Classification & Compensation Study FAQs

Study Results FAQs

1. What was the purpose of the study?
   One of the primary objectives of the Classification and Compensation Study was to ensure fair and competitive compensation for all positions, as measured against the greater employment market. Through its comprehensive market study, Evergreen found that many UPS positions are appropriately classified, with compensation very competitive with market rates.

2. Who made the decision on adopting Evergreen’s recommendations?
   Human Resources and the Appointing Authorities reviewed Evergreen’s report and data. Human Resources made recommendations which were adopted by the Unified Personnel Board regarding the classified pay plans and classification structure for Classified Service. The Appointing Authorities will follow this classification structure effective September 16, 2018.

3. What recommendations were made to the Unified Personnel Board?
   a. Method to reduce the number of unique classification titles: Option 3 - Moderate Consolidation
   b. Market approach: Public sector market
   c. Implementation: Address classifications behind market, bring pay rates to new pay grade minimums, address resulting compression
   d. Implement for Classified Service on September 16, 2018; consideration for Exempt Service at a later date

4. How were the pay increases calculated?
   Pay adjustments were targeted to positions
   • that were found to be compensated behind market rates,
   • that needed adjustments to bring compensation to the minimum of the new pay grade, and
   • that were impacted by compression resulting from bringing the pay of others to the minimum of the pay range.
   See Classification & Compensation Study Pay Adjustment Calculations.

5. Are there additional steps to the study?
   The implementation of the study requires a multi-year approach. The second phase will be developed during FY19. The next step could include Appointing Authorities consideration of exempt classification and pay grades, and addressing rank and range compression (see definitions below). Additionally, Evergreen’s recommendations of pay administration (pay practices and policies) may be considered.
   • Rank Compression – Employees in a supervisor-supervisee relationship not possessing sufficient pay variation.
   • Range Compression – Employees in the same job, but with different levels of experience not possessing sufficient pay variation.

How does this impact me?

A. What happened to my position and pay?
   The Unified Personnel Board approved a new classification plan for Classified Service and new Classified Pay Plans on September 6, 2018. Classified employees were notified by email and letter of the pay plan and classification changes for their position. View a sample letter.
   All Classified employees have a new pay grade with a new minimum, midpoint and maximum. Some employees will have a new job title, and some employees will have a new pay rate.

B. What is the effective date for pay increases?
   September 16, 2018.

C. What if I want to appeal?
   If you are unsatisfied with your classification or pay grade, you may request a secondary review from Evergreen by completing a form at www.surveymonkey.com/r/PinellasCountyAppeals by Monday, September 24, 2018. Further levels of appeal are available for employees experiencing a downward reclassification.

www.pinellascounty.org/hr/study
6. How many employees received a pay increase?
   Approximately 950 classified employees received a pay increase on September 16 as a result of the study.

7. Why didn't I get a pay increase?
   Evergreen reported that most UPS positions are compensated at fair market levels. The midpoint of a pay range is viewed as the fair market rate for a position and is reflective of compensation for an individual with full competence in performing the job. Therefore, pay adjustments were not applied to individuals already compensated at or above the midpoint of the pay range. In addition, employees may not have received an adjustment if their current pay grade is already at or above market rates. Also see Classification & Compensation Study Pay Adjustment Calculations.

8. Did anyone get a reduction in pay?
   Three employees may receive a pay reduction due to downward reclassification.

9. Did anyone change from Classified to Exempt, or vice versa?
   No. There were no changes from Classified Service to Exempt Service or vice versa.

10. Were the number of job titles (classifications) reduced?
    Yes – from 380 to about 350 for Classified Service. The intent of the study was to ensure that jobs are classified correctly. Evergreen recommended combining similar jobs to consolidate some job titles (classifications) to ensure consistency and equity across Appointing Authorities and departments. The updated job classifications have been assigned to appropriate pay ranges based on the results of the JAT analysis, market study, and internal equity considerations.

11. Will Exempt employees get pay increases?
    There are no changes to Exempt employees’ pay plans and classifications at this time. Implementation of changes for Exempt Service employees involves a more extensive process than it does for Classified Service. While the Unified Personnel Board manages the classification system for both service types, it has authority only for the Classified pay plans, not for Exempt pay plans. Those with the authority to implement Exempt pay plans include the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and the four constitutional officers. Human Resources will work with Appointing Authorities during FY19 to establish a process for addressing Exempt Service classifications and compensation.

12. Did the study affect career ladders?
    Current career ladders may need to be adjusted to work within the new classification plan, and will be part of the next steps of the implementation process.

13. Will there be an adjustment of the pay grades in September?
    Yes. The Unified Personnel Board approved a 2% upward adjustment of the pay plans to be effective September 30, 2018. This is not a pay increase but does increase the minimum, midpoint and maximum of the pay grades.

14. Will there be a general increase in October?
    The Board of County Commissioners and Appointing Authorities with other funding sources are considering a FY19 budget that includes a general increase equal to 3% of the midpoint of the employee’s pay range. If adopted, the increase will be effective October 1, 2018. The increase would be calculated on the midpoint of the pay ranges in effect on September 30, 2018, incorporating any new pay plans and pay grade adjustments adopted by the Personnel Board.

15. Will pay plans change as a result of the study?
    The Classified Pay Plans will change as of September 16 as a result of recommendations adopted by the Personnel Board. There are no changes to Exempt pay plans at this time.
16. How do I view my updated class specification?
   View class specifications at [www.pinellascounty.org/hr/specs](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/specs).

17. Will the duties that I wrote on my Job Assessment Tool (JAT) appear on my updated class specification?
   Maybe. A class specification is a broad description with general duties so it will not include all of your specific duties which would be in your position description.

18. What is the difference between a class specification and a position description?
   A class specification is a broad description that encompasses the general duties of various jobs within the classification. A position description, which is created and maintained by the department, contains more detailed information about the duties of the individual position.

19. What if I am in a different position now than I was a year ago when I did my Job Assessment Tool (JAT) or what if I’m new and I never did a JAT?
   This is not an issue since the JAT is specific to a position, not a person. Evergreen analyzed data provided by hundreds of employees to determine the proper classification and job title for each position. Even if you were not able to complete a JAT for your current position, others did so which enabled Evergreen to review and classify your position.

20. Can I read the final report with the study’s findings?
   Yes. The 53-page report is available at [www.pinellascounty.org/hr/study/pdf/report.pdf](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/study/pdf/report.pdf) and a 4-page Executive Summary is available at [www.pinellascounty.org/hr/study/pdf/executive-summary.pdf](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/study/pdf/executive-summary.pdf).

**Study Overview FAQs**

21. What did Evergreen Solutions do during the Classification & Compensation Study?
   Our consultant, Evergreen Solutions, analyzed internal and external data to determine opportunities for improvement in the current classification and compensation systems. Tasks included an analysis of classification information collected via the Job Assessment Tool (JAT), an analysis of market data collected by a salary survey of benchmarked classifications, and the development of recommendations for a classification and compensation system that is internally equitable and externally competitive.

22. From which organizations did Evergreen Solutions collect market data by a salary survey?
   There were 20 governmental (“peer”) organizations contacted for this study which included: Broward County, Charlotte County, Collier County, Hillsborough County, Lee County, Manatee County, Orange County, Palm Beach County, Pasco County, Sarasota County, Volusia County, the State of Florida, the City of Clearwater, the City of Dunedin, the City of Jacksonville, the City of Largo, the City of Orlando, the City of Pinellas Park, the City of St. Petersburg, and the City of Tampa.

23. How did Evergreen compare the County’s jobs with other organizations?
   Benchmark positions (jobs) were selected that were representative of County positions. Benchmark jobs are those with a clear and consistent definition in the relevant labor market, for which reliable market data may be collected. These benchmark positions were matched with positions at peer organizations in Florida to compare the salary range and average actual salaries offered by peer organizations. Employees’ JAT submissions were used to inform the matches so that the actual job duties performed were compared with peer organizations, instead of simply comparing job titles. Matches were then scrutinized by Human Resources and Evergreen staff to make sure that only appropriate matches were used. Once all the matches had been finalized, the average salary (both range and average actual salary) from peer organizations was compared to the salary offered by the County to determine if the County was “behind” or “ahead” of the market.
24. **What did the market study show? How do Pinellas County's pay rates compare to other employers?**

   Evergreen’s comprehensive market study of 20 peer organizations throughout Florida showed that, on average, Unified Personnel System (UPS) pay rates are comparable to our public sector peers; and UPS compensation is comparable to the private sector when factoring in the value of UPS benefits (see the Evergreen Solutions presentation).

25. **Did the study address internal equity (fairness) between jobs in the Unified Personnel System?**

   Yes. Evergreen used data from the Job Assessment Tool (JAT) to systematically construct a structure that reflects the relative worth of each job in relation to all jobs within the UPS.

   The internal and external equity determinations will benefit the organization by providing:
   
   a. Competitive pay structures and pay rates to aid in hiring and retaining a quality workforce  
   b. Measures of job worth in order to increase employee job satisfaction  
   c. A framework for guiding decisions about promotional increases

26. **When will the consultant’s recommendations be implemented?**

   Evergreen provided several options and recommendations for consideration. Some recommendations will be implemented during the current fiscal year, and some may be targeted for implementation during FY’19.

27. **Did my supervisor change my JAT information?**

   No. Supervisors were not able to change Job Assessment Tool information. Supervisors reviewed the data and provided comments if necessary. There were approximately 100 cases where a supervisor disagreed with information on a JAT. Evergreen called these supervisors and the employees to clarify the information and determine whether edits to the JAT were needed. In many cases, the change was positive for the employee (e.g., adding duties or expanding their responsibilities).

28. **What about the employees who didn’t get raises during the recession?**

   During the economic downturn approximately ten years ago, because many organizations implemented layoffs and salary freezes, UPS pay rates kept pace with the market on average. Decisions regarding pay adjustments will focus on aligning employee pay to market rates for comparable positions and placement within adopted pay plans.

29. **How can I get more information?**

   Visit the Classification and Compensation Study website at [www.pinellascounty.org/hr/study](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/study) or contact the Pay and Classification team at [pay.class@pinellascounty.org](mailto:pay.class@pinellascounty.org).