

Pat Pitney, President

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Date June 19, 2024

To Ronnie Houchin, Chair, UA Staff Alliance

From Pat Pitney, President

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pat K Pitney".

CC Memry Dahl, Chief Human Resources Officer
Michelle Rizk, VP University Relations
Paul Layer, VP Academics, Students and Research
Sean Parnell, UAA Chancellor
Daniel White, UAF Chancellor
Aparna Palmer, UAS Chancellor

Re Response to Staff Alliance FY26 Compensation Recommendations

Thank you to Staff Alliance for your May 3 memo with recommendations for FY26 compensation. I appreciate all that staff across the system do to support our academic, teaching and service missions. I have reviewed the recommendations with CHRO Dahl; my response to the specific recommendations follows below.

Compensation Recommendations

Across the board 3% increase for all staff

Consistent with the increases to be requested for other employee groups, we will request a 2.75% increase for staff in FY26.

Performance-based step increases tied to annual evaluations

We are not in a fiscal climate to tie step increases to annual evaluations. Instead, I encourage supervisors to use one-time bonuses as a mechanism to reward performance. Step increases can be used to reward exceptional performance as well, but managers must recognize the year-over-year fiscal impact. In addition, step increases and reclassifications may be used to compensate employees who have taken on or been assigned additional duties. For reference, in FY23, 21% of staff (539 of 2,507 positions) received an in-grade adjustment by their supervisor, with an average increase of 5.6%. An additional 6% (151) received other salary adjustments, including educational attainment incentives, internal equity and retention offers.

Expand the UAF bonus policy systemwide

Rather than adopting one university's process for performance bonuses as the standard for the entire system, I encourage the respective staff councils to work with their chancellors for a process local to each university, which may include adopting a policy similar to UAF's recognition policy. I understand that UAS does have a policy very similar to UAF's, and UAA's Employee Experience group recently made recommendations to Chancellor Parnell related to employee recognition.

continued

Other Recommendations

Add additional day(s) for parental leave to get closer to 10-day average

Given that FY24 was the first year for this new program, we will be reviewing data to evaluate the budget impact. We do not plan to expand the program for FY26, but will consider it in the future.

Recalculate length of service for recognition events

I agree that an employee's cumulative service in benefitted positions should be included in calculations for longevity recognition. Human Resources will develop a report that calculates total length of service across the system, accounting for breaks in service. My understanding is that each staff council follows a different path to request their data. For this to be successful, it would be best for all four staff councils to use the same source report for their events. Therefore, I ask the staff councils to coordinate with CHRO Dahl so the HR team can resolve this in time for the spring 2025 longevity recognition events.

Extend break in service to one year for leave accrual

Beginning in FY26, employees returning to a benefitted position after a break in service of less than one year will return at their previous leave accrual rate.

Continued support for hybrid and remote work

We recognize that flexibility in location and schedule are valuable to many employees. With that in mind, supervisors have latitude to approve remote/hybrid work and flexible schedules for their employees provided the business needs of the department and expectations of their respective units/divisions are met. To that end, UA HR has a training collection on remote work topics for employees and supervisors, including staying engaged as a remote employee, managing remote/hybrid employees, and setting reasonable boundaries.

Enhance career development planning resources for employees and supervisors

Supervisor training

HR continues to expand self-service training materials for employees, including a broad range of resources focusing on career development, leadership, and supervision located through the Employee Engagement & Development Center. In addition, the UA HR Talent Acquisition and Development Team (TA&D) highlights monthly training topics in the UA News and each university's newsletter. In addition, TA&D is working with the universities to develop a supervisor training program, and the Compensation team is working on career development plans/processes, including career laddering, as part of the Classification Framework Modernization project, which is ongoing and expected to continue into FY26.