Geographic Differential

What is a geographic differential?

A geographic differential is an additional compensation adjustment applied to positions that are required to be performed in a labor market with a higher cost of labor than the Manhattan, KS market.

Geographic differentials help K-State remain competitive when recruiting and retaining talent in markets where compensation levels are significantly higher than those in Manhattan.

Eligibility requirements

A position may be considered for a geographic differential only when:

- The position is required to be performed in a specific geographic location outside the Manhattan or Salina campuses.
- The work location is established by the university and is necessary for the position's responsibilities.
- The actual cost of labor in the market where the position will be performed meets the requirements for a geographic differential to be applied, as determined by HR Compensation and Organizational Effectiveness (COE).

A position is not eligible for a geographic differential when:

- An employee chooses to live in a different location for personal reasons.
- The position is temporarily assigned to another location.

Geographic differential determination

HR COE evaluates whether a geographic differential is appropriate based on the cost of labor in the market where the position is required to be located. *The position location must be entered into the applicant tracking system (PageUp) and will be used to determine whether a geographic differential will be applied*.

K-State maintains three geographic differential tiers, each representing a different band of higher labor costs relative to the Manhattan market.

The applicable tier, if any, is determined by HR COE following a review of the required location and relevant labor market data.

When to request a geographic differential review

Geographic differential eligibility should be evaluated when:

- A unit is preparing to recruit for a new or vacant position.
- A unit is requesting a position be established in a new geographic market.
- A unit initiates a required change to the position's work location.

Request process

Staff positions

Units may request consideration of a geographic differential when submitting a staff position description through the applicant tracking system.

Faculty positions

Units may request consideration of a geographic differential when submitting a job requisition for recruitment.

Additionally, if a unit is requiring that a filled position be moved to a location away from the Manhattan or Salina campuses, contact hrcomp@ksu.edu to determine if a geographic differential is applicable for the new location.

Approval authority

The selection of a geographic differential option by a unit initiates a review and does not guarantee approval.

Final determination regarding eligibility and applicable geographic differential tier is made by HR COE.

Once approved, the geographic differential is applied through submission of a Pay Change form.

Quick test

Ask the following questions:

- Is the position required to be performed in a specific geographic location outside the Manhattan or Salina campuses?
- Is the required location based on a business need rather than employee preference?

If the answer to both questions is yes, the position may be eligible for HR COE review for a geographic differential.

Questions about geographic differentials? Check with your unit's HR Manager.