



# West Virginia Department of Transportation Policy: **Developmental Discretionary Increase for Education or Professional Certification**

*Issued by the Secretary of Transportation*

**Policy No: DOT 3.33**

**Issue Date: 11/01/2021**

**Revised:**

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

This policy is designed to reward employees for developing additional knowledge, skills, and competencies in their current jobs, allowing them opportunities to advance their salary as they advance their knowledge and expertise within the Department of Transportation (DOT).

The DOT Secretary may grant a salary adjustment to employees who acquire, after employment with the DOT, certain formal training, certification, or a degree that was not required to meet minimum qualifications for the current position. This program provides opportunities for salary growth - rewarding employees monetarily for significant contributions and increased skills/competencies while working in their current positions.

All salary and career growth opportunities are dependent upon DOT need and budgetary availability and are at the DOT Secretary's discretion. Nothing in this policy creates any right or entitlement on the part of any employee. Salary and career growth opportunities are subject to authorization or limitation by the Governor's Office and by other state entities.

Employees may also be eligible for the Education Reimbursement Program which will reimburse for the cost of training, certification, or a degree in exchange for a time commitment. The Education Reimbursement Program allows an employee to take training that is related to any job position within DOT. If an employee takes training in order to qualify for a promotional position at DOT that better fits the employee's interest or gives the employee the opportunity to advance their career path, then that employee would receive the promotional pay that comes with a pay grade advancement, which does not fall under this policy. This policy provides an opportunity to reward employees for taking additional training to advance their knowledge in their current job position. *For additional information please see the DOT 3.9, Education Reimbursement Program and DOH 3.21, the Classification Compensation Career Plan Policy.*

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## **2.0 SCOPE**

This policy applies to DOT employees after they have completed two (2) years of full-time employment with DOT, excluding the Parkways Authority. This policy does not apply to the DOH Transportation Worker Apprenticeship Program; however, those employees are eligible to apply for the Educational Expense Reimbursement Program. The Department's users are expected to be familiar with and to comply with this policy.

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## **3.0 DEFINITIONS**

- 3.1 **Apprenticeship Program**: The Division of Highways' program for the training and advancement of employees in the Transportation Worker classification series and who are paid pursuant to the division's hourly pay schedule. See Appendix A, DOH 3.21, the Classification and Compensation Career Plan Policy for hourly pay schedule.
- 3.2 **Certification**: Formal procedure that documents an employee has learned specific skills or knowledge in accordance with established requirements or standards for

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the profession or occupation. Certification is given by an official representative of a designated authority. A copy of the certification document may be required by the Department. A minor certification may be earned by skills and/or written test. A major certification is the result of in-depth education and training.

This does not include certificates of completion or attendance for routine training.

- 3.3 **Classification Specification:** The official description of a class of positions that describes the nature of work, examples of work performed, the knowledge, skills and abilities required, and generally accepted minimum qualifications required for employment.
- 3.4 **Compensation Plan:** The official schedule of pay rates for each class of positions and the salary regulations used in pay administration for employees of the Department of Transportation.
- 3.5 **Developmental Discretionary Increase:** A pay increase that an employee can apply for and, if approved, can be given in consideration for taking the initiative to complete advanced training or education on the employee's own time, in an effort to increase knowledge, skills, or abilities in the current position.
- 3.6 **Permanent Employee:** Any classified employee who has completed the probationary period prescribed for the job class, or any classified-exempt employee was hired to fill a position for an unlimited period of time, notwithstanding the agency's right to terminate the employee for cause or at the employee's will.
- 3.7 **Promotion:** A change in the status of an employee from a position in one class to a vacant position in another class of higher rank as measured by salary range and increased level of duties, responsibilities, or both.
- 3.8 **Reallocation:** Reassignment of a position by the Division from one class to a different class on the basis of a change in the kind or level of duties or a combination of both, assigned to the position, or to address a misalignment of title and duties.
- 3.9 **Salaried Classified Service:** The category of employees who are covered by the DOT merit system, also known as the state civil service system, and are paid pursuant to the department's salaried pay schedule.
- 3.10 **Salary Advancement:** A discretionary increase in compensation granted to an employee in the salaried classified service in recognition of the quality of job performance.
- 3.11 **Training:** For the purpose of this policy, training shall be any certifications, licenses, degrees, and/or education acquired to improve knowledge, skills and abilities.

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### 4.0 POLICY

#### 4.1 ELIGIBILITY

- A. Developmental discretionary increases may be granted to employees who have acquired increased skills and competencies in their current job classification. This recognizes employee's increased value to the DOT and in the marketplace without reallocating or promoting the employee to another position.
- B. Developmental increases may happen at any time of the year and do not affect any employee's merit increase.
- C. The developmental discretionary increase shall be based on the degree level or certification and the hours required to obtain the degree or certification (See Appendix C, the Professional Skills Decision Tree).
- D. The employee must maintain an overall rating score of at least a "meets expectations" in their Employee Performance Appraisal (EPA) during the time between application and receiving the developmental discretionary increase.
- E. The employee's disciplinary history may disqualify them for a discretionary increase.
- F. To qualify for this program, the course or degree must be job-related, or developmental growth related to the current position. For example, if the employee is a Supply Specialist and wants to pursue a degree as an Engineer in order to qualify for a promotion into a new position, the courses and degree would not be related to the current position and therefore would not qualify the Supply Specialist for a Developmental Discretionary Increase. The Supply Specialist may qualify for Education Reimbursement.

#### 4.2 TRAINING ELIGIBILITY:

The certification/degree must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- A. Must contribute to the employee's current position.
- B. Must contribute toward enhancing performance by updating and improving knowledge and skills that will enable the employee to perform current job duties more effectively and that are beneficial to the ongoing operations of the agency.
- C. Courses for professional certifications, certifications, trainings, or degrees must be taken from national/regional recognized institutions, must be accredited by recognized accrediting agencies and institutions, and or must be professional certifications that are reviewed and approved by the Training and Development unit of DOT.

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- D. Routine certifications or trainings that are required to maintain minimum qualifications required for the position are not eligible for the Developmental Discretionary Increase.
- E. If an employee is in the process of completing an approved degree, receives a promotion that is not due to the degree and the degree is still relevant for the new position, then the employee may still receive the developmental discretionary pay increase once the degree is completed. The employee will need to reapply with the new supervisor to determine eligibility.
- F. If the employee is in a certification or training that requires less than 1 year to complete and receives a promotional raise prior to receiving a developmental discretionary raise, the employee is not eligible for the discretionary pay increase.

#### 4.3 CONDITIONS FOR APPLICATION

- A. All developmental discretionary increases are discretionary.
- B. The employee should submit the Eligibility Review application and receive approval **prior** to starting their certification, training, or degree. All applications must be turned into the Human Resources Division Training and Development Unit. Failure to obtain eligibility review and approval could result in denial.
- C. All applications must be signed by the supervisor attesting to the employee receiving at least a “meets expectation” on their current EPA. (This will be verified again at the completion of the program to ensure the employee received at least a “meets expectation” on all EPAs during the time between application and receiving the Developmental Discretionary Increase.)
- D. All applications must be signed by the Training and Development Manager attesting to the certification, training or degree being related to the current job duty.
- E. All applications must be signed by the Employee Relations Manager attesting that the employee’s disciplinary history has been reviewed and is not a bar for a discretionary increase. (This will be verified again at the completion of the program to ensure that no disciplinary action above a verbal warning was received during the time between application and receiving the Developmental Discretionary Increase.)
- F. The employee must successfully complete the certification/training/degree. The employee is responsible for providing proof of successful completion within ninety (90) days after completion.
- G. The developmental discretionary pay differential shall not exceed the maximum step approved by the Commissioner based on the professional

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skills, and competency acquired (See Appendix C, the Professional Skills Decision Tree).

- H. The step of increase shall be based upon the degree level or certification and the hours required to obtain the degree or certification. When granted, this step shall be consistent among all similarly situated employees who obtain the same training, education, certification, or licensure.

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### 5.0 RELEVANT MATERIALS/DOCUMENTS

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|-----|----------|--|
| 5.1 | App. A-D | Eligibility and Approval Forms                     |
| 5.2 | DOH 3.21 | Classification and Compensation Career Plan Policy |
| 5.3 | DOT 3.9  | Educational Expense Reimbursement Program Policy   |

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### 6.0 APPENDICES

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|-----|------------|--|
| 6.1 | Appendix A | Developmental Discretionary Increase Eligibility Form                  |
| 6.2 | Appendix B | Developmental Discretionary Increase Application Form                  |
| 6.3 | Appendix C | Developmental Discretionary Increase Professional Skills Decision Tree |

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### APPENDIX A: DEVELOPMENTAL DISCRETIONARY INCREASE – ELIGIBILITY FORM

Eligibility Review for Developmental Discretionary Increase		
Name: _____	Start Date of Training: _____	
Supervisor: _____	Current Position: _____	
Agency: _____	Years at DOT: _____	
Division: _____	Years/current position: _____	
Org.: _____		
Training, Certification, or Degree: _____		
Company or University: _____		
Relevance to current position: _____		
_____		
_____		
Employee: I am attesting that this certification/training/degree is relevant to my current position and will increase my knowledge, skills, and abilities in my current position. I understand I must maintain at least a "meets expectations" or better on my EPA's and any disciplinary action could affect my eligibility.		
_____	_____	_____
Employee Print Name	Signature	Date
Supervisor: I have reviewed and approve that the requested course would be beneficial to the employee's current position. I am attesting that this employee has received at least "meets expectations" or better on their current EPA.		
_____	_____	_____
Supervisor Print Name	Signature	Date
Training and Development Manager: I have reviewed and approve that the requested course is related to the employee's current position.		
_____	_____	_____
Training Manager Print Name	Signature	Date
HR Employee Relations Manager: I am attesting that I have reviewed the employee's disciplinary history and it does not disqualify the employee.		
_____	_____	_____
Employee Relations Print Name	Signature	Date

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### APPENDIX B: DEVELOPMENTAL DISCRETIONARY INCREASE – APPLICATION FORM

Return the Eligibility Review for Developmental Discretionary Increase form and this application to the WVDOT Training and Development Unit.

Application for Developmental Discretionary Increase		
Name: _____	Date of Application: _____	
Supervisor: _____	Date of Training Completion: _____	
Division: _____	Current Position: _____	
Org.: _____	Years/current position: _____	
	Years at DOT: _____	
	Agency: _____	
HR Employee Relations Manager: I am attesting that I have reviewed the employee's disciplinary history and it does not disqualify the employee.		
_____	_____	_____
Print Name	Signature	Date
Supervisor: I am attesting that this employee has received at least "meets expectations" or better on their EPAs since application in this program.		
_____	_____	_____
Print Name	Signature	Date
Employee: I am attesting that this certification/training/degree is relevant to my current position and will increase my knowledge, skills, and abilities in my current position. I understand I must maintain at least a "meets expectations" or better on my EPAs and any disciplinary action could affect my eligibility.		
_____	_____	_____
Print Name	Signature	Date
<input type="checkbox"/> I have attached my grade report containing a grade of "C" or better or my passing notice.		

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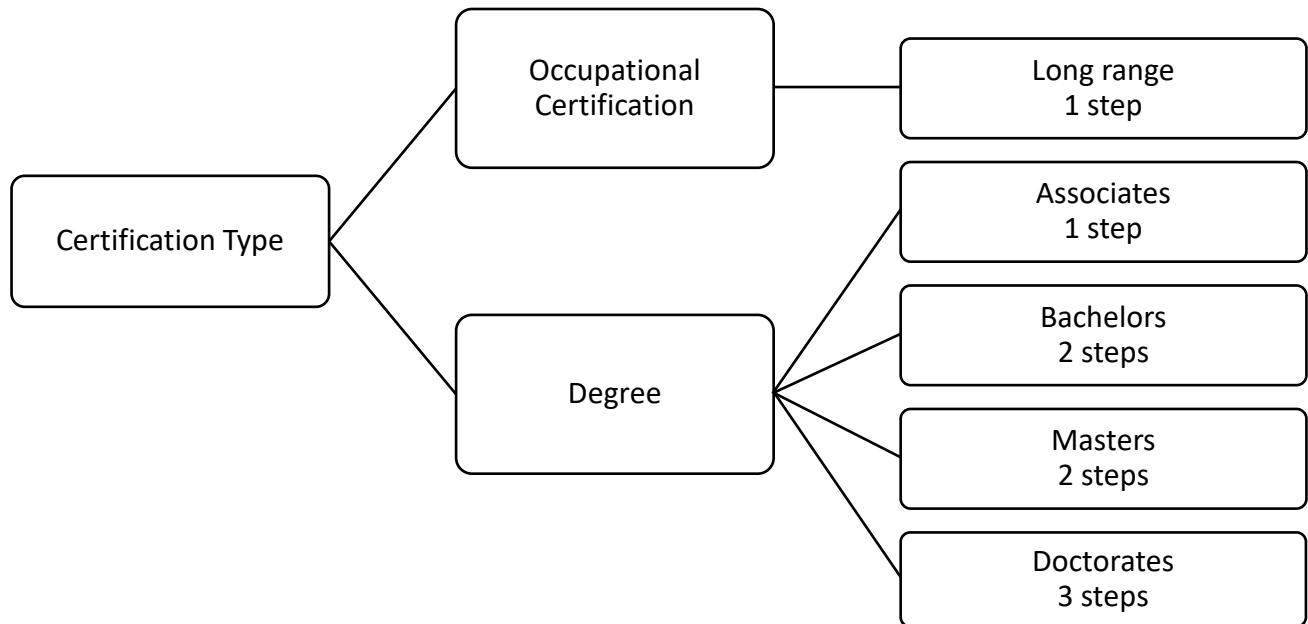
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## APPENDIX C: DEVELOPMENTAL DISCRETIONARY INCREASE – PROFESSIONAL SKILLS DECISION TREE



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## 7.0 CHANGE LOG

November 1, 2021 –

- Reformatted policy to DOT.
- Updated definitions to mirror Administrative Rule.



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**Request Form**

Recommend     Do Not Recommend

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Relations Manager

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Recommend     Do Not Recommend

\_\_\_\_\_  
Training and Development Manager

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Recommend     Do Not Recommend

\_\_\_\_\_  
Human Resources Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Recommend     Do Not Recommend

\_\_\_\_\_  
State Highway Engineer (as applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Approved     Denied

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner of Highways

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date