



Sandy City Council Office

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MEMORANDUM

January 20, 2026

To: Members of the City Council

CC: Dustin Fratto, Council Director

From: Kris Nicholl, District 3

Subject: Setting appropriate compensation limitations for elected officials

Purpose

1. Continuity between elected official turnover
2. Public Trust
3. Alignment with Budget Policy Statements
4. Transparency
5. Give the council the express ability to set elected official pay.

Policy: Setting appropriate compensation limitations for elected officials.

Setting compensation limits for elected officials is clearly within the council's realm of authority. Furthermore, as the legislative body and budget authority the council may set the salary for the council members and the mayor. Neither of these are currently set in the Sandy Municipal Code. Instead, the city has relied upon language adopted each year in the annual budget and internal council policy. The council holds the authority to open and amend the budget throughout the fiscal year. As the staffing and compensation plan is a part of the annual budget, the Council may amend the salary for the council and mayor by amending the plan. To further ensure compliance the Council may also, in accordance with Utah 10-6-126, may reduce the total budget appropriation of the appropriate department (Mayor or Council).

Proposal:

Elected officials are **NOT** eligible for the following forms of compensation:

- Salary Related: Merit pay adjustments, incentive pay, spot awards, vehicle allowances, phone allowances, and tuition reimbursements
- Benefits Related: Paid time-off (PTO) nor any other paid leave.

Note: More research is needed to make sure paid leave can be included due to Federal law entitled right to paid leave and the suggested amendment below does not address paid leave.

Elected officials **ARE** eligible for the following forms of compensation:

- Salary as set by the council including the same cost of living adjustment (COLA) provided that fiscal year to all non-sworn full-time city employees.
- Standard health, retirement, and other insurance benefits as offered to all non-sworn full-time city employees

Proposed Amendment:

Sandy 4-5-15 – Compensation limitations for Elected Officials (New Section)

- (a) Compensation for the mayor and council members shall be set annually in the staffing and compensation plan approved by the City Council in the annual budget.
 - (1) Any salary adjustment for the mayor or any member of the council shall not exceed the specific percentage increase authorized as a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for non-sworn, full-time city employees during the same fiscal period.*
 - (2) The mayor and council members shall be ineligible for merit pay adjustments, incentive pay, or any discretionary bonuses.*
 - (3) Under no circumstances shall elected officials receive vehicle allowances, phone allowances, or any other form of additional compensation.**
- (b) The mayor and each member of the council shall be eligible for all insurance programs and retirement benefits, including but not limited to health, dental, and life insurance, under the same terms and conditions provided to non-sworn full-time city employees.*

Note: this amendment would also require future adjustments to the standard language about elected official salaries that can be found in the annual budget document. It would also require the council to update its internal policies on council member compensation.