



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: 02/2/2023

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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 West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT).

The WVDOT Secretary may grant a salary adjustment to employees who acquire, after employment with the WVDOT, 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 WVDOT need and budgetary availability and are at the WVDOT 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 Educational Expense Reimbursement Program which will reimburse for the cost of training, certification, or a degree in exchange for a time commitment. The Educational Expense Reimbursement Program allows an employee to take training that is related to any job position within WVDOT. If an employee takes training in order to qualify for a promotional position at WVDOT 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 DOT 3.34, the Classification and Compensation Career Plan Policy*.

2.0 SCOPE

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

3.0 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Apprenticeship Program:** The WVDOT's program for the training and advancement of employees in the Transportation Worker classification series and who are paid pursuant to the WVDOT's hourly pay schedule. See Appendix A, DOT 3.34, the Classification and Compensation Career Plan Policy for hourly pay schedule.

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- 3.2 **Certification**: Formal procedure that documents an employee has learned specific skills or knowledge in accordance with established requirements or standards for 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 WVDOT. 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 classification 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 classification of positions and the salary regulations used in pay administration for employees of the WVDOT.
- 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 classification, 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 classification to a vacant position in another classification 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 WVDOT from one classification to a different classification 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 WVDOT merit system, also known as the state civil service system, and are paid pursuant to the WVDOT'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 WVDOT 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.
- D. The employee receives an overall rating score of at least a "meets expectations" in their Employee Performance Appraisal (EPA).
- 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 Educational Expense Reimbursement Program.

4.2 Training Eligibility

The certification or 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, trainings, or degrees must be taken from national or regional recognized institutions, must be accredited by recognized accrediting agencies and institutions, and must be professional certifications that are reviewed and approved by the Human Resources (HR) Division's Training and Development Section of WVDOT.

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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 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 one (1) year to complete and receives a promotional raise prior to receiving a developmental discretionary increase, the employee is not eligible for the discretionary pay increase.

4.3 Conditions for Eligibility and Application

- A. All developmental discretionary increases are ***discretionary***.
- B. The Eligibility and Application Form 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.)
- C. The Eligibility Form must be signed by the HR Division’s Training and Development Manager attesting to the certification, training or degree being related to the current job duty.
- D. The Eligibility and Application Form must be signed by the HR Division’s Employee Relations Manager attesting that the employee’s disciplinary history has been reviewed and is not a bar for a discretionary increase.
- E. The Eligibility and Application Form must be signed by the supervisor, the District Manager or the Division Director, and the employee.
- F. The employee must complete the additional inquiries and acknowledgment.
- G. Employees who use education reimbursement must successfully execute the terms of the Educational Expense Reimbursement Program Agreement before they become eligible for discretionary increase consideration.
- H. Training obtained during work hours could result in denial of a discretionary increase.
- I. The employee must successfully complete the certification/training or degree. The employee is responsible for providing proof of successful

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completion.

- J. The employee who successfully completes their certification/training or degree and has worked within the WVDOT for one (1) year after completion and has not received a promotion based on the certification/training/degree.
- K. The employee who receives their degree through participation in the Bridge Valley program is not eligible for a discretionary increase.

5.0 RELEVANT MATERIALS/DOCUMENTS

- 5.1 App. A Developmental Discretionary Increase Application Form
- 5.2 [DOT 3.34](#) Classification and Compensation Career Plan Policy
- 5.3 [DOT 3.9](#) Educational Expense Reimbursement Program Policy

6.0 APPENDICES

- 6.1 Appendix A Developmental Discretionary Increase Application Form

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APPENDIX A:

DEVELOPMENTAL DISCRETIONARY INCREASE APPLICATION FORM

Eligibility Review and Application for Developmental Discretionary Increase

Name: _____ Date of Application: _____
Supervisor: _____ Date of Training Completion: _____
Division: _____ Current Position: _____
Org: _____ Years/current position: _____
Years at DOT: _____
Training, Certification or Degree: _____
Company or University: _____
Relevance to current position: _____

Agency:

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.

Used Education Reimbursement to pay for training. ☐ Y or ☐ N

Obtained certification/training/degree during work hours. ☐ Y or ☐ N

☐ I have attached my grade report containing a grade of "C" or better on my passing notice.

Employee Print Name

Signature

Date

Supervisor: I have reviewed and approve 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

District/Division Manager: I have reviewed and approve 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.

District/Division Manager Print Name

Signature

Date

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Training and Development Manager: I have reviewed and approve the requested course is related to the employee's current position.

Training and Development 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

Approvals:

Employee Relations Manager

Date

Reviewed ☐

HR Assistant Director

Date

Reviewed ☐

Chief/Executive

Date

Recommended ☐

Do Not Recommend ☐

Approved ☐ Denied ☐

Step Granted _____

Commissioner Of Highways

Date

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7.0 CHANGE LOG

November 1, 2021 –

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

February 2, 2023

- Updated Appendix A Developmental Discretionary Increase Application Form
- Updated references to Policy DOH 3.21 to DOT 3.34.

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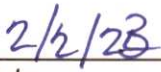
Effective Date of Policy: 02/02/2023

Approved by:



Jimmy D. Wriston, P.E.

Secretary of
Transportation
Commissioner of
Highways



Date

*The Secretary of the West Virginia Department of Transportation or the Commissioner of Highways may, pursuant to the authority vested with the Secretary and Commissioner in W. Va. Code §5F-2-2, §17-2A-1 *et seq.*, and §17-2-1 *et seq.*, waive the requirements of this policy if the circumstances, in the Secretary or Commissioner's sole discretion, warrant such action.