Out-of-Class Best Practices guidelines

Workforce Equity & Planning Advisory committee (WEPAC)

The City of Seattle Personnel Department updated the out-of-class (OOC) work assignments rule to create increased access to OOC opportunities and greater consistency across departments in 2010. These guidelines should be followed for all 90+ day OOC assignments (or 520 hour equivalence). Following these best practices for out-of-class assignments will help ensure equity, transparency and consistency.

Be clear and transparent about the purpose of the out-of-class opening.

- Clearly state the purpose of the position in the position posting. Be clear: will this OOC posting be developmental (i.e. intended for upward mobility), a special work assignment with a limited term, or designed to meet a specific business need (e.g. a hauler is needed on Fridays)?
- Clearly state the job requirements and qualifications. Be explicit about the minimum qualifications.

Be clear and transparent in all your communications about out-of-class opportunities.

- Clearly state the work duties and the time frame for the assignment in the out-of-class announcement.
- Be clear about the selection criteria, process and timeline. Is this OOC position open only within a work group, at the department level, or City-wide?
- Communicate all OOC opportunities broadly. Distribute the information both electronically and with hard copies, and provide status updates on the posting (e.g. has it been filled, is it still open, etc.).
- Provide employees with feedback regarding the application process. Ask candidates if they would like to receive feedback on their own application; if they request it, provide constructive suggestions that could help the applicants in the future.

Share the wealth.

- Whenever possible, distribute OOC opportunities among all qualified employees.
- Establish a talent bank of individuals qualified for intermittent out of class assignments within the most frequently assigned job classifications. As openings come up, rotate the assignments through the list of qualified employees.
- Supervisors must document their reasons for not releasing an employee for an OOC assignment.

Provide clear supervisory support.

- Make sure everyone involved – the OOC employee, the OOC supervisor and the employee's original supervisor – all have a clear understanding of the job's responsibilities, time commitment and supervisory authority.
- The supervisor should set clear workplace expectations at the beginning of the assignment.
- The supervisor should provide feedback to the OOC employee that is consistent with the purpose of the OOC and at defined intervals.

Help ensure clear and consistent administration of out-of-class policies across your department.

- Distribute policies, rules and best practices for OOC and other workforce equity topics broadly to ensure all employees in your department are aware of the City's RSJI workforce equity efforts.
- Make sure your department's record-keeping system complies with the Personnel Rule and these practices through an annual self-audit of OOC assignments.
- Pilot NeoGov to track all 90+ day OOC assignments.
- Make sure your department collaborates with your Change Team on auditing and compliance with the OOC Rule.