

Windham NRCD Pay and Benefit Policies

Below pay scales take effect July 1, 2024. Policy reviewed and approved by Windham County NRCD Board of Supervisors 5/15/2024.

Eligibility

These pay and benefit rates apply only to permanent employees of the Windham NRCD. Temporary and seasonal employees will receive pay rates commensurate with relevant funding programs as detailed in position employment agreements.

Pay Scales

Executive Director

Tier I:

Step	1 (probationary)	2	3	4	5
Hourly Rate	26.00	27.30	28.67	30.10	31.60

Step	6	7	8	9	10
Hourly Rate	33.18	34.84	36.58	38.41	40.33

Tier II:

Step	1 (probationary)	2	3	4	5
Hourly Rate	28.00	29.40	30.87	32.41	34.03

Step	6	7	8	9	10
Hourly Rate	35.74	37.52	39.39	41.37	43.44

Resource Specialist/Technical Staff/Project Manager

Tier I:

Step	1 (probationary)	2	3	4	5
Hourly Rate	21.00	22.05	23.15	24.31	25.53

Step	6	7	8	9	10
Hourly Rate	26.80	28.14	29.55	31.03	32.58

Tier II:

Step	1 (probationary)	2	3	4	5
Hourly Rate	23.00	24.15	25.36	26.63	27.96

Step	6	7	8	9	10
Hourly Rate	29.35	30.82	32.36	33.98	35.68

FTE

1.0 FTE (full-time equivalent) is considered 2,080 hours per year (40 hours per week). Employees assigned to work less than full-time will have an FTE equal to their number of assigned hours divided by 2,080. Benefits earned proportional to level of employment shall be based on assigned number of hours, not worked number of hours. However, end of fiscal year reporting will include actual number of hours worked for each employee, which will be used in planning and budgeting for the next fiscal year.

Tiers

Tier I or Tier II pay scales shall be selected by hiring party (executive director for resource specialist/technical staff/project manager and personnel committee for executive director) based on previous education and experiences relevant to job duties. Windham NRCB Board of Supervisors shall have final approval of pay scale selection. Tier II pay scale shall be reserved for employees with considerable education and experience related to position duties, including but not limited to graduate degrees, advanced technical training through state or federal agencies or partners and experience in similar positions with partner organizations or agencies. Employees may be moved from Tier I to Tier II if the employee's supervisor and the board agree that the employee has completed additional education and/or training since being hired that qualifies them for this promotion. The tier II pay scale exist to recognize and fairly compensate employees who, through education, training, and experience, have become invaluable to the district. This is intended to reduce district employee attrition to partner organizations and state and federal agencies. An employee may formally request a review of their pay scale tier at any time by submitting a request in writing to their direct supervisor, who shall share the request with the board. The board shall act within two months of the request. This action shall include a review of the employee's education and training advancements and result in a decision regarding

advancing the employee to tier II or remaining at tier I. An employee may only request a review once every 3 years.

Steps

Staff shall advance to the next step on the appropriate pay scale after each performance evaluation, provided they receive satisfactory performance reviews from their supervisor and the board. Probationary employees shall be reviewed after six months in their position. All other performance reviews, and corresponding step increases when merited, shall occur annually. Step increases are contingent upon available funding.

Cost of Living Increases

The board of supervisors will evaluate all district pay scales as part of the annual budgeting process to consider the need for cost-of-living increases. If there has been a documented increase in cost of living using the consumer price index and Social Security Administration cost-of-living increases, the board will adjust district pay scales, accordingly, provided sufficient funding exists to do so.

Sick Leave

District employees will receive two weeks of sick time per year to be used in the event of illness or injury that prevents them from performing their job duties as well as to provide care for a sick family member. Sick time may also be used for medical and dental appointments for employees and family members. Employees budgeted for less than 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) will receive a reduced amount of sick leave time per day that corresponds to their current FTE. For example, an employee working .5 FTE will receive 4 hours of paid sick leave per day of sick leave. *Sick leave rolls over from one year to the next, however an employee is allowed to only accumulate up to four weeks of sick leave. Unused sick leave is forfeited by the employee without compensation when employment is terminated by either party.*

Holidays

District employees will receive all federal holidays off from work with pay. Employees budgeted for less than 1.0 FTE will receive a prorated amount of paid time off on each federal holiday that corresponds to their current FTE. For example, an employee working .875 FTE would receive 7 hours of paid time off per federal holiday. In the event that an employee is required or chooses to work on a federal holiday, they may take an alternate day off with pay *within the same fiscal year. Staff planning to use paid holidays on alternate dates are expected to notify their supervisor regarding their plans prior to both the federal holiday and the alternate date selected. This policy is intended to allow staff who observe holidays not currently recognized by the federal government to use holiday time to observe these holidays.*

Vacation

New district employees will receive two weeks (10 days) of paid vacation per fiscal year. Employees budgeted for less than 1.0 FTE will receive a prorated amount of paid time off for each vacation day that corresponds to their current FTE. For example, an employee working .5 FTE would receive 4 hours of paid time off per vacation day. Probationary employees may not use paid vacation time until they have completed their six-month performance review satisfactorily. The board may waive this requirement upon request on a case-by-case basis.

Employees will receive two additional days of paid vacation time for each subsequent year they remain employed with the district, up to five weeks (25 days) of paid vacation per year. For example, an employee in their fourth year with the district will receive 16 days of paid vacation per year. Vacation time can be accrued from year to year; however, an employee may not accrue more than six weeks (30 days) at any time. Vacation time accrued and not used beyond this total will be forfeit at the end of each fiscal year. Unused vacation time is forfeited without compensation when employment is terminated by either party.

Employees wishing to use vacation time for two or more consecutive days shall notify their supervisor in writing at least two weeks prior to beginning their vacation. Employees using vacation time for one or less days at a time shall notify their direct supervisor in writing 24 hours in advance. Employees are expected to plan ahead so that no organizational tasks go unfinished, and no work obligations are missed. Employees should plan vacations around district programming, such as workshops, meetings and sales programs.

Salaried vs. Hourly Employees

District employees are presumed to be hourly employees unless specifically identified as salaried in writing. Hourly employees are subject to applicable laws concerning overtime. As a result, hourly employees may not work more than 40 hours per week without advanced approval from their supervisor. Salaried employees are considered exempt from overtime laws. Salaried employees who work more than 40 hours in a week may bank excess hours as comp time, which may be used as vacation time. The use of comp time as vacation time is subject to the provisions listed above concerning vacation time and its usage. Accrued comp time expires when employment is terminated by either party and has no cash value. The district will not pay salaried employees for any accrued comp time at the completion of employment, and these hours will be forfeited.

Determination of employment status as hourly or salaried will be made by the board of supervisors and will follow all applicable laws and regulations. The **executive director** position will be considered a salaried position. Additional staff may be designated as salaried by the board of supervisors and will be defined as such in the employee's employment agreement.

Benefits

The Conservation District will contribute an amount equal to 20% (pre-tax) of an employee's actual wages towards benefits or cash-in-lieu of benefits. Individual employees may defer a portion of their wages into an individualized retirement account with a provider selected by the district. The district will match any such contribution up to 3% of the employee's gross wages. This contribution will count towards the 20% contribution the district will make for benefits or cash-in-lieu of benefits. For example, if an employee defers 3% or more of their wages into a retirement account, the district will also contribute an amount equal to 3% of that employee's wages into the same retirement account, however the cash-in-lieu of benefit payment will be reduced from 20% to 17% of gross wages.

The district may choose to offer a health insurance plan or cafeteria benefit plan in the future should a reasonable option for a small organization become available. In the event that a plan is offered, district employees will be given the option whether or not enroll in such a plan or continue to take the district contribution as taxed income through cash-in-lieu of benefits payments. The district may adopt such a plan through a vote of the board of supervisors without amending this policy.

The district will purchase a short-term disability insurance policy for all permanent employees. This policy will be selected by the board of supervisors. This policy will provide direct payment to employees who require a leave of absence due to a qualifying medical condition to replace a portion of their lost income. This policy will likely include an elimination period between the qualifying event and when benefits payments take effect. Employees may use sick time, provided they have sick leave available, to cover this gap in payments. Specific details of this policy, including questions of eligibility and benefit amounts shall be spelled out in the policy and will be compatible with applicable laws and regulations.

Effective Date

These policies will take effect at the beginning of the 2025 fiscal year and may be revised by the board at any time.