required qualifications, including age, residency, medical certification, and completion of Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) training, before granting licensure, thereby aligning Arkansas's CDL program with national safety and operational standards.

III. The professional certification must be current and maintained by an employee while employed in an authorized position or specific classification.

- a. The attached Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Report identifies park locations, position title, position number, and required classification of CDL. This report also identifies positions which may need to complete licensure as required by their duties. ADPHT will perform an internal certification audit on each license holder annually.

IV. There must be documentation that the professional certifications are continued or renewed.

- a. Arkansas ensures that CDL holders maintain and renew their professional certifications through a coordinated documentation and monitoring system. These ongoing checks help maintain safety, legal compliance, and accountability across Arkansas state government operations.
 - i. **Medical Certification:** Drivers must maintain a valid DOT medical examiner's certificate (Form MCSA-5876), which is issued by an FMCSA-certified examiner and electronically submitted to the state's Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS) via the FMCSA National Registry II within one business day of the exam. The Arkansas Driver Services then updates the CDL record within 10 days; failure to maintain a current medical certificate results in automatic downgrade or suspension of CDL privileges until a valid certificate is submitted.
 - ii. **Self-Certification & Record Checks:** Upon issuance or renewal, drivers must declare their intended type of commercial operation. A process known as self-certification and these details are recorded in Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS) alongside driving records from other jurisdictions.
 - iii. **State Renewal Process:** Every 5 years, CDL holders must apply in person at an Arkansas Driver Services office, submit proof of identity, residency, and a current medical card, and pay applicable fees. Arkansas allows renewal within a six-month window before expiration, and re-verification of endorsements may require additional testing and background checks.
 - iv. **Arkansas State Vehicle Safety Program (SVSP):** Arkansas state agencies follow a standardized driver-license monitoring process to ensure employees operating state vehicles meet all legal and safety requirements. Through the Arkansas State Vehicle Safety Program, the Office of Driver Services automatically notifies agencies of any new violations added to an employee's driving record, and departments routinely verify that employees maintain a valid driver's license and required endorsements. This ongoing monitoring helps protect public safety, supports responsible use of state vehicles, and ensures compliance with state policies and regulations.

V. Why is the professional certification required?

- a. **Class A CDL:** Arkansas State Parks' Heavy Equipment Operators currently enter at a lower salary level despite regularly performing duties that require the operation of commercial vehicles to transport materials and equipment across the state. Although the OPM Heavy Equipment Operator classification does not require a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), these ASP employees must obtain and maintain a Class A Arkansas CDL. It is required whenever the combination of a tow vehicle and trailer has a gross combination weight rating (GCWR) of 26,001 pounds or more, with the trailer's GVWR exceeding 10,000 pounds, to safely and legally operate dump trucks and other commercial-grade vehicles essential to park construction, maintenance, and infrastructure projects. In contrast, the OPM Truck Driver classification, an SGS06 position requiring CDL and involving comparable commercial-vehicle responsibilities, receives a substantially higher entry salary. Establishing a certification differential for Heavy Equipment Operators appropriately recognizes the additional licensure, regulatory compliance, and operational responsibilities tied to holding a Class A CDL, while supporting equitable compensation among positions performing similar commercial-driving functions.
- b. **Class B CDL:** Several operational roles within Arkansas State Parks, including Park Specialist, Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I and II, Maintenance Supervisor/Expert, Maintenance Coordinator, Maintenance Specialist, and Trade Specialist, may be required to obtain and maintain an Arkansas Class B Commercial Driver's License (CDL) due to operating

passenger-carrying vehicles such as 15-passenger shuttles, tour buses, mini-buses, and other large park-transport vehicles used to move visitors safely at the Ozark Folk Center and Blanchard Springs State Parks. A Class B CDL is required when operating a single commercial vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 26,001 pounds or more, or any vehicle designed to carry 16 or more passengers including the driver. Because these positions regularly support high-volume guest transport and public-safety functions, maintaining a Class B CDL reflects additional professional qualifications and operational responsibilities that warrant appropriate recognition through a certification differential.

VI. Why was the professional certification not required in the past?

- a. This matter recently gained priority due to the lack of requirements for the Class A CDL requirement for our ASP Operation Section's Heavy Equipment Operators, which was not observed and corrected in the past or within the new pay plan.
- b. In the past, Arkansas State Parks did not require certain operational staff to hold a Class B Commercial Driver's License (CDL) because passenger-transport responsibilities were not formally incorporated into position duties. With Blanchard Springs now transitioning into a state park and the Ozark Folk Center's passenger-shuttling functions not previously addressed earlier, several positions may now be required to operate large shuttles, minibuses, and other passenger-carrying vehicles that meet Class B CDL thresholds. As these responsibilities expand and become essential to safe visitor transport, the need for Class B CDL certification has emerged only recently, reflecting the evolving operational demands of these parks.

VII. Provide every position number that the professional certification will affect.

- a. The attached CDL Operator Report identifies ASP locations, position title, and position numbers of personnel, which may be required to obtain the appropriate CDL. It also reflects maximum cost of the request CDL Pay Differential.
- b. All requests for CDL certification differentials will be formally reviewed and approved by an ASP Director or Manager of Operations (Park Administrator) to ensure consistency, operational necessity, and alignment with agency standards and responsibilities.

VIII. What is the recommendation for professional certificate pay for licensed CDL operators?

- a. Arkansas State Parks is implementing professional certificate pay for employees who obtain and maintain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), recognizing the advanced training, testing, and safety responsibilities required to operate commercial-grade vehicles. As park operations increasingly rely on CDL-qualified staff for passenger transport and heavy-vehicle use, this differential ensures fair compensation and supports the agency's commitment to safe and efficient service delivery. In determine the certificate pay for Class A and B CDLs, the following information was considered.
 - i. **Testing Requirements:** Class A includes written exams for General Knowledge, Air Brakes, Combination Vehicles, and a skills test that covers pre-trip inspection, basic control, coupling/uncoupling, and on-road driving. Class B requires the General Knowledge and Air Brakes exams (if applicable), Passenger Endorsement, and a skills test featuring inspection, basic maneuvers, and road driving, but *no coupling/uncoupling* is involved

- ii. **Training Duration & Cost:** Class A training typically takes 3–8 weeks and costs \$3,000–\$10,000, reflecting the complexity of combination vehicle operation. Class B training is shorter and more affordable, generally 1–4 weeks and \$1,500–\$5,000, since it focuses on single-unit vehicles.
 - iii. **Versatility & Job Scope:** Class A CDL is the most versatile as it authorizes operation of any vehicle allowed under Classes A, B, and C, with the appropriate endorsements. Class B CDL limits drivers to non-combination commercial vehicles, such as buses, dump trucks, and mixers; it does not allow operation of tractor-trailers.
- b. Because Class A licensure requires more advanced training, higher testing complexity, and the ability to operate heavy combination vehicles that carry greater regulatory and safety responsibilities, it represents a substantially higher professional qualification than Class B. In contrast, Class B licensure supports single-vehicle, passenger-transport, and localized operational needs that involve less technical skill and lower equipment risk. For these reasons, ASP recommends certification pay at **10% above entry salary for Class A CDL operators** and **7.5% for Class B CDL operators**, ensuring compensation appropriately reflects the skill level, operational responsibility, and safety obligations required for each license class.

IX. Internal Process

Arkansas State Park's guidelines for receiving, maintaining, and salary adjustments for a CDL pay differential (CDLD):

- To receive a CDLD, staff are required to possess a current CDL license and must be supporting ASP operations that require the license.
- All CDL operators will be allowed to maintain their CDLD by meeting all state and federal training, medical, and licensing requirements. Failure to do so will eliminate the employees' CDLD and possibly cause performance action to be taken.
- The ASP Operations Manager (Park Administrator) will conduct annually audit to verify the status of all staff wastewater licenses. Deficiencies will negate the CDLD and possibly cause performance action to be taken.
- All current licensed wastewater operators will receive the CDLD correlating with their current license status (Class A or B).
- New CDL operators must submit training and/or CDLD requests to the ASP Manager of Operations (Park Administrator) for approval before attending training and receiving a CDLD. Once approved, this will allow the employee to gain access to the CDLD program.

Arkansas Department of Transportation CDL Class A or B									
Position Number	Grade	Differential %	Regular Salary Entry/ Extra Help Hourly	Extra Help Projected Hours	Maximum Differential Pay	Regular Salary or Extra Help	Position Title	Location	CDL Class (A or B)
22092381	SGS04	10%	\$43,088		\$4,309	Regular Salary	Heavy Equipment Operator	ASP Operations Section	Class A
22092372	SGS04	10%	\$43,088		\$4,309	Regular Salary	Heavy Equipment Operator	ASP Operations Section	Class A
22092384	SGS04	10%	\$43,088		\$4,309	Regular Salary	Heavy Equipment Operator	ASP Operations Section	Class A
22091483	SGS02	7.5%	\$17.50	500	\$656	Extra Help	Park Specialist	Ozark Folk Center	Class B
22091478	SGS02	7.5%	\$17.50	500	\$656	Extra Help	Park Specialist	Ozark Folk Center	Class B
22091667	SGS02	7.5%	\$17.50	650	\$853	Extra Help	Park Specialist	Ozark Folk Center	Class B
22091701	SGS02	7.5%	\$17.50	1,000	\$1,313	Extra Help	Park Specialist	Ozark Folk Center	Class B
22092569	SGS06	7.5%	\$52,137		\$3,910	Regular Salary	Maintenance Supervisor/Expert	Ozark Folk Center	Class B
22092320	SGS04	7.5%	\$43,088		\$3,232	Regular Salary	Maintenance Specialist	Ozark Folk Center	Class B
22185330	SGS06	7.5%	\$52,137		\$3,910	Regular Salary	Maintenance Supervisor/Expert	Blanchard Springs	Class B
OPM Requested	SGS05	7.5%	\$47,397		\$3,555	Regular Salary	Maintenance Coordinator	Blanchard Springs	Class B
OPM Requested	SGS04	7.5%	\$43,088		\$3,232	Regular Salary	Maintenance Specialist	Blanchard Springs	Class B
OPM Requested	SGS05	7.5%	\$47,397		\$3,555	Regular Salary	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter II	Blanchard Springs	Class B
OPM Requested	SGS02	7.5%	\$35,610		\$2,671	Regular Salary	Park Specialist	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132380	SGS05	7.5%	\$18.50	1,800	\$2,498	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter II	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132446	SGS04	7.5%	\$17.50	1,800	\$2,363	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132448	SGS04	7.5%	\$17.50	1,800	\$2,363	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132450	SGS04	7.5%	\$17.50	1,800	\$2,363	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132451	SGS04	7.5%	\$17.50	1,800	\$2,363	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132452	SGS04	7.5%	\$17.50	1,800	\$2,363	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132453	SGS04	7.5%	\$17.50	1,800	\$2,363	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132454	SGS04	7.5%	\$17.50	1,440	\$1,890	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132455	SGS04	7.5%	\$17.50	1,440	\$1,890	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132456	SGS04	7.5%	\$17.50	1,440	\$1,890	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132457	SGS04	7.5%	\$17.50	960	\$1,260	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132458	SGS04	7.5%	\$17.50	960	\$1,260	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132459	SGS04	7.5%	\$17.50	960	\$1,260	Extra Help	Park Heritage & Tourism Interpreter I	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132514	SGS02	7.5%	\$17.50	1,800	\$2,363	Extra Help	Park Specialist	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132515	SGS02	7.5%	\$17.50	1,440	\$1,890	Extra Help	Park Specialist	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132516	SGS02	7.5%	\$17.50	1,440	\$1,890	Extra Help	Park Specialist	Blanchard Springs	Class B
22132517	SGS02	7.5%	\$17.50	960	\$1,260	Extra Help	Park Specialist	Blanchard Springs	Class B
Projected fiscal year CDL pay differential with all positions filled and budgeted hours uses:					\$73,594				