



## **TOWN OF NORWOOD PERSONNEL BOARD**

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### **#P-411 – ACCELERATED STEP INCREASE POLICY NON-BARGAINED-FOR EMPLOYEES**

#### **1. Purpose and Scope**

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to establish eligibility for and the procedures to follow relating to step rate increases which are in excess of the annual increase set forth in the adopted Town Classification Plan. This policy ensures that proposed acceleration of step increases are implemented equitably and consistently to all eligible employees.
- 1.2 This policy does not add additional steps to the Classification Plans. This policy provides the method and procedures that an Appointing Authority must follow to accelerate step increases.
- 1.3 Please see also the Town's Employee Performance Award Policy (#P-501) and Employee Recognition Award Policy (#P-502) at [www.norwoodma.gov](http://www.norwoodma.gov), click Committee/Boards, click Personnel Board, and click Town Personnel Policies. These policies indicate other avenues Appointing Authorities may utilize in lieu of an additional step increase

#### **2. Applicability**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all permanent non-bargained-for full and part-time compensated positions excluding employees of the School Department. Positions covered by Civil Service Law are subject only to those portions of the policy which are not specifically regulated by Civil Service Law. Step increases for bargained-for positions are governed by the applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- 2.2 To the extent permitted by law, employment agreements (new, updated or extensions) entered into after the effective date of this policy, with employees whose positions are subject to this policy, must follow all of the provisions of this policy.
- 2.3 This policy is intended to be consistent with any and all applicable laws. If any part of this policy is inconsistent with the law, that part of the policy shall be considered invalid, and the remaining provisions of this policy shall be construed so as to be consistent with the law.

#### **3. Definitions**

- 3.1 Please consult the Personnel Definitions Document (#D-100) regarding Appointing Authority, Regular Full-time Employee, Regular Part-time Employee, Intermittent Employee, Seasonal Employee, Intern, Volunteer, Temporary Employee and any other applicable terms utilized in this document.
- 3.2 Classification Plan – a system of grouping similar positions together under common job titles using a quantitative analysis process to compare duties and responsibilities for commonality of purpose.

- 3.3 Compensation Plan - a schedule of salaries and pay rates including titles, grades, and step increases that groups similar positions together. A compensation plan may also include additional benefits such as time off, insurance, retirement, and incentives and bonuses.
- 3.4 Performance Agreement - a written/signed document establishing expectations and accountability for meeting a set of agreed upon challenging objectives.
- 3.5 Step Date – the date an employee begins service in a specific grade within the appropriate Compensation Plan. This date can be adjusted based upon permanent movement out of grade or for other reasons deemed appropriate by the Appointing Authority, the Human Resources Director and as indicated in Section 5.7.

#### 4. Eligibility

- 4.1 Regular Full-time and Regular Part-time employees budgeted for and regularly scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week, are eligible for consideration of accelerated step increases.
- 4.2 Part-time employees budgeted for and regularly scheduled to work fewer than 20 hours per week, Intermittent/Seasonal/Temporary Employees, Interns, and Volunteers are not eligible for accelerated step increases.

#### 5. Policy

- 5.1 It is strongly encouraged that Appointing Authorities seek alternative methods to recognize employees for work completed above and beyond their normal expectations.
  - 5.1.a The Town’s Employee Performance Award Policy was developed for the purposes of evaluating and rewarding eligible employees that accomplish significant achievements in the performance of their job responsibilities to the Town of Norwood.
  - 5.1.b The Town’s Employee Recognition Award Policy was developed for the purpose of recognizing an employees with an “Employee Recognition Award” for exceeding service excellence while performing their job responsibilities to customers or fellow employees of the Town of Norwood.

Both of these programs are one-time events to avoid long-term budget impacts to the Town. These managerial tools are good alternatives for recognizing an employee’s excellence in job performance without altering the established step increase process.

- 5.2 The Town’s Classification and Compensation Plans provides that each position be identified at a specified grade within the Classification Plan. Employees may consult the Position Description for their position or inquire with the HR Department for information regarding a position’s grade or step, or the employee’s step date.
- 5.3 Each of the Town’s Compensation Plans provide for an annual step increase based on continuous service and in some circumstances performance reviews.
- 5.4 Under normal circumstances annual step increases, up to the step limit within the Classification and Compensation Plan for the employee’s position, are granted on an employee’s annual Step Date.

- 5.5 Funding for accelerated step increases is subject to approval by the Finance Commission and/or Town Meeting, if there is in sufficient funds in the allocated salary line item.
- 5.6 All such requests must be based on performance. As such, an agreed upon Performance Agreement must be signed by both the Appointing Authority and the employee. Section 6.4 below outlines the minimum parameters of what needs to be in a Performance Agreement.
- 5.7 In the event of an error or violation of this policy, either intentional or unintentional, Human Resources must be immediately informed. Human Resources will identify and make the proper correction(s). A violation of this policy, whether intentional or unintentional, will not change this policy, nor set a precedent in any future application of this policy.

## 6. Provisions

- 6.1 In order for an Appointing Authority to grant an Accelerated Step increase, the procedures outlined below must be followed prior to communicating approval to an employee.
- 6.2 Accelerated step increases are limited to the following conditions:
  - 6.2.a May be approved no sooner than 12 months after the date a final signed Performance Agreement has been submitted to Human Resources. Step increases may not be effective retroactively.
  - 6.2.b May be approved no more than once in a 3-year period for the same employee. The 3-year period begins on the effective date of a previous accelerated step increase.
  - 6.2.c Accelerated steps may only be 1 step above an employee's next scheduled step increase.
  - 6.2.d Every attempt should be made to have an approved accelerated step increase start on the current Step Date.
- 6.3 The appropriate Appointing Authority must fill-out and sign **Document #D-114 Accelerated Step Increase Request** form and submit it to the Human Resources Department.
- 6.4 Performance Agreements
  - 6.4.a Accelerated steps may only be earned through the development, satisfaction and signing of an Appointing Authority - Employee Performance Agreement – see document **#D-115 - Performance Agreement Template**, which is available from the HR Dept.
  - 6.4.b The Appointing Authority and/or designee and Human Resources Director and/or his/her designee shall jointly coordinate the development and write-up of any and all Performance Agreements.
    - 6.4.b.i The Appointing Authority is responsible for setting specific objectives.
    - 6.4.b.ii The Human Resources Director or designee is responsible for ensuring the objectives are clearly and unambiguously drafted and understood by the employee and Appointing Authority.
  - 6.4.c Performance Agreements must be signed by the Appointing Authority and Employee.
- 6.5 The Appointing Authority shall secure the required funding from the Finance Commission and/or Town Meeting, prior to notification to the employee, if there are not available funds in the allocated salary line item.





**TOWN OF NORWOOD  
PERSONNEL BOARD**

**#D-114 - REQUEST FOR ACCELERATED STEP INCREASE**

**Please note:** This request shall be submitted by the Appointing Authority, not by the individual or Department Head and submitted to the Personnel Board thru the HR Director for review, input and feedback.

**SECTION I - Appointing Authority Input**

Date of Request: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_      Appointing Authority: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_      Department Head: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_      Current Position Grade & Step: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

What Step is the Appointing Authority requesting the employee be accelerated to? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the date in which the current employee was put in the Grade indicated above? \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

**Rational for the Request**

- Information should be specific as possible, so the Human Resources Director can appropriately review and evaluate pertinent issues and be consistent in application, before reporting back to the Appointing Authority.
- Accelerated Step increases can be considered if the request is based on performance. A copy of the signed Performance Agreement (PA), as outlined in section 6 of this policy, must be submitted with this request. Performance Agreements must have been agreed to by the Appointing Authority and the employee a minimum of 12 months in advance of consideration.

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Appointing Authority signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*[Once signed, please forward all documents for review to the Human Resources Director]*

**SECTION II – Human Resources Review**

Date received by the HR Department: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a signed copy of a Performance Agreement attached with this request? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If No, please inform the Appointing Authority individual who signed this form that it is required in order for this request to move forward. Please date stamp documents to be sure a timeline can be tracked.

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In your review of Section 6.4 of this policy and the submitted documents, have all other aspects of required documentation been met? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If No, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

HR Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

*[Once all documentation has been provided, please return to the Appointing Authority]*

***A copy of this completed and signed-off document shall be placed in the employee’s personnel file. The Appointing Authority must also ensure the employee is provided a copy of this document and the signed Performance Agreement.***

## Accelerated Step Increase Request Process Flow Chart

