



Multi-Lingual Skills Pay Policy

Policy Number: PP 4-6

Effective Date: 04/02/2024

Approved By: Chris Blue, Town Manager

POLICY

The Town offers skills-based pay to all Town employees, except interns, who can meet the Town's established competency standards in languages other than English. This policy advances the Town's mission of building a community where all people can thrive and reflects our Town's RESPECT values, especially Communication, Professionalism, and Equity.

PURPOSE

Chapel Hill is a diverse community with residents and visitors from around the world. Employees who speak languages other than English help people access and enjoy Town services and those employees should receive compensation for providing these specialized services.

R.E.S.P.E.C.T. VALUES



Equity: Although we may hold different roles in the organization, we all work toward the common goal of serving the Town and the Town's residents and customers. Therefore, we seek and support policies and actions that are administered consistently and fairly to everyone regardless of rank, tenure or personal background.



Communication: We take part in constructive dialogues and set clear goals and expectations so we may better understand our roles in the workplace. Our organizational values serve as a common language when discussing each other's decisions and actions.

APPROVAL

Chris Blue, Town Manager



Multi-Lingual Skills Pay Procedures

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Approved By: Cliff Turner, Human Resource Development Director

PROCEDURES

Stipend for Language Skills-Based Pay

Full-time employees can earn \$1,500 annually for interpretative language competency, prorated and paid in equal installments in each pay period. Employees can earn additional skill pay for additional languages where they demonstrate interpretive competency.

All other eligible employees can earn \$.72 per hour per interpretive language competency, paid on hours worked.

The pay does not add to the employee's base salary and is not used to calculate annual cost of living raises or other pay adjustments.

Qualifications for Language Skills Pay

To receive the skills-based pay, employees must pass a language competency test and complete a training about best practices for interpretation.

Currently, Alta Language Services, Inc. is the approved vendor for language testing. An employee must achieve a score of 9 or higher on their skills test to receive the skills-based pay.

Only the results of a Town-approved test will be used to determine whether an employee qualifies for language skills pay.

Police Department Policy

The Chapel Hill Police Department previously established a language skills policy and set competency requirements based on law enforcement needs. Qualifying police department employees will continue to receive the language skills pay based on their departmental policy.

Language Competency Test Process.

1. Employees should fill out the *Language Assessment Request* and submit to their Human Resource Development (HRD) Partner or to the HRD office.
2. HRD will arrange the test, which is taken on work time.
3. Employees will be monitored during the test and are not allowed to have any electronics or other resources in the testing location.
4. Employees can receive skills-based pay for more than one language. They must pass the competency test for each individual language.
5. If an employee does not pass the skills test, they can try again in 12 months.
6. Every three years, employees must take the test and recertify in order to continue receiving the skills-based pay.

PROCEDURES
CONT.

Town Training on Best Practices

The Town will offer a special training on Best Practices for Interpretation to help employees understand their roles and responsibilities as multi-lingual staff. Employees are expected to complete this training at the next available opportunity after passing the competency test. Employees will be notified when the training is offered.

Training for supervisors on the role, uses, and limitations of multi-lingual staff in the workplace is currently under development.

Expectations for Using Language Skills

Employees who receive the incentive pay are expected to provide interpretive assistance as needed in the course of their regular job duties and work schedule. They may occasionally be asked to provide similar assistance outside of their regular job duties, as their schedule and workload permit.

An employee who receives language skills pay should:

- Provide verbal language assistance as part of routine customer service
 - Example: Help a Spanish speaking resident sign up for a library card
 - Example: Explain to a Mandarin speaker why they were stopped by law enforcement
 - Example: Answer basic questions about trash pick up
 - Example: Explain how to get on the wait list for Public Housing

An employee who receives the language skills pay should NOT:

- Interpret technical concepts or confidential information, including medical or legal terminology.
 - Example: A meeting with the OSHA officer regarding a workplace injury.
 - Example: Translate or Interpret for a pre-disciplinary conference
- Interpret or translate for a scheduled and extended period
 - Example: Interpreting for a Karen- speaking resident at a community meeting.
 - Example: A two-page policy about language incentive pay
- Translate a binding document that has medical, legal, or governmental jargon
 - Example: A Public Housing lease
 - Example: A development agreement

FORMS/INSTRUCTIONS

[Language Assessment Request Form](#)

Submit this form to any member of HRD. Notify your department that you intend to have your interpretation skills assessed.

PROCEDURES
APPROVED BY

Cliff Turner, Human Resource Development Director

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| <p>DEFINITIONS</p> | <p>A. <u>Language Interpretation</u> is the process of converting spoken words from one language into another in a way that is culturally and linguistically appropriate so that it can be understood by its intended audience.</p> <p>B. <u>Language translation</u> is the process of converting the written word from one language into another in a way that is culturally and linguistically appropriate so that it can be understood by its intended audience.</p> |
| <p>RESPONSIBILITIES</p> | <p>HRD: schedules and oversees test administration and reports results to the employee and their department.</p> <p>Departments: submit the PTF for processing once they are notified that the employee has qualified for skills-based pay.</p> <p>Employees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. use their language skills in the manner intended. b. take the Best Practices training as soon as possible after it is offered. <p>Supervisors: support employees in using their language skills only in the manner intended.</p> |
| <p>ADDITIONAL CONTACTS</p> | <p>Human Resource Development hr@townofchapelhill.org</p> |
| <p>SCOPE</p> | <p>This policy applies to all Town employees, except interns.</p> |
| <p>APPENDICES</p> | <p>Appendix A: Town of Chapel Hill Language Assessment Request Form</p> |
| <p>POLICY HISTORY</p> | |

Appendix A

Town of Chapel Hill Language Assessment Request Form

Use this form to request a spoken language assessment for skill-based pay. Once you fill it in, it automatically saves your request. However, we suggest that you also email it or print it out and give it to someone in HRD so that HRD can organize the test. It is an interactive live video exam administered in a testing location at the Human Resource Development office in Town Hall over a Town computer and takes approximately 30 minutes. It is considered work time.

Once HRD requests your assessment test, you will receive an email telling you the date and time of your assessment. You will also receive an access code that you must have to access the exam. The access code is sent **ONLY TO YOU**. HRD does not have access to your code. You cannot have any personal items with you in the room. This includes electronics, backpacks, purses, coats, notes and other similar materials. The test assesses your spoken skills in the language and takes about 30 minutes.

1.Date

Enter your answer

2.Name

Enter your answer

3.Department

Enter your answer

4.Email

Enter your answer

5.Phone

Enter your answer

6.What language(s) do you want to be tested in? Note: Scheduling language testing depends on the availability of the testing center's assessors.

Enter your answer

7. Do you need any accommodations to take the test? Some examples of accommodations include a wheelchair accessible location or hearing amplification, among others.

Enter your answer

8. It's possible that your assessment will be scheduled at a time other than your normal work hours. Tests are scheduled when the testing center assessors are available. If you cannot attend the testing time for any reason, please let HRD know right away. If you have any questions, please contact HRD at 919-968-2743.