

ENROLLED ORDINANCE 178-34

MODIFY THE SALARY RANGE ASSIGNMENT FOR THE TELECOMMUNICATOR CLASSIFICATION FROM OPEN RANGE 07 TO OPEN RANGE 09 AND ESTABLISH A DIFFICULT-TO-FILL SHIFT INCENTIVE FOR TELECOMMUNICATORS FOR COVERAGE NEEDS

WHEREAS, there has been increased turnover and difficulty attracting and retaining quality telecommunicator candidates; and

WHEREAS, the Waukesha County Department of Emergency Preparedness employee turnover rates are exceeding the County's capacity to attract and train employees in a timely manner; and

WHEREAS, many employers are facing the same tight labor market with low unemployment rates; and

WHEREAS, a review of the local wages for Telecommunicators last summer indicated the County salaries were not keeping pace; therefore, a one grade salary range adjustment was made in anticipation of the 2023 total compensation market and benefits study; and

WHEREAS, the total compensation market and benefits study in progress, while not yet final, is indicating that the Telecommunicator salaries are lagging; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to take action to address Telecommunicator salaries in order to attract candidates and retain employees; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to take steps to retain current Telecommunicators who are providing critical dispatch services during this time of high vacancy by moving the Telecommunicator classification from Open Range 07 to Open Range 09; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to provide a salary adjustment of \$3.00/hour upon movement into Open Range 09 as the department has the administrative authority to do a salary adjustment upon movement to the new pay grade and no budget amendment is necessary; and

WHEREAS, the change in salary range assignment is expected to improve emergency dispatch capacity in the long-term, but there is currently a critical shortage of available staff, and it is appropriate now to provide additional compensation to incentivize workers to cover difficult-to-fill shifts; and

WHEREAS, to address the current critical shortage of available staff, this ordinance would approve the ability to temporarily provide a \$3.00/hour pay increase for staff working night, weekend, and holiday shifts when the directors of Emergency Preparedness and Administration deem it necessary to ensure appropriate coverage during times of low staffing levels; and

WHEREAS, it is expected that, through turnover and vacancy of positions at the Communications Center during 2023, there will be sufficient remaining budget authority to accommodate wage rate increases and the difficult-to-fill shift incentive and that these impacts will be incorporated into the 2024 proposed budget.

THE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF WAUKESHA ORDAINS that effective July 29, 2023, the Telecommunicator classification be moved from Open Range 07 (\$25.16/hour minimum - \$29.22/hour midpoint - \$33.28/hour maximum) to Open Range 09 (\$27.75/hour minimum - \$32.23/hour midpoint - \$36.70/hour maximum).


BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that effective June 17, 2023, the Director of Emergency Preparedness and Director of Administration have discretion to jointly agree during periods of critical staffing shortages to commence or terminate, for Telecommunicators working the difficult-to-fill shifts, a shift incentive of \$3/hour for hours worked during the following time periods: weekdays 6 PM – 6 AM, weekends Friday 6 PM – Monday 6 AM, and County recognized holidays.

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Presented by: Judiciary & Law Enforcement Committee


Approved by: Human Resources Committee


Approved by: Finance Committee

  
Jacob LaFontain, Chair


  
Larry Nelson, Chair


  
James A. Heinrich, Chair


  
Michael A. Crowley

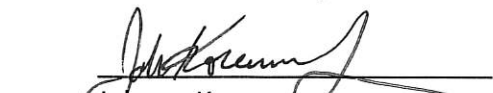
  
Michael A. Crowley

  
Larry Bangs

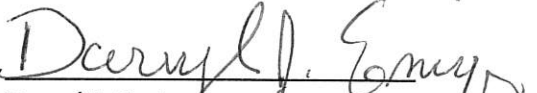
  
Robert L. Kolb

  
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Brian Meier

  
Darryl J. Enriquez


  
Thomas J. Schellinger

  
Chris Mommaerts

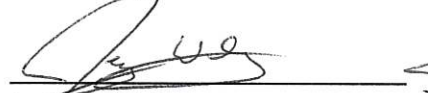
  
Joel R. Gaughan

  
Terry Thieme

**Absent**


  
Richard Morris

  
Matthew E. Weil

  
Jeremy Walz

  
Gary J. Szpara

The foregoing legislation adopted by the County Board of Supervisors of Waukesha County, Wisconsin, was presented to the County Executive on:

Date: July 31, 2023,   
Margaret Wartman, County Clerk

The foregoing legislation adopted by the County Board of Supervisors of Waukesha County, Wisconsin, is hereby:

Approved: X  
Vetoed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 7/31/2023,   
Paul Farrow, County Executive

FISCAL NOTE

**MODIFY THE SALARY RANGE ASSIGNMENT FOR THE TELECOMMUNICATOR CLASSIFICATION FROM OPEN RANGE 07 TO OPEN RANGE 09 AND ESTABLISH A DIFFICULT-TO-FILL SHIFT INCENTIVE FOR TELECOMMUNICATORS FOR COVERAGE NEEDS**

This ordinance modifies the salary range for telecommunicator positions, increasing from Open Range 07 (\$25.16/hour minimum - \$29.22/hour midpoint - \$33.28/hour maximum) to Open Range 09 (\$27.75/hour minimum - \$32.23/hour midpoint - \$36.70/hour maximum). This is being done to allow for a \$3.00/hour increase in pay for these positions, that otherwise would not be possible within the current salary range maximum for some employees, in order to promote retention and recruitment.

The Department of Emergency Preparedness is experiencing significant vacancy levels within the telecommunicator classification. Reasons for these vacancies include the continuing tight labor market and competition from surrounding county and municipal governments for telecommunicator positions. Due to the work load and extensive training involved with the telecommunicator position, some candidates decide to leave early in training or pursue other, similarly paid positions that do not require as much commitment and stress. Both the total compensation market and benefits study (which is currently underway) and a review of other governments salary ranges indicates that telecommunicator pay is lagging, which makes it more difficult to compete for these positions.

Below is a table illustrating the hourly wages of Waukesha County's telecommunicators compared to other similarly sized and nearby local governments. Waukesha County currently ranks in the bottom half of pay levels among other counties and cities (based on maximum rate). A \$3.00/hour wage increase will put the county in the upper half and be more in-line with higher-paying local governments at the top of list that are most likely to compete for telecommunicator positions due to proximity.

**Comparison of Telecommunicator Pay: Before & After Salary Range Change\***

Organization	Min Rate	Max Rate
Milwaukee, City of	\$ 31.38	\$ 38.58
Racine County	\$ 28.35	\$ 38.10
Waukesha, City of	\$ 28.20	\$ 38.06
Waukesha County - Proposed, Open 09	\$ 27.75	\$ 36.70
Dane County	\$ 32.23	\$ 34.78
Walworth County	\$ 25.83	\$ 34.00
Waukesha County - Current, Open 07	\$ 25.16	\$ 33.28
Kenosha County	\$ 24.46	\$ 31.44
Milwaukee County	\$ 23.45	\$ 29.84
Elm Grove, Village of	\$ 22.21	\$ 27.79

\*Some local governments salary schedules provide for more rapid progression through the range than Waukesha County.

The annualized cost of this salary range adjustment and related \$3.00/hour increase in pay, including FICA and Wisconsin Retirement Contribution expenses, is estimated at about \$343,000. The partial-year impact in 2023, beginning with the July 29<sup>th</sup> pay period, is estimated at \$145,000.

This change in salary range assignment is expected to improve emergency dispatch recruitment/retention in the long-term, but there is currently a critical shortage of available staff, so this ordinance also approves a new policy to allow a separate \$3.00/hour increase in pay for telecommunicators working difficult-to-fill hours. This would be a temporary incentive, provided during periods of high vacancy when the directors of Emergency Preparedness and Administration deem it necessary to help incentivize coverage. Difficult-to-fill hours are defined to include weeknights (6:00 PM to 6:00 AM), weekends (Friday 6:00 PM to Monday 6:00 AM), and holiday shifts. This policy would be retroactive to June 17, 2023. The partial-year impact of this policy through the end of 2023, including overtime, is estimated to cost \$94,000.

Department management anticipates being significantly below budget in personnel cost due to vacancy and turnover, which is expected to be sufficient to cover both the salary range adjustment and the difficult-to-fill shift pay incentive. The impacts of the is ordinance will be built into the 2024 proposed budget.



William Duckwitz  
Budget Manager  
7/5/2023  
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