

CITY OF RICHARDSON INTERDEPARTMENTAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

LANGUAGE PAY

POLICY

To better serve the community, it is the policy of the City of Richardson to provide additional language pay to regular full-time employees in eligible positions who demonstrate the necessary verbal and/or written fluency in eligible languages (other than English) through a testing process.

PROCEDURE

I. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Policy and Procedure, the following definitions shall apply:

Eligible Employees – Eligible employees are those regular full-time employees designated by a Department Head for his/her department for which secondary language fluency is desirable in order to better serve the community. Eligible employees must have direct contact responsibilities that require fluent verbal and/or written use of a language other than English on a continuing and frequent basis in order to meet the department's public services responsibilities.

Excluded Employees – Employees excluded are those for which foreign language skill is REQUIRED by their position's job description, as it is assumed that the base pay for such positions compensates for that and other required skills.

NOTE: Department Heads and Assistant Department Heads are also not eligible for language pay.

Eligible Languages – Eligible languages include Spanish, Chinese dialects (e.g., Mandarin, Cantonese), Vietnamese; and, for the Library only, Russian and Hindi. The additional language(s) must be beneficial to the performance of the employee's position duties and have a positive impact on the department's delivery of services.

II. PROCEDURE

The purpose of this section is to establish consistent procedures for determining eligibility for additional language pay for City of Richardson employees.

- A. Department Heads are responsible for identifying employees within their departments who qualify for language testing (verbal and/or written, if written language skills in other than English are needed) for language pay. (See attached form for beginning this process.) Employees may be certified in more than one language, but language pay will not exceed the monthly maximum allowed for verbal and/or written language skills.
- B. If an employee receiving language pay promotes, transfers, or demotes to a position where the language skill is not needed, voluntarily withdraws from the language pay program, OR fails to pass required bi-annual recertification tests, the employee's department will be responsible for issuing a Personnel Status Change to discontinue the language pay. (This will be the sending department, in the event of an interdepartmental transfer/promotion/ demotion.) A Lotus Notes notice will be generated to Department Heads when bi-annual recertification tests are due for employees.

- C. The Human Resources Department will coordinate language proficiency testing with an approved outside vendor agency, assuring that all appropriate criteria have been met.
- D. Employees must demonstrate abilities for verbal and/or written language fluency on a certified test conducted by the approved outside vendor agency. Employees who pass language fluency tests will be required to re-test two years following their last successful test (every other year), at the City's expense, in order to reconfirm that language skills are still sufficient to warrant additional pay.
- E. Language certification testing will usually take place at the approved vendor's site. Human Resources may arrange for on-site testing at a City location when appropriate (e.g. for a number of employees to be tested on one date, etc.).
- F. The City will pay for one language test process (verbal and/or written) per employee per year. These tests will be conducted on City-paid time. Sworn Police and Fire employees will not be allowed to test during basic training; they must first report for duty on a shift in order to be eligible to test for language pay. Other employees designated by their department heads will be eligible to test for language fluency after being hired.
- G. After successful test results for employees have been communicated in writing from the vendor to Human Resources, employees' departments will be notified to process Personnel Status Changes to begin paying Language Pay on the first of the next following month.
- H. Employees who fail to demonstrate adequate language fluency skills on the initial test(s) may choose to re-test on their own time and at their own expense. Employees will coordinate such additional tests with the approved vendor agency. Employees shall provide written confirmation of successful re-test results to their Department Heads, to request implementation of Language Pay on the first of the next following month.
- I. Employees who receive language pay will be expected to translate for other employees as needed. They may also be required to report to work during emergencies and/or disaster relief efforts in order to assist in translating for others.

Any questions about this Policy and Procedure may be directed to Jose Moreno, Director of Human Resources (972-744-4002) or Cheree' Bontrager, Assistant Director of Human Resources (972-744-4003).

Original Signed by Bill Keffler

9-19-06 (Revised 11-06)

Bill Keffler
City Manager

Date