Livingston County
Vacancy Review Policy

Resolution No. 2010-06-189 Amended: June 21, 2010

A. POLICY

1. PURPOSE:
Livingston County instituted a number of cost reduction measures in light of the financial forecasts indicating the County would be unable to sustain current levels of services within available resources. One of those measures is a hiring freeze. The objective of the hiring freeze for general fund departments and departments that receive a subsidy from the general fund is to contribute to the reduction of the budget deficit and to begin to make long-term structural changes and improved efficiencies in Livingston County's work force.

2. POLICY STATEMENT:
The Board of Commissioners instituted a hiring freeze on July 7, 2008, which resolved:

- No position in a General Fund department which becomes vacant shall be replaced. In departments not funded by the General Fund, vacancies shall be posted internally with employees in General Fund departments given first consideration. The Board encourages the sharing of responsibilities within or between Departments. In addition supervisory positions may be filled internally as long as a vacancy ultimately falls off the payroll. The Board of Commissioners also endorses consolidation of County offices in order to reduce operating expenses.

In addition, on December 1, 2008 the Board reaffirmed their position on the hiring freeze by resolving:

- Any services funded by State/Federal grants which costs exceed grant funding and which services are not basic to the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Livingston County and/or which are provided by others; shall be discontinued and the grant funding declined.

- The approved Authorization and Funded Employee List contained in the budget shall limit the number of employees who are authorized to be employed and no funds are appropriated for any position or employees not on the approved Authorization and Funded Employee List.

- All vacancies that occur during this hiring freeze are hereby declared to be a position reduction on the Authorized and Funded Employee List for each such vacated position and funding shall be removed from the Courts, Elected Officials and Department Head budgets. Said vacated position shall not be filled, except by specific Board authorization.

- If the Board of Commissioners authorizes a vacant position to be filled, then all Judges, County Elected Officials and County Department Heads will hold that position vacancy that occurs during the 2009 fiscal year for the appropriate duration of time to properly compensate for vacation and/or sick payoffs to insure personnel expenditures don't exceed the 2009 authorized budget provided that

the judges and elected officials can still perform their mandated functions at a serviceable level.

However, there may be a few instances in which the best interests of Livingston County are served by allowing a hire to take place. The attached Vacancy Review Guidelines explain the objective, criteria and procedures for granting exceptions to the hiring freeze.

Vacancy requests will be approved only when it is clear to the Board of Commissioners that:

- The work is essential to Livingston County;
- The Elected Official/Department Head has examined current work and staffing to identify and then implement changes that improve service, reduce costs and reduce the number of staff required to get the department's work done;
- Alternatives to getting the work done have been seriously explored including redesigning work, reassigning current staff, using additional technology or rethinking how work is performed, streamlining and any other staff-suggested means;
- Lower priority work has been eliminated, deferred, or handled some other way. In other words, with approval, can some of the department's current duties be discontinued?;
- There is no reasonable alternative to hiring.

Where there is no reasonable alternative to hiring, it is expected that another position will be surrendered. Step placement at hiring should be scrutinized to minimize overall personnel costs. Avoid incurring any costs that are not necessary. All County expenditures – not just personnel costs need to be examined to reduce costs to the greatest extent possible.

3. APPLICABILITY:

Applies to all budgeted full-time and part-time positions that become vacant during the period of time that the hiring freeze is in effect. The hiring freeze applies to positions in a general fund department and to departments that receive a general fund subsidy. Every position will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Departments are permitted to temporarily increase staffing levels due to increased workload, vacancies created by terminations or employee leaves of absence if sufficient funding is available within that department's budget. No approval is required to return the incumbent employee to the original position. If funding is not available within a department's budget sufficient to cover the expense of a temporary position, the department must receive approval from the Board of Commissioners through the vacancy review procedure prior to filling a temporary vacancy.

The hiring freeze will be in effect until further notice, and will not be lifted without an affirmative action taken by the Board of Commissioners.

4. DEFINITIONS:

5. REFERENCE AND LEGAL AUTHORITY:

Board Resolution 604-193	Resolution Establishing a Position Review Process to Justify the Current Need for Vacant Positions under the General Hiring Freeze
Board Resolution 2008-07-201	Resolution Authorizing Implementation of Adjustments to the 2008 Livingston County Budget
Board Resolution 2008-12-352	Resolution Adopting the 2009 Livingston County Budget

Board Resolution 2009-05-156 Resolution Authorizing Livingston County's Annual Budget Process and Calendar for 2010

6. SEE ALSO:
   Personnel Policy regarding Workforce Reduction
   Form: Livingston County 2004 General Hiring Freeze, Request to Fill
   Form: Request for Exception to the Hiring Freeze

7. SUPERSEDES: No. 2009-07-217

8. APPROVED BY:
   Personnel Committee: 06/02/2010
   Finance Committee: 06/09/2010
   Board of Commissioners: 06/21/2010

9. RESOLUTION: No. 2010-06-189

10. REVIEW HISTORY:

A. PROCEDURE:
The requesting Elected Official/Department Head will complete the analysis required to Request an Exception to the Hiring Freeze. The appropriate Board Sub-Committee will review all requests for hiring within their jurisdiction. Only when the appropriate Board Sub-Committee is confident that the hire meets the criteria will the request receive further review from the Finance Committee and ultimate authorization will be provided by the Board of Commissioners prior to making a job offer.

The Board Sub-Committee may request clarification or additional information as deemed necessary.

Administration will adjust budgets to reflect the savings from vacant positions.

REQUEST FOR EXCEPTION TO THE HIRING FREEZE

Request Submitted by:

Title of Position to be Filled: Salary:

Annual Cost of Budgeted Position (incl. fringe benefits):
Projected Cost for the next five years (incl. fringe benefits):

New Position/Classification ☐ Yes ☐ No
If No: Name of Employee Last Occupying this Position

When did the position become vacant?

Has sufficient time been given to properly compensate for vacation and/or sick pay-offs to insure personnel expenses do not exceed the authorized budget?

1. Briefly describe this position and why you believe that it is essential enough to warrant an exception to the overall Livingston County hiring freeze. Provide a copy of the job description.

2. Indicate if this is a mandated program/service by citing the act, rule, resolution, order, etc. that has necessitated this work. Also, if mandated, explain what effect this program/service has on current operations. If not mandated, outline the reason(s) for the department providing this task/work.

3. Budgeted department head count for the past five years:
Jan., 20 : Jan., 20 : Jan., 20 : Jan., 20 : Jan., 20

Please explain changes:

4. Does the vacant position for which an exemption is being requested perform essential function(s) that cannot be performed with the existing staff resources within Livingston County? Identify all special skills, education and/or licensing requirements for the position.

5. Recognizing that all Elected Officials/Department Heads are expected to provide quality supervision and be creative problem solvers, how could the department reassign work and/or personnel to get all essential work of the department done without additional hiring?

6. Specifically list three reasonable options if your request to replace a position is denied.

7. What are the consequences of deferring the vacant position over the next several months and beyond?

8. What budget saving measures has this department implemented? Have additional measures been identified?

9. What position or other costs would you be willing to drop to enable hiring – if that becomes necessary to obtain approval for hire?

10. Please provide additional information regarding the staff of this department (i.e. organizational charts, workflow chart, staff on leaves from work/job restrictions, employee training downtime, etc.) to determine the workforce available for accomplishing the necessary tasks/services.

11. Is the work required by statute to be performed at the County level or can it be shared with other Counties? With local governments?

12. Explain what services can be provided by others, private sector or non-profit?

13. Are there other County employees with the skills and knowledge that can be transferred from another department thereby shifting the vacancy to another department where the position will not be filled?

14. Has the use of temporary employees been evaluated to handle the work? Please provide explanation(s).

15. Has the use of part-time (less than 30 hours) employees been evaluated for feasibility and cost-effectiveness to accomplish the work? Please provide explanation(s).

16. Has current staff been working overtime and, if so, how much is currently being worked or how much is planned to be worked per week (on the average)?

17. Has cross-trained staff been fully utilized to maximize the output of existing staff? Please provide explanation(s).

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