

Minnesota House of Representatives

Compensation Study

February 28, 2019



INTRODUCTION

In February 2019, the Minnesota House of Representatives contracted with the National Conference of State Legislatures to update the salary ranges for the Minnesota House of Representatives legislative staff.

Specifically, NCSL agreed to:

- Review the House salary ranges, compare these ranges to market and make recommendations for changes in House salary ranges;
- Recommend changes in classifications for those highly competitive positions that have outpaced the existing salary ranges; and
- Provide a list of recommendations for House of Representatives personnel to consider on compensation policy, promotion policies, and movement of salary ranges to maintain the compensation system in the future.

Members and staff will want to review these recommendations and make changes as appropriate to meet the continued needs of the Minnesota House of Representatives.

Concurrent with this study of House compensation, NCSL is reviewing the salary ranges for the Legislative Coordinating Commission and the Minnesota Senate. These studies will be completed in March 2019.

Methodology

NCSL study team members talked with selected senior staff directors and reviewed documents and emails to understand the challenges in hiring and compensating House employees. NCSL identified issues regarding the competitiveness of House salary ranges compared to other employers, the width of House salary ranges, and the classification of highly competitive positions.

NCSL compared house salary ranges and positions with comparable positions found in the Minnesota State Senate; Minnesota Legislative Coordinating Commission; Minnesota executive branch; Hennepin, Dakota, Ramsey and Washington counties, and the cities of St. Paul, Minneapolis and Bloomington. The study team reviewed salary data from PayScale, Robert Half Technology, ERI Economic Research Institute and Twin Cities Metro Area Tech. To further understand the economy and compensation costs in the metro area, the team reviewed data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and economic studies of the greater Minneapolis-St. Paul area.

The review of salary ranges focused on the highly competitive or "lead" positions in each salary range. NCSL identified comparable positions in each of the 16 salary ranges. When the market salaries in a range differed, NCSL compared the two salaries, the individual position descriptions, and the salaries in adjacent ranges to develop a final recommendation.

The related classification of positions within the ranges was broadly reviewed but limited in scope by the study requirements. In instances where NCSL found large salary differentials between positions in a range, then individual positions were analyzed to determine if a classification change was warranted. These differentials were found in key fiscal and legal positions, highly competitive positions found in the private sector (information technology, accounting, human resources and communications positions), and caucus director positions. NCSL is recommending classification changes for twenty-one positions.

Lastly, NCSL identified issues outside the scope of the study that affect the Minnesota House salary and classification plan. These findings and recommendations are included.

Executive Summary

Finding: The salary ranges in the Minnesota House of Representatives are low next to comparable positions in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area, other branches of government and the Minnesota Senate.

Recommendation 1: Existing salary ranges should be adjusted by 1 to 19 percent to meet the market and establish competitive salary ranges.

Finding: The width of House salary ranges is too broad when compared to the Minnesota Senate, Legislative Coordinating Commission and the salary ranges of competitive positions in the executive branch.

Recommendation 2: The width of House salary ranges should be set at 80 percent which comparable to the Senate and Legislative Coordinating Commission.

Finding: Some highly competitive positions are not at market salary range.

Recommendation 3: Twenty-one positions should be reclassified to accurately reflect market salary ranges for these positions. The positions include ten highly competitive positions in the information technology, accounting, human resources and communications areas, eight key fiscal and legal positions, two director level positions and one temporary page position.

Discussion

Salary Ranges

NCSL staff compared the current salary ranges in the Minnesota House with the salary ranges of comparable positions in Minnesota state, local and county government and the private sector. This analysis focused on benchmark positions in each salary grade and on highly competitive positions. The highly competitive positions included jobs in the information technology, accounting, human resources, and communications fields.

The Minnesota Senate and Minnesota state government salary ranges were current through February 2019. Salary data from the Minnesota Legislative Coordinating Commission was current as of October 2018. County data was current beginning in 2018 to January 2019. Additional government and private sector information in the ERI Economic Research Information database was current in January 2019. Due to the date proximity of the data, no attempt was made to age the salary ranges or to age comparable data. No salaries prior to 2018 were reviewed.

The salary range analyses showed that House salary ranges were lower than the comparable market salary ranges by 1 to 19 percent. Starting salaries in the ranges have not moved since 2015 though the top of the ranges have moved equal to the merit pool percentage increase awarded to legislative employees by the legislature. If salary ranges do not move as part of a functioning compensation system, then an organization loses its ability to compete in hiring qualified applicants for positions. In reviewing compensation trends in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, NCSL found that compensation costs have risen an average of 5.2 percent in 2018. The highest adjustments are recommended toward the top of the salary ranges particularly for highly competitive management, communications, information technology, human resources and accounting positions.

Recommendation 1: Salary ranges should be adjusted by 1 to 19 percent to reflect market ranges and establish competitive salary ranges in the House of Representatives.

Salary Range Width

The width of the salary ranges in state legislatures is normally high compared to the width of ranges found in the public and private sectors. These wider ranges provide the legislature with the ability to remain competitive in recruiting and retaining employees. The salary ranges also provide a means to award an employee who chooses to make a career out of legislative service.

The study team found the width of the House salary range to be over 100 percent. This has occurred with the movement of the top of the range at the same percentage as the legislature's merit pool percentage. If the base of the salary range had moved along with the top, the width of the salary range would have remained at a lower level. The Minnesota Senate salary range width currently averages 71 percent; the Legislative Coordinating Commission averages 82 percent.

Recommendation 2: The width of House salary ranges should be set at 80 percent comparable to the Senate and the Legislative Coordinating Commission.

Classification Adjustments

NCSL identified twenty-one positions that needed to be moved to a higher salary range. Ten of the positions to be reclassified are in the information technology, human resources, accounting and communications series. NCSL found the salary ranges for these positions to be considerably higher in the public and private sectors. A comparison of midpoints of these positions found the midpoints for the positions in the House of Representatives to be 7-13 percent lower than the midpoints of positions in Hennepin, Ramsey and Dakota counties, the cities of St. Paul, Minneapolis and Bloomington; the Minnesota Senate; Minnesota state government; and the private sector.

The midpoints of the fiscal analyst and legislative counsel series of jobs compared to the midpoints of similar jobs in the cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, counties, Minnesota Senate and state government were found to be lagging by as much as 22 percent.

The midpoints for the salary ranges of the Executive Directors of the Majority and Minority Caucus lagged the market by six percent.

The two temporary positions are recommended to be classified at the same level. The Lead Committee Page (temp) is recommended to move to salary range 3 in line with the production technician.

Recommendation 3: Twenty-one positions need to be reclassified to accurately reflect market salary ranges for these positions. The positions include ten highly competitive positions in the information technology, accounting, human resources and communications areas, eight key fiscal and legal positions, two director level positions and one temporary page position.

**Minnesota House of Representatives
Proposed Salary Ranges
2/28/19**

Red-Reclassification

<u>Series</u>	<u>Current Range</u>	<u>Proposed Range</u>
<u>Legislative/Administrative Aide & Assistant/Administrative Supervisor Series</u>		
Legislative Assistant I	33,676-67,132	37,296-67,132
Legislative Assistant II	37,418-74,592	41,440-74,592
Legislative Assistant III	41,576-82,881	46,045-82,881
Legislative Assistant IV	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Legislative Assistant to the Majority Leader	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Legislative Assistant to the Speaker	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Legislative Assistant to the Minority Leader	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Supervisor Administrative Support	56,461-112,553	62,259-112,553
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative Assistants who are assigned to a Committee shall receive an annual stipend of \$3,346.32. • Legislative Assistant (Research and LA to the Director HRD) following the LA I, II, III, and IV multi-level positions 		
Administrative Aide I	30,309-60,419	33,556-60,419
Administrative Aide II	33,676-67,132	37,296-67,132
Administrative Assistant to the Chief Clerk	37,418-74,592	41,440-74,592
Administrative Assistant	37,418-74,592	41,440-74,592
<u>Page/Sergeant-At-Arms Series</u>		
Lead Committee Page (Temp)	28,214-56,071	30,376-54,667
Educational Programs Coordinator (Temp)	33,676-67,132	37,296-67,132
Assistant Sergeant at Arms	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Chief Sergeant-at-Arms	68,318-136,190	68,720-123,371
<u>Facility Services/Duplicating/Purchasing/Telecommunications Series</u>		
Supply Assistant I	30,309-60,419	33,556-60,419
Supply Assistant II	33,676-67,132	37,296-67,132
Digital Publishing Technician	37,418-74,592	41,440-74,592
Duplicating Technician	37,418-74,592	41,440-74,592
Telecommunications Technician	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Facility Services Supervisor	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Communications Officer	56,461-112,553	62,529-112,553

<u>Series</u>	<u>Current Range</u>	<u>Proposed Range</u>
<u>Photography/Publications/Writer/Editorial/TV Series</u>		
Photographer	37,418-74,592	41,440-74,592
Digital Media Editor/Writer	41,576-82,881	46,045-82,881
Writer (Temp)	41,576-82,881	46,045-82,881
Assistant Editor	41,576-82,881	46,045-82,881
Writer/Editor	41,576-82,881	46,045-82,881
Editor/Publications Manager	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Assistant Director/Editor	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Chief Photographer/Art & Production Coord. II	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Director, House Public Information Services	75,149-149,808	75,661-136,190
<u>Constituent Services Series</u>		
Constituent Services Specialist Writer I	41,576-82,881	46,045-82,881
Constituent Services Specialist Writer II	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Constituent Services Specialist Writer III	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Constituent Services Coordinator	56,461-112,553	62,259-112,553
<u>Media/Art & Production/TV Series</u>		
Production Technician (Temp)	30,309-60,419	33,556-60,419
Communications Specialist I	41,576-82,881	51,161-92,090
Communications Specialist II	46,195-92,090	56,846-102,322
Communications Specialist III	51,328-102,322	62,529-112,553
Video Journalist-Producer	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Video Content Producer	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Digital Communications Manager	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Art & Production Coordinator I	41,576-82,881	46,045-82,881
Art & Production Coordinator II	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Broadcast Media Manager	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Press Secretary	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Engineering Director	56,461-112,553	62,529-112,553
Producer/Director	56,461-112,553	62,529-112,553
Media Coordinator	56,461-112,553	62,529-112,553
Director of Public Affairs	68,318-136,190	75,661-136,190
Director of Communications & Public Affairs	68,318-136,190	75,661-136,190
<u>Research Series</u>		
Research Consultant I	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Research Consultant II	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Research Consultant III	56,461-112,553	62,259-112,553
Research Coordinator	68,318-136,190	68,720-123,371

<u>Series</u>	<u>Current Range</u>	<u>Proposed Range</u>
<u>Committee Administrator Series</u>		
Committee Administrator I	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Committee Administrator II	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Committee Administrator III	56,461-112,553	62,529-112,553
Committee Administrator Coordinator	68,318-136,190	68,720-123,371
<u>Information Technology Series</u>		
Information Technology Assistant	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Information Technology Analyst I	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Information Technology Analyst II	56,461-112,553	62,259-112,553
Applications Programmer Analyst	56,461-112,553	62,259-112,553
Assistant Network Engineer	56,461-112,553	62,259-112,553
Network Engineer	68,318-136,190	68,720-123,371
Web Developer	68,318-136,190	68,720-123,371
Information Technology Director	78,336-155,680	100,704-181,267
<u>Legislative & Fiscal Analyst Series</u>		
Research Assistant (Temp)	33,676-67,132	37,296-67,132
Legislative Analyst I	56,461-112,553	62,529-112,553
Legislative Analyst II	68,318-136,190	75,661-136,190
Legislative Analyst III	75,149-149,808	83,226-149,808
Legislative Analyst IV	81,312-161,594	91,549-164,789
Fiscal Analyst I	56,461-112,553	62,529-112,553
Fiscal Analyst II	68,318-136,190	75,661-136,190
Fiscal Analyst III	75,149-149,808	83,226-149,808
Fiscal Analyst IV	81,312-161,594	91,549-164,789
Staff Coordinator	84,286-167,507	100,704-181,267
Chief Fiscal Analyst	90,238-179,334	110,774-199,394
Director, House Research	90,238-179,334	110,774-199,394
<u>Parliamentary Staff</u>		
Assistant Desk Secretary	41,576-82,881	46,045-82,881
Assistant Supervisor	41,576-82,881	46,045-82,881
Assistant Index Clerk	46,195-92,090	51,161-92,090
Front Office Supervisor	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Index Office Supervisor	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Desk Secretary Supervisor	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Desk Clerk	56,461-112,553	62,529-112,553
Legislative Clerk	56,461-112,553	62,529-112,553
2 nd Assistant Chief Clerk	68,318-136,190	68,720-123,371

<u>Series</u>	<u>Current Range</u>	<u>Proposed Range</u>
<u>Parliamentary Staff (continued)</u>		
1 st Assistant Chief Clerk	78,336-155,680	83,226-149,808
Chief Clerk	104,622-207,920	121,851-219,333
<u>Fiscal Services/Accounting Series</u>		
Fiscal Services Specialist I	37,418-74,592	46,045-82,881
Fiscal Services Specialist II	41,576-82,881	51,161-92,090
Fiscal Services Specialist III	46,195-92,090	56,846-102,322
Accounting Officer	56,461-112,553	68,720-123,371
Controller/Chief Financial Officer	81,312-161,594	100,704-181,267
<u>Human Resources Series</u>		
Human Resource Generalist	51,328-102,322	56,846-102,322
Director, Human Resources	78,336-155,680	100,704-181,267
<u>Caucus Leadership Series</u>		
Coordinator of Legislative Outreach	68,318-136,190	68,720-123,371
Administrative Assistant to the Majority Leader	68,318-136,190	68,720-123,371
Legislative Director to the Minority Leader	68,318-136,190	68,720-123,371
Executive Assistant to the Minority Caucus	68,318-136,190	68,720-123,371
Executive Assistant to the Majority Caucus	68,318-136,190	68,720-123,371
Senior Advisor to the Speaker	68,318-136,190	68,720-123,371
Executive Assistant to the Majority Leader	75,149-149,808	75,661-136,190
Director of Legislative Services	75,149-149,808	75,661-136,190
Legislative Director to the Speaker	81,312-161,594	91,549-164,789
Executive Director, Minority Caucus	81,312-161,594	110,774-199,394
Executive Director, Majority Caucus	97,430-193,627	121,851-219,333

Observations

The Minnesota House of Representatives needs a process to keep salary ranges current.

Most employers move salary ranges annually based on a cost of living figure. A regular adjustment of salary ranges allows an employer to attract qualified candidates and maintain a workforce. Absent movement in salary ranges, an employer cannot compete to attract qualified candidates and often loses employees to better paying positions.

The base of the Minnesota House salary ranges was last adjusted in 2015. At that time, salary ranges were adjusted by the COLA percentage awarded to legislative employees. Since 2015, the House has moved the top of the salary ranges by the percentage awarded for merit increases but this has done little to contribute to market competitiveness.

The Minnesota House should continue to adjust salary ranges (both the base and the top) on an annual basis. Absent a cost of living adjustment, the House should move the ranges using a percentage figure based on the merit percentage. For example, if the merit percentage is three percent, the range could move by 1.5 to 1.75 percent.

Every two years, the House should review the salary ranges for all positions with the market to keep the compensation schedule current.

The Minnesota House of Representatives, Senate and Legislative Coordinating Commission should work together on the maintenance of salary ranges.

The House, Senate and LCC should work together to maintain comparable salary ranges. Absent this cooperation, ranges are sometimes updated in isolation and inequity results between the two houses and the LCC. When salary ranges are updated in isolation, this can sometimes create a competition between houses and agencies that can result in salary inflation.

There needs to be a provision for equity adjustments for existing employees.

The NCSL study team noted that existing House employees are at a disadvantage when new employees with like skills and qualifications are hired at salaries higher than those of current staff. The House needs a mechanism to provide adjustments to maintain equity in salaries.

If the proposed salary ranges are implemented, the House will need to consider adjustments for current employees to maintain equity within the ranges.

The House needs to review the requirements for promotions to higher level positions.

Some of the positions in the House of Representatives require a minimum of three years or more in a position before an employee is eligible for promotion. Recent reports by the Society for Human Resource Management suggest that promotions should occur more often for workers of millennial age and younger. The Minnesota Senate has recently reduced the years of experience required for promotion for the committee administrator, fiscal services specialists, indexers, legislative assistants and researchers to two years. NCSL recommends the House review the years of experience required for promotions for each position particularly at lower level positions. Is one year adequate to master a job and be eligible for promotion to a higher level or is two years of experience (through a biennium) necessary to master the requirements for promotion?

The House should review higher-level promotion opportunities in job families.

The Senate has added promotion positions to the committee administrator, public information officer, researcher and sergeant series of jobs. House personnel should continue to review promotion opportunities within House job series to see if higher level positions are warranted. NCSL cautions House personnel not to add promotion positions unless the new position requires greater skills and offers additional responsibilities.

Compensation Study Resources

Minnesota State Senate

Minnesota Legislative Cooperating Commission

Minnesota Executive Branch

City of St. Paul

City of Minneapolis

City of Bloomington

Hennepin County

Ramsey County

Washington County

Dakota County

Technology Salary Guide, Robert Half Technology

ERI Economic Research Institute

Minneapolis Metro Area Pay Trends, PayScale Index

Twin Cities Metro Area Technology Salary Guide

Minneapolis-St. Paul Area Economic Summary, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Changing Compensation Costs in the Minneapolis Metropolitan Area, BLS Midwest Office

