Minnesota Senate
Senate Human Resources

Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Ave. West
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senate
State of Minnesota

2025 Merit Plan for Minnesota Senate Employees

Background:
On June 13, 2025, the Minnesota Senate Rules and Administration committee passed a Committee Resolution, which approves a series of compensation increases for Senate Staff.

Merit Plan Provisions:
The increases include a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for fiscal year 2025, Merit Based Increase for fiscal year 2025, adjustments to stipend amounts for Committee Legislative Assistants, and salary range adjustment in fiscal year 2026.

In keeping with past practices, the amount available for merit pools will be divided by "department" defined as 1) the Majority Caucus; 2) the Minority Caucus; 3) all nonpartisan offices under the direction of the Secretary of the Senate; and 4) Senate Counsel, Research and Fiscal Analysis.

The Director of Human Resources shall:

a) Make training available upon request regarding this plan.
b) Ensure that a performance evaluation for the previous fiscal year (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025) has been completed for each employee scheduled to receive a merit-based pay increase.
c) Ensure that performance ratings and merit-based pay increases are congruent.

****Merit-based pay increases provided under this plan may not be appealed****

Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA):
Each Senate employee employed on July 1, 2025, will receive a salary increase of three and one half percent (3.5%).

Committee Legislative Assistant stipends will increase by three and one half percent (3.5%) effective July 1, 2025.

Salary Range minimums and maximums will increase by three and one half percent (3.5%) effective July 1, 2025. (As provided by Rules Committee resolution, the Secretary of the Senate and the Controller may make necessary adjustments to the Senate salary ranges to continue the Senate's current practice regarding the width of the ranges and the space between the ranges.)

Merit-Based Compensation:

The total amount available for ALL merit increases for fiscal year 2026 is two percent (2%). The merit pool will be calculated based upon wages as of June 13, 2025.

Employees at the maximum of the salary range for their position are eligible to receive a merit-based increase as a onetime payment (not added to base salary) to be paid in equal installments through June 30, 2026.

Senate employees employed in a permanent position on July 1, 2025, and hired on or prior to March 1, 2025, are eligible for merit-based pay following completion of the performance evaluation process by their supervisor or Member. Individual merit-based pay increases will not be approved without a completed performance evaluation for the period July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025.

Merit-based increases take effect July 1, 2025. If performance appraisals are completed after July 1, 2025, any increase will be retroactively applied to July 1, 2025. Any increase in this section is calculated after other increases (COLA) are applied.

Merit-Based Pay Performance Categories:

Below Expectations:
If an employee's performance appraisal states that the employee's performance during the review period did not fully meet expectations set by the employee's supervisor, the employee's supervisor may authorize a merit increase in an amount up to one percent (1%) of the employee's salary.

Meets Expectations:
If an employee's performance appraisal states that the employee's performance during the review period met the expectations set by the employee's supervisor, the employee is eligible for a merit increase of one percent (1%) of the employee's salary.

Exceeds Expectations:
If an employee performance appraisal states that the employee consistently delivered discretionary effort that exceeded expectations, the manager of the employee's supervisor must review the appraisal. If the employee's supervisor is a Senator, the Senator's caucus must designate the individual responsible for this review. If the manager or designee determines that the appraisal provides a detailed and thorough description of the employee's work that sufficiently demonstrates that the employee's performance exceeded expectations, the employee is eligible for a merit increase for exceptional work in the form of an amount added to the employee's base salary as provided below:

A) Merit Increases awarded to an employee for exceptional work will be in addition to a salary increase of one percent (1%).
B) The additional dollar amount provided for the merit increase for exceptional work will be determined after the allocation of all other salary increases from the employee's department salary base authorized under this plan.

C) The amount of this increase shall be determined by the head of each department for each eligible employee after all other salary increases provided under this plan have been allocated and added to the base salary for each employee awarded.
D) The amount of the increase for exceptional work awarded under this paragraph may not exceed two and a one half percent (2.5%) of the employee's base salary. The total amount of a salary increase awarded to an employee under this plan may not exceed six percent (6%) of the employee's base salary.