

Advance Step Guideline/Tips

If you are requesting a step higher than Step 1, an Advance Step Request Form and coded cert list must be completed and sent to Recruitment Analyst for review.

- Recruitment Analyst review is required before routing for approval process.
- Recruitment Analyst reviews request to determine if requested step is appropriate.
- Recruitment Analyst seeks clarification for justification or informs hiring supervisor/manager if there are concerns with requested step.

Based on individual situations, you may be asked to complete a job history that specifies the candidates relevant work experience and an incumbent comparison to demonstrate that adverse impact does not exist.

Below is a step-by-step guide/suggestions on completing the form:

Advance Step Request Form

Hiring Manager or Personnel Liaison prepares a draft Advance Step Request Form. (refer to form)

Section 1: All need to be completed

- A. Name of Recruitment Analyst (this is for CAO to return to downtown Analyst)
- B. Date
- C. Name of Department (and Division if applicable)
- D. Name of candidate (same name as on application)
- E. Official job classification title
- F. Requested step
- G. Corresponding hourly rate on salary scale
- H. Name of person completing form or liaison
- I. Phone number

Section 2: Check applicable boxes.

- J. Based on actual work experience that is applicable to this job. (Credit for full-time equivalent experience beyond the minimum qualification.)
- K. Used when there has been a difficult recruitment (ex: limited names on list, multiple recruitments, minimal number of applicants interviewing, hard to recruit positions, etc.)
- L. Unique qualifications are things that are specialized, difficult to find, special skill, licensure or education above minimum qualifications, etc.

- M. Used when candidate will not accept the job for less money and there is difficulty in retaining employment for this position and/or a high turnover rate.
- N. Used only if candidate requested and negotiated a higher step or voluntarily disclosed their current salary.
- O. Write out justifications for J-N
- Example of language for “K” is: *Environmental Health Specialists are difficult to recruit due to the specialized field. After an extensive recruitment, there were only 3 candidates on the eligible list.*
 - Example of language for “L” is usually described in the justification section: *Uniquely, Mr. Smith is a licensed contractor which is a specialized license that will benefit him with advanced knowledge in his new building maintenance position.*
 - Typical language for “M” is: *It is necessary to offer Mr. Smith a Step 7 in order to remain competitive.*
 - Typical language for “N” is: *Mr. Smith engaged in a competitive negotiation and requested Step 7. Although he did not disclose his salary, he specified that he required a Step 7 in order to accept the position. It is necessary to offer him a Step 7 in order to remain competitive.* When they provide their salary for justification, a typical way to say this is: *Mr. Smith is currently making \$75.00/hour. A Step 7 at \$63.51/hour is a \$11.49/hour or 15.32% decrease in pay. It is necessary to offer him a Step 7 in order to remain competitive.*

Section 3: Complete all sections if applicable. Can leave blank if no education/certs.

- P. Education/Certifications: Obtain information from job application. If unclear on application, please confirm with candidate. Only put if degree/certification is completed. Put degree and name of school. Example: *BS-Chemistry, University of Oregon*

Section 4: Complete all boxes. (List must be coded in JobAps prior to completing this section.)

- Q. Certification List Details: Complete all boxes. Put 0 if none. Use other for codes that are not listed. For example: RM-3, NC-2
- R. At least three reference checks must be completed including the current or most recent employer. If the candidate indicated that they were forced to resign, please be sure to inquire about the reason. Check this box to confirm this has been completed.

Section 5: Justification must be thorough and detailed.

- S. Recommended writing tips:

- Utilize the person’s full name (Joe Smith) when first referencing the candidate and subsequently by their preferred pronoun.
- First paragraph usually starts with describing years of experience: *Joe Smith has almost 5 years of experience as a Medical Assistant. His experience includes...*
- Then describe experience using examples of actual duties taken from job application. Include relevance to new position.
- Describe unique skills. Example: *Mr. Smith is uniquely qualified because he has advanced computer programming experience and has been trained in the EPIC database program that the Agency currently uses for medical records.*
- If applicable, end with these two sentences: *Based on his skills, interview, and experience, Mr. Smith was the best candidate for the position. Had he started his career with the County of Santa Cruz, he would be at Step 7.*
- *If you cannot fit all the information in the justification box, please write “See Attached” and attach an additional page describing your justification.*

Section 6: You may need an incumbent spreadsheet for this section.

- T. Fill in all boxes. Put total number in first box. Put #'s for each step. 0 if no incumbents in a step. Don’t leave boxes blank.
- U. Looking at your incumbents, check this box if all have less experience and/or education than candidate.
- V. Looking at your incumbents, check this box if all have less experience and/or education or if placed on step with “promo” rule.
- W. Use this box if any incumbents have more experience or education than candidate. If there is an adverse impact, it may not be approved so you must be able to justify adverse impact. The typical reason is if the incumbent was hired before 1/15/18 before AB168 was enacted. Consider using the following language: *There is one incumbent below Step 4 that has more experience than Ms. Smith. However, this incumbent received a substantial increase from their current salary at the time of hire prior to AB168 being implemented. Prior to AB168 candidates disclosed salaries and now this is voluntary so the reliance in education and experience is relied on heavily to review advance steps. There is no adverse impact to the candidate because she received a substantial increase when joining the county.*
- X. There should be no adverse impact if you are requesting an advanced step. Check this box when you have determined there is no adverse impact.
- Y. If there is adverse impact and you need to check this box, then please contact your hiring manager or Recruitment Analyst before submission.

Personnel Analyst should review the form prior to obtaining Department Head signature. Once you obtain the Department Head signature, send to your Recruitment Analyst for routing to Personnel Director and/or CAO signatures.

Job History Spreadsheet

You may need to prepare a Job History spreadsheet (use template) to assist in determining number of years of experience.

- ✓ Complete name of candidate at top left corner
- ✓ Review candidate's job application and go to Employment History Section. Review job title and duties to see if it is related experience. For example: *The job is PHN III. The candidate has worked as a PHN II, PHN III, Supervising PHN, Coffee Barista. The PHN jobs are applicable; however, Coffee Barista is not applicable and they would not receive credit for this job.*
- ✓ Transfer corresponding Job #'s work dates into "From" and "To" columns.
- ✓ Place the job title in the "Title" column.

The spreadsheet includes formulas to help with auto-calculation of total years of experience, however if you are doing a manual calculation follow the tips below:

To calculate Full Time Equivalent (FTE) experience by month:

- Review the "From" and "To" dates to determine months of experience.
- Review Hours Per Week to see if they are part time or full time. We do not count hours beyond 40 hours per week.
- Calculate the "From" date to the "To" date by month to get a total number. Round up or down to the half month.
- If the person is part time, divide the number by the percentage of FTE. For example: *36/hrs per wk equals .90%*. If they worked 30 months, calculate $30 \times .90 = 27$ months. (See formula below) Note: If they are still working in a job, you may count the months that they have worked since the application was completed as long as the hiring supervisor can confirm that they are still employed. Put this information into your Job History Spreadsheet.

$$\frac{\text{Hours Per Week}}{40} \times \text{\# of Months worked} = \text{\# of FTE Months}$$

Place "n/a" in the FTE months column if the job is not relevant to the position.

Add the total months of only the jobs that are relevant to the position and divide by 12 to convert it into years.

Use this information to determine experience for Justification on Advance Step Request Form.

Incumbent Spreadsheet

Discuss with your Department Personnel Liaison to determine if you need to prepare an Incumbent Spreadsheet (use template) to determine if there is adverse impact before you submit the advanced step for approval.

- Ideally, pull the last incumbent spreadsheet used for that classification so you only have to update it.
- Complete position at the top of form and put current date.
- Complete name of candidate at top. Include their education, years of related experience (taken from Job History), requested step.
- Pull report from either departmental Personnel database or Payroll Hours Accumulator Report to determine current incumbents (employees) in position and what step they are on. If using previous spreadsheet, update employee information (i.e.: employee moved to a new step or new employees to be added). NOTE: All employees in the department must be placed on the spreadsheet—not just employees in that division or unit.
- If you have new employees to be added or if you are starting a new spreadsheet: Review each incumbent's last application and determine their years of relevant experience, education, and date of hire. If they were hired based on the "promotional rule," then put "promo rule" in experience.
- Use this spreadsheet to complete Adverse Impact Section of the Advance Step Request Form.
- If there is adverse impact to current incumbents or supervisor, discuss with your hiring manager or Personnel Analyst before submitting your request.

Final Packet

Send to Recruiting Analyst at the Personnel Department in one email:

- Advance Step Request Form
- Job History Spreadsheet (if needed)
- Incumbent History Spreadsheet (if needed)
- Job Application
- Cert List (with outcome codes and dates of contact)

Analyst will contact you with any questions. Once it is reviewed by Analyst, they will inform you if it is approved to move forward for signatures or provides feedback for changes.

Departmental Liaison routes for department head approval. Once department head approves and signs document, email to Personnel Analyst for remaining approval and signatures.

1. Steps 2-3 requires Department Head signature
2. Steps 4-5 requires Department Head, Personnel Director signatures
3. Steps 6-7 or higher requires Department Head, Personnel Director, CAO signatures