

ITEM #: 15
DATE: 01-27-26
DEPT: HR

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO SUPPLEMENTAL EMPLOYMENT POLICIES FOR CERTAIN ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION AND TECHNICAL SERVICES EMPLOYEES

BACKGROUND:

In June, 2023, City Council approved a set of policies (attached) for employees of the Electric Distribution and Technical Services divisions formerly covered by a collective bargaining agreement with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). The employees had previously voted to decertify membership with the union, and the City recognized that several provisions in the contract were not addressed elsewhere in City policy. Therefore, the supplemental policies were created to help manage circumstances specific to this group of employees.

City staff has determined there is a need for clarification when determining pay for apprenticeship programs within the Electric Distribution and Technical Services division. This is particularly important when employees promote from other positions within the division to an apprenticeship position. The apprenticeship positions are the only positions in this group that contain wage steps, which are based on the number of related hours of experience. The challenge with the policies as written is that an employee may promote into an apprenticeship position and receive a substantial pay decrease, then wait several years until achieving enough experience to match their previous pay. This results in a disincentive for internal candidates to consider apprenticeships for critical and hard-to-fill positions, such as lineworker and substation electrician.

In order to remedy this issue and provide fair and consistent application of policy, staff is recommending the addition of the following language to "Supplemental Employment Policies for Certain City of Ames Electric Distribution and Technical Services Division Employees."

2.4 Establishing Pay for Apprentice Programs. If an internal candidate promotes to an apprentice program, the employee shall be entitled to Step A of the apprentice position unless they have prior qualified experience that would entitle them to a higher step (as determined by the Apprentice Evaluation Committee). However, if the internal candidate is currently earning more than the appropriate step for their experience, the City Manager may authorize a rate of pay in a step that exceeds the employee's prior qualifying experience. In such an instance, the employee's pay will remain at the higher step, adjusted annually with Pay Plan adjustments, until their actual experience reaches the next appropriate step.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the amendment to the Supplemental Employment Policies for Certain City of Ames Electric Distribution and Technical Services Division Employees.
2. Do not approve the amendment.

3. Refer this item back to staff for further information.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

After working with the Supplemental Employment Policies for Certain City of Ames Electric Distribution and Technical Services Division Employees for over two years, it has become apparent that not all circumstances are covered in the current policy. No applicable City policy appropriately provides pay guidance for internal promotion within the Electric Distribution and Technical Services division. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1 as described above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Electric Distribution Supp. Policies.pdf](#)