



Position Classification Policy

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a standardized framework for classifying positions within the Buncombe County Government (County). This policy ensures that positions are appropriately aligned with the organization's current needs, responsibilities, and market standards.

2. Applicability

This policy applies to all Buncombe County departments and employees unless there is a conflict with GS 153A-103 related to hiring, discharging, and supervising employees. Such exclusion is noted at the end of this policy. Otherwise, departments may adopt and enforce policies that are more restrictive than County Policy.

3. Policy

3.1. Administration of the Classification Plan

3.1.1. The Position Classification Plan serves as the foundation for developing competitive selection and compensation programs while supporting budgetary and organizational planning. The County will maintain a comprehensive Position Classification and Compensation Plan, which includes all established and approved classification (class) titles along with their assigned salary grade ranges. For each class title, a job description is maintained and made accessible to all employees via the County's intranet. These descriptions outline:

- The class title
- The primary purpose of the position
- Essential functions and responsibilities
- Required qualifications, including education, experience, and necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Organization conformance standards, and
- Other information applicable to the job.

- 3.1.2. Positions will be assigned the same class title and salary grade range when their duties are sufficiently similar, including:
 - The job description accurately reflects the responsibilities of the positions sharing that title.
 - They require the same level of education, experience, knowledge, competencies, and other qualifications.

3.2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.2.1. The Human Resources Director, as designated by the County Manager, will be responsible for the administration and maintenance of the Position Classification Plan so that it accurately reflects the duties performed by employees in the classes to which their positions are allocated.
- 3.2.2. The Human Resources Director will allocate each position covered by the Position Classification Plan to its appropriate class and salary grade in the plan. New positions will be established only with the approval of the Board of County Commissioners upon the recommendation of the County Manager and/or the Human Resources Director.
- 3.2.3. With the recommendation of the County Manager and/or Human Resources Director, the Board of County Commissioners may create or delete a class from the Position Classification Plan.
- 3.2.4. Department Directors will be responsible for bringing to the attention of the County Manager and/or Human Resources Director (1) the request for new positions, and (2) significant changes in duties, responsibilities, working conditions, or other factors affecting the classification of any existing positions.
- 3.2.5. The Buncombe County Sheriff's Office (BCSO), in collaboration with County HR, will conduct and document a comprehensive review of all BCSO job descriptions at least once every four years to ensure they remain accurate and aligned with current responsibilities and requirements.

3.3. Position Classification Management

- 3.3.1. The position classification management process ensures that all job roles are defined, evaluated, and categorized based on objective criteria, including duties, responsibilities, required qualifications, and levels of authority. This process helps ensure consistency, fairness, and transparency.
- 3.3.2. The County Manager may reclassify or adjust vacant positions as needed, excluding positions within the Buncombe County Sheriff's Office.
- 3.3.3. Positions Classification Review Process:
 - 3.3.3.1. A position classification review request may be initiated at any time by the Department Director, County Managers' Office or Human Resources, when there has been a substantive, measurable change in job content and degree of responsibility or a restructuring of roles within a department.

- 3.3.3.2. Requests for a classification review must be submitted in writing and include detailed justification outlining the proposed changes and reasons for the request.
- 3.3.3.3. Each classification review will be evaluated based on factors such as significant changes in job duties, level of responsibility, required qualifications or skills, market data, and organizational needs.
- 3.3.3.4. Classification review requests will not be based on an individual employee's performance, tenure, or placement within the salary grade.
- 3.3.3.5. HR will review all reclassification requests in consultation with relevant stakeholders, which may include the employee and their supervisor. This evaluation will assess the request and make recommendations based on established criteria.
- 3.3.3.6. The evaluation process will include a thorough job analysis, which may include consultation with subject matter experts and benchmarking against similar positions in the industry.
- 3.3.4. Position Reclassification Review Timeline:
 - 3.3.4.1. Filled Positions: Excluding positions on a career ladder, approved position reclassifications will only occur annually as part of the Buncombe County budget request process, except with the permission of the County Manager.
 - 3.3.4.2. Vacant Positions: Approved position reclassifications may occur at any time.
 - 3.3.4.2.1. Should a reclassification of a vacant position occur outside the budget process, the Department will be required to find a budget off-set from their operating budget.
- 3.3.5. Employees do not have the right to appeal or file grievance based on classification and compensation determinations
- 3.3.6. Prior to posting a position, supervisors are expected to review a job description to address changes in job duties, responsibilities, or requirements that may warrant an update to a job description. Minor revisions to a job description between compensation study reviews are standard and would not require a position classification review.
- 3.3.7. Please reference the Position Classification Procedures.

3.4. Pay Rates for Reclassifications

- 3.4.1. This section applies countywide unless there is a separate pay policy that has been approved by the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners.
- 3.4.2. When a position classification is adjusted to a higher salary grade, employees in that class may receive a pay increase in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the Employee Pay Policy and is contingent upon the approval of the County Manager and/or Human Resources Director.
- 3.4.3. When a class of positions are assigned to a lower salary grade, the salaries of employees in that class will not be reduced unless the employee's pay is above the maximum of the salary grade for the new position per the Employee Pay Policy.

4. Policy Non-Compliance

Employees willfully violating the terms and conditions of this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

5. Audit

All policies for Buncombe County may be subject to audit or review as outlined in the [Internal Auditor's Statement](#).

6. Definitions

- 6.1. **Position:** A position is a specific job usually established by a budget action setting aside funds for salary and other costs. A position may be full-time or part-time.
- 6.2. **Position Classification:** A job or group of jobs having similar duties and responsibilities requiring similar qualifications, which can be properly designated by one title indicative of the nature of work performed, and which carry the same salary grade.
- 6.3. **Position Classification Plan:** A systematic method used to categorize jobs into predefined classes or grades based on their duties, responsibilities, and required qualifications.
- 6.4. **Position Reclassification:** Reclassification is a change in class title and/or salary grade of an existing or previously classified position, due to substantive, measurable change in job content and degree of responsibility or a restructuring of roles within a department.

7. Approval and Revision History

Policy Origination Date:	May 20, 2025
Requires Board Approval:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Board Approval Date:	May 20, 2025
Policy Exclusions:	None
Revision History:	

8. Background

Prior to April 2025, the Position Classification policy existed in the Buncombe County Personnel Ordinance. That language has now been removed and the content lives within this policy document.