



# ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Procedure Number: 23-18

Effective Date: 10/10/2001

Revision Date: 07/01/2009

*C. D. DeWitt*  
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County Administrator

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SUBJECT: **TRAINEE PROGRAM**

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DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBLE: **Human Resources Department**

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## I. **STATEMENT**

In accordance with Board of Supervisors Policy D-23.6, Essential Training, and in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) governing trainees, Pima County's Trainee Program is designed to (1) assist County employees with upward mobility opportunities or career-path changes, and (2) assist departments in the recruitment of hard-to-fill positions.

## II. **PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY**

- A. An eligible individual is any person interested in a Trainee Program opportunity who:
1. does not meet the minimum qualifications for the classification at the time it is announced, but is able to do so by the end of the training period, or
  2. does meet the minimum qualifications but is not competitive enough to pass selective criteria requirements.
- B. Appointments to the Trainee Program will typically be restricted to entry-level classifications within each job family, but may also be used for higher level classifications when qualified candidates are not forthcoming or not accepting job offers.
- C. Recruitment and Selection for all trainee positions shall be in accordance with Pima County Merit System Rules governing classified service.
- D. Trainees shall be appointed **ONLY** to regular classified County budgeted positions.

## III. **PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS**

- A. Trainees are provided training opportunities directly tied to knowledge, skills and abilities required of the classification. An individualized plan shall be designed for each person appointed to the Trainee Program to assist him/her in meeting the minimum qualifications or selective criteria requirements of the classification within the required time limits.

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B. Participants may remain in a trainee status up to twenty-four (24) months:

1. Participants must meet all minimum qualifications of and complete all required testing for the classification prior to non-competitive transition into a full performance position. This includes any licensing or certification requirements; and
2. Each shall serve a minimum of six (6) months. The length of the Trainee Program beyond the initial six months is determined by the hiring authority or designee. Successful completion of the program is based upon the acquisition of required knowledge, skills and abilities, as measured by testing (if applicable) and performance review, and not on time served in the program.

C. Employee Benefits While Serving in a Trainee Status

1. New hire trainees shall accrue sick and annual leave in the same manner as employees on initial probation. Sick leave may be used after three (3) months of continuous service. Annual leave may be used after six (6) months of continuous service. Accrued sick and annual leave may be used at any time for a job-related illness or injury. New hire trainees are not eligible for a Board approved adjustment until they have successfully completed the Trainee Program unless the Board of Supervisors approves otherwise. Their eligibility begins with the first Board approved adjustment following the non-competitive transition to the full performance position, provided all other relevant conditions are met. Example: If an employee completed the Trainee Program on November 1, 2008, and the Board approved an adjustment for July 1, 2008, the employee is ineligible for the increase. However, if the Board approved an increase on January 1, 2009, or any time after November 1, 2008, the employee may be eligible for the increase, as long as other relevant criteria are met.
2. Employees on initial probation at the time of appointment to the Trainee Program shall retain both their initial hire and anniversary dates, but their initial probationary status shall be suspended during the trainee period. They have the same right to accrue and use sick and annual leave as that held prior to the appointment. Accrued sick and annual leave may be used at any time for a job-related illness or injury. They are also not eligible for a Board approved adjustment until they have successfully completed the Trainee Program unless the Board of Supervisors approves otherwise. Their eligibility begins as stated in C.1 above.
3. Unclassified employees appointed to the Trainee Program shall retain both their initial hire and anniversary dates, and they have the same right to accrue and use sick and annual leave as that held prior to the appointment. They are also eligible to receive a Board approved adjustment during the training period, provided all other relevant conditions are met, and the increase does not exceed the maximum of the salary range, unless the Board of Supervisors approves otherwise.

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4. Regular classified permanent employees appointed to the Trainee Program retain the same right to accrue and use sick and annual leave as that held prior to the appointment. They are eligible to receive a Board approved adjustment during the training period, providing all other relevant conditions are met, and the increase does not exceed the maximum of the salary range.
- D. Employee Salary While Serving in a Trainee Status
1. During the training period participants appointed to the program are paid five percent (5%) below the minimum salary of the classification for which being trained or at a matrix training rate, when approved by the County Administrator.
  2. If a regular classified employee is appointed to the Trainee Program, and the 5% differential would result in a decrease in salary, the employee shall retain his/her current salary, provided it does not exceed the maximum of the classification for which the employee is being trained.
  3. For unclassified employees training for a classified job and the 5% differential would result in a decrease in salary, only the County Administrator can approve a salary above the 5% differential, but it shall not exceed the maximum of the classification for which the employee is being trained.
- E. Only regular classified permanent employees appointed to the Trainee Program are consigned to the program. As such, their vacated position may only be filled by a temporary appointment during the entire time the employee is in the Trainee Program (up to 24 months maximum). In order to preserve this right, the employee is required to inform the department in writing, via the Appointing Authority or designee, that he or she is leaving for a trainee position. The department shall maintain that document in the department personnel file and shall return a copy of the document to the employee with a signature from the Appointing Authority acknowledging receipt and filing.
- F. Trainees may be terminated or returned to their previous position (if appropriate) at any time during the training period without the right of appeal.
1. Except for regular classified permanent employees, all other trainees (outlined in C. above) who fail to successfully complete the Trainee Program shall be terminated in the same manner as an employee on initial probation pursuant to Merit System Rule 11.3. Unclassified employees shall be terminated as "at will" employees.
  2. A regular classified permanent employee who fails to successfully complete the Trainee Program shall be returned to his/her previous position and salary provided he or she gave written notice as stated in paragraph E above, and shall serve no probation (provided no layoff occurred during the training period that impacted the employee's prior position). If layoff did occur, and the previously held position was

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eliminated, the employee would be subject to layoff at the time he/she failed the Trainee Program.

- G. Participants who successfully complete the Trainee Program shall be non-competitively transitioned into the full performance position. They shall be required to serve either initial or promotion probation in accordance with Merit System Rules 10.1 and 10.2, when applicable. Any other probations listed in Merit System Rule 10.2 may be applied, when applicable, at the discretion of the Appointing Authority.
- H. Upon successful completion of the Trainee Program, participants subject to the 5% differential shall receive a salary equivalent to the minimum of the classification for which trained.

Participants not subject to the 5% differential shall be compensated upon successful completion of the Trainee Program as follows:

1. Regular classified employees who maintained a salary equivalent to their previous salary shall receive no increase in pay, if the classification for which trained is the same pay grade as their previously held position.
2. Regular classified employees who maintained a salary equivalent to their previous salary shall receive at least a 2.5% reduction in pay or the minimum of the new salary range (whichever is greater), if the classification for which trained is a lower pay grade than their previously held position.
3. Regular classified employees who maintained a salary equivalent to their previous salary shall receive at least a 2.5% pay increase (up to 5%), if the classification for which trained is a higher pay grade than their previously held position (pursuant to Personnel Policy 7-117.H, Promotions), provided they do not exceed the maximum of the new salary range.
4. Unclassified employees previously approved for a higher trainee salary pursuant to D.3 above shall retain the same salary as received during the trainee program.
5. Employees transitioning into positions with open range matrices will be placed within the matrix in accordance with the approved salary administration plan.

#### **IV. PROCEDURES**

- A. Announcements for trainee positions should clearly denote trainee status, pay differential, minimum and maximum time of the training period, and non-competitive transition into the position upon successful completion of the program. Initial hire probation or completion of an initial hire probation period for those regular employees who were still in an initial hire probation status, prior to becoming a trainee, will be required upon the non-competitive transition into the

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position for which trained. (The designation Trainee shall follow the classification title for advertising purposes only).

B. Trainee is not a classification, but a method of filling a budgeted position. At the beginning of the trainee period, complete a Personnel Action Form (PAF) as follows:

1. New hires, employees on initial probation and unclassified employees should have a PAF reflecting permanent full-time, part-time or variable-time with a fill type of Trainee Program (TP) and an employee type of Trainee (TR).
2. Regular classified permanent employees maintain their permanent status and same employment type. The PAF should be coded with a new fill type of Trainee Program (TP).
3. An individualized training plan shall be developed for each candidate appointed to the Trainee Program and maintained in the department file. This plan shall be reviewed immediately upon hire of the trainee by the County's Training Officer and verified by the Human Resources Director (see Attachment A). For a training plan template, contact the Human Resources Training Officer. Please note that the Sheriff's Department is NOT required to submit training plans to Human Resources for approval.

Any changes to the training plan during the trainee period to include, but not limited to, length of training period and/or trainee's status requires the plan be resubmitted to Human Resources for review and verification before implementation. You must note "Amended" on the form next to the form title.

4. Regular meetings shall be conducted throughout the training period to inform the trainee of his/her progress.
5. Trainee Program performance appraisals are required at the mid-point of the training period, which extends from a minimum of six (6) months up to a maximum of twenty-four (24) months. Refer to the Performance Management Program guidelines and forms. Note: Performance appraisals are not required if a participant fails to successfully complete the Trainee Program and is terminated or returned to his/her previous position. Submit the initial Performance Plan to the Human Resources Training Officer for review at the same time you submit the training plan for approval.
6. a. At the conclusion of the Trainee Program, complete a PAF denoting the outcome (i.e., successful completion, termination, etc.). If successful, new hires, probationary employees and unclassified employees should have a PAF that reflects permanent full-time, part-time or variable time, with a fill type of Normal Fill (NF) and an employment type of Regular Classified (RC). Section E (Probation) should be coded and dated for employees who are required to serve or continue initial appointment probation commensurate with their

successful completion of the trainee program pursuant to Merit System Rule 10.1.C. Regardless of probationary status, the phrase "NON-COMPETITIVE TRANSITION INTO FULL PERFORMANCE CLASSIFICATION" should be cited in Section M. Salaries shall reflect the appropriate pay rates outlined in Section III, Item "H" of this document.

- b. Regular classified permanent employees continue to maintain their permanent status and same employment type. The fill type should be changed to Normal Fill (NF). The phrase "NON-COMPETITIVE TRANSITION INTO FULL PERFORMANCE CLASSIFICATION" should be cited in Section M.

Attachments

Attachment A

Attachment A

**SAMPLE****Contact the HR Training Officer for an electronic template****Pima County Trainee Program  
Individualized Training Plan**

Name of Trainee:	<u>Susan P. Doe</u>	Classification:	<u>1184 – Legal Assistant</u>	Phone:	<u>740-1234</u>
Department:	<u>Legal</u>	Supervisor:	<u>Joan Jump</u>	Phone:	<u>740-1235</u>
Date Prepared:	<u>8/15/08</u>	Prepared by:	<u>Joan Jump</u>	Phone:	<u>740-1235</u>
Dates of Training Period: (6 months minimum, 24 months maximum):	<u>8/15/08 – 5/31/09</u> <u>(9.5 months)</u>				

**Trainee's Status at the Beginning of the Training Period****A. Minimum Qualifications for the Position (cite MQs as listed in County's classification description):**

EITHER:

(1) An Associate's Degree or a certificate of completion from an accredited college or technical school as a Legal Assistant or Paralegal.

OR:

(2) Two years of experience in a legal setting under direction of an attorney involving specifically-delegated legal work coordinating and analyzing case information in a manner consistent with legal assistant duties.

**B. Proficiency level at the start of training (cite partial MQs already met by trainee):**

(1) Two (2) semesters of education toward a four (4) semester Associate's Degree from an accredited college or technical school as a Legal Assistant or Paralegal.

AND:

(2) Six (6) months experience in a legal setting under direction of an attorney involving specifically-delegated legal work coordinating and analyzing case information in a manner consistent with legal assistant duties.

**C. Skills, knowledge and abilities missing at the start of training (cite those MQs that still need to be met by trainee before the end of the training period – i.e., A – B = C). If multiple MQ options are available, indicate which the employee will be pursuing by using boldface type:**(1) **Two (2) semesters of education toward a four (4) semester Associate's Degree from an accredited college or technical school as a Legal Assistant or Paralegal.**

OR:

(2) Eighteen (18) months experience in a legal setting under direction of an attorney involving specifically-delegated legal work coordinating and analyzing case information in a manner consistent with legal assistant duties.

Attachment A  
(Continued)

Attachment A

**Training Plan (addresses items identified in "C" above)**

<b>Goal (What)</b>	<b>Objective (Why)</b>	<b>Training Method (How)</b>	<b>Chronological Time Frame (When)</b>
Obtain Associate's Degree from an accredited college as a Legal Assistant or Paralegal.	Acquire the requisite skills and knowledge necessary to satisfactorily perform essential duties.	Attend required classes at Pima Community College at my own expense.	Nine (9) months: August 2008 through May 2009.
While a Trainee, perform all essential job duties in accordance with pre-established written performance standards for Legal Assistants in the department.	Complete tasks accurately within the prescribed time frames.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-the job training</li> <li>• Read dept manuals</li> <li>• Attend related classes offered by the County</li> <li>• Attend weekly meetings with supervisor to address questions, next steps and informal feedback.</li> </ul>	Nine (9) months: August 2008 through May 2009
Pass Legal Assistant Examination	Demonstrate proficiency in the skills, knowledge and abilities required to do the job.	Take first written exam offered following receipt of Associate's Degree	May 2009

Training Plan Approved

Training Plan Denied

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Reviewed by Training Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Verified by Human Resources Director

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Date