

**Subject:** PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

**Date:** March 29, 2000

**Pages:** 1 of 2

**Replaces Policy Dated:** N/A

**PURPOSE:** To establish the conditions under which Pinal County employees may be additionally compensated for professional certification(s).

**STATEMENT OF POLICY:** In keeping with Pinal County's policy of encouraging the professional growth of its employees, under specified circumstances on a pre-approved basis, the County will provide step increases for the attainment of relevant professional certification(s).

**SCOPE:** Pinal County Departments whose employees perform duties that could be enhanced through the attainment of advanced certification or licensure, may submit a proposal to recognize employees who complete such certification or licensure with specified step increases. Increases will only be awarded if the certification or licensure obtained is a part of a certification plan previously submitted by the employee's department and approved by the County Manager.

**PROCEDURE:** Departmental proposals for participation must include a list of certification programs to be included and the proposed step increase to be awarded upon successful completion of the certification program(s). To qualify as an eligible professional certification program under this policy, the program must 1) be directly applicable to the employee's job duties, 2) include competency testing, 3) be an industry recognized certification program, 4) enable the employee, upon successful completion, to perform job related activities which the employee was previously unable to perform.

Examples of eligible certification programs are, ICBO Certifications for Building Inspector, Plumbing Code Inspector, Mechanical Code or Electrical Inspector, A+ Service Technician, Certified Novell Administrator, Certified Novell Engineer.

Examples of certification programs which would not be considered eligible include, Certified Public Accountant, Professional in Human Resources, FBI academy, any other certification that is required to meet minimum job qualifications or that does not confer upon an employee the ability to perform duties they were previously unable to perform.

In the event a certification obtained through an approved program under this policy qualifies an employee for promotion to a higher grade, the employee will be eligible to receive only the promotional increase.

Professional certification credit in the form of step increases will *not* be awarded for completion of pre-requisite course work or for partial completion of a certification program.

In order to qualify for participation in an approved professional certification program an employee must 1) Have achieved regular status; 2) have demonstrated a performance level of meets expectations performance or better. Once an employee has received recognition under this program, the employee will be required to perform the duties permitted by the certification as a condition of continued employment. Furthermore, the employee will be required to sign a service commitment form stating that he (or she) will repay the county an amount equal to the

**PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION (Cont.)**

Page 2 of 2

extra salary received (or the cost of the Certification training whichever is greater) multiplied by the fraction of the year not completed, if he or she separates voluntarily from Pinal County employment within one year following receipt of the step increase.

Upon completion of an approved certification program by the employee, the appointing authority shall prepare a Personnel Status Change form reflecting the agreed upon step increase. This form along with the original approved recommendation, a signed service commitment form, and a copy of the certificate and/or transcript must be forwarded to the County Manager for final approval before the increase will be effective.