



**HUMAN RESOURCES**  
Compensation and Policy

**EFFECTIVE DATE:**  
**1/24/2024**

## **APPENDIX: Progression & Proficiency Development Programs PPPM 209**

Progression and Proficiency Development Programs provide employees in certain classifications with the opportunity to progress into higher pay grades through the acquisition of additional knowledge, skill, and abilities relevant to a particular job family.

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This appendix applies to all progression, proficiency and educational increase opportunities, and supersedes all other 'progression and productivity program policy and procedure' documents previously applicable to individual progression programs.

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### **A. PURPOSE**

- **PROGRAM VALUE:** The City of Tulsa recognizes the value in employee development and strives to encourage and reward those who improve their skills. Progression and Proficiency Development programs clearly communicate how department management may award additional pay for employees who obtain skills and training beneficial to the City.
- **CLASSIFICATION SPECIFIC:** Not all classifications and/or job families are suitable for progression programs. Progression programs must be developed at the direction of HR and the approval of the Mayor. Creation of progression programs is based on organizational need, training gaps, and retention concerns.
- **PROGRESSION V. PROMOTION:** Progressions are differentiated from promotions in that promotions are the filling of vacant positions utilizing appropriate merit policies. Vacant positions cannot be filled by progressions. Advancement through progression is not considered a promotion even



though the advancement results in a change of pay grade for an employee, as it is not a competitive merit process.

- **ADVERTISEMENT OF VACANCIES:** New hires can be hired at any level provided the department submits the vacancy advertisement specifically requesting it to be filled as a progression. Contact the Employment Office for additional information.

## B. ELIGIBILITY & PAY

- **PAY:** Pay rates for progression and proficiency programs are outlined in PPPM Section 200. In no case shall an employee exceed the top step of their respective pay range.
- **ELIGIBILITY:**
  - An employee must meet the same requirements as promotional candidates regarding discipline and performance, and must be full-time. Previous discipline and/or CPIP status are grounds for management to delay submitting a progression.
    - For a written reprimand, progression/proficiency increase cannot be submitted until six (6) months following the effective date of the DAR.
    - For a suspension or demotion, progression/proficiency increase cannot be submitted until 12 months following the effective date of the DAR.
    - Any employee on a City Performance Improvement Plan (CPIP) cannot receive a progression/proficiency increase until the CPIP has been successfully resolved. If/when a CPIP is successfully resolved and a progression/proficiency request is submitted following its conclusion, the increase will not be retroactive and the effective date should follow the date of successful completion.
  - An employee must be competently and proficiently performing their current duties and responsibilities at the time of proficiency increase and/or progression.
  - All criteria indicated must be met before an employee can progress to the next level or receive a proficiency increase.



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- An increase in knowledge, skill, and ability should occur as a result of completing progression and proficiency criteria.
- **ACCREDITED COURSEWORK:** All course work completed for progression/proficiency purposes must be from an accredited college or university unless otherwise specifically outlined in the progression program criteria document.
- **PROGRESSION & PROFICIENCY PROGRAMS ARE DESIGNED TO PROGRESS EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT FORWARD:**
  - Employees are not permitted to go back and complete lower-level proficiencies nor are they permitted to skip proficiencies or progression levels.
  - Each proficiency and progression step must be completed in order as outlined in the program or job description, and may only be submitted once.
  - Progression and Proficiency criteria should align with operational needs and correspond with department training needs.
- **TIME-IN-CLASSIFICATION:**
  - Employees must remain in grade for the time specified in the progression criteria document.
  - Internal employees transferring from one progression program to a different one will be required to complete all time-in-classification requirements as outlined in their new progression program unless an exception has been approved by the Personnel Director or designee.
  - Employees transferring positions within the same progression program as a lateral move may be progressed by the department after completion of a 90-day probationary period, subject to approval of the Personnel Director or designee.

*(continues below)*



## C. PROCEDURE

- **EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Employees are responsible for completing all criteria. If they need assistance with a plan to complete criteria, they should work with their direct supervisor. For the current listing of City of Tulsa Training opportunities, please refer to City Connections, My Foundation or [www.cityoftulsa.org/employees](http://www.cityoftulsa.org/employees).
- Once an employee has completed all criteria, they may submit a Request for Progression or Request for Proficiency Packet to their supervisor, referred to as *the 'Packet'*.
- Training credit expires after two years. Employees should complete unique training not previously completed for each training requirement, unless the previous training has expired.

- **SUPERVISOR & DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Supervisors are responsible for monitoring the progress and performance of their direct reports.
- Upon receipt, the supervisor should review the Packet for completeness and accuracy.
- If the Packet is incomplete, missing documentation, missing signatures, or otherwise not ready to be submitted, the supervisor is responsible for working with the employee to correct any deficiencies. (This is not the responsibility of the payroll clerk or HR.)
- If the Packet is not ready to be submitted, the supervisor should not submit the packet for any further approval.
- **DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR EACH PACKET:** In addition to a completed and signed Request for Progression/Proficiency form, specific documentation to verify all required training,



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certification, and other criteria have been completed is required in each Packet submission even if previously submitted.

- Once the Packet is complete and ready for submission, the supervisor has 2 weeks to submit the packet for further review.
- The supervisor's submission of the packet is their attestation that the packet is complete and correct, and that the employee is satisfactorily completing their current job responsibilities as assigned. If the employee's performance isn't proficient, the supervisor should work with the employee to correct any deficiencies prior to submitting a Packet.

- **PAYROLL CLERK RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- The payroll clerk is responsible for submitting the Packet as an attachment to a PA in the payroll system for review and approval by HR. If the payroll clerk receives a packet that is incomplete or missing information, documentation, or signatures, they should return it to the supervisor for correction.

- **HR RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Upon submission through the Payroll system, HR is responsible for the final review and approval that all progression/proficiency criteria have been met.
- Final decisions on applicability of requirements pertaining to training and certification are at the discretion of the Personnel Director or designee.
- Progression and Proficiency Program actions shall be subject to the collective bargaining agreement grievance procedure as applicable.