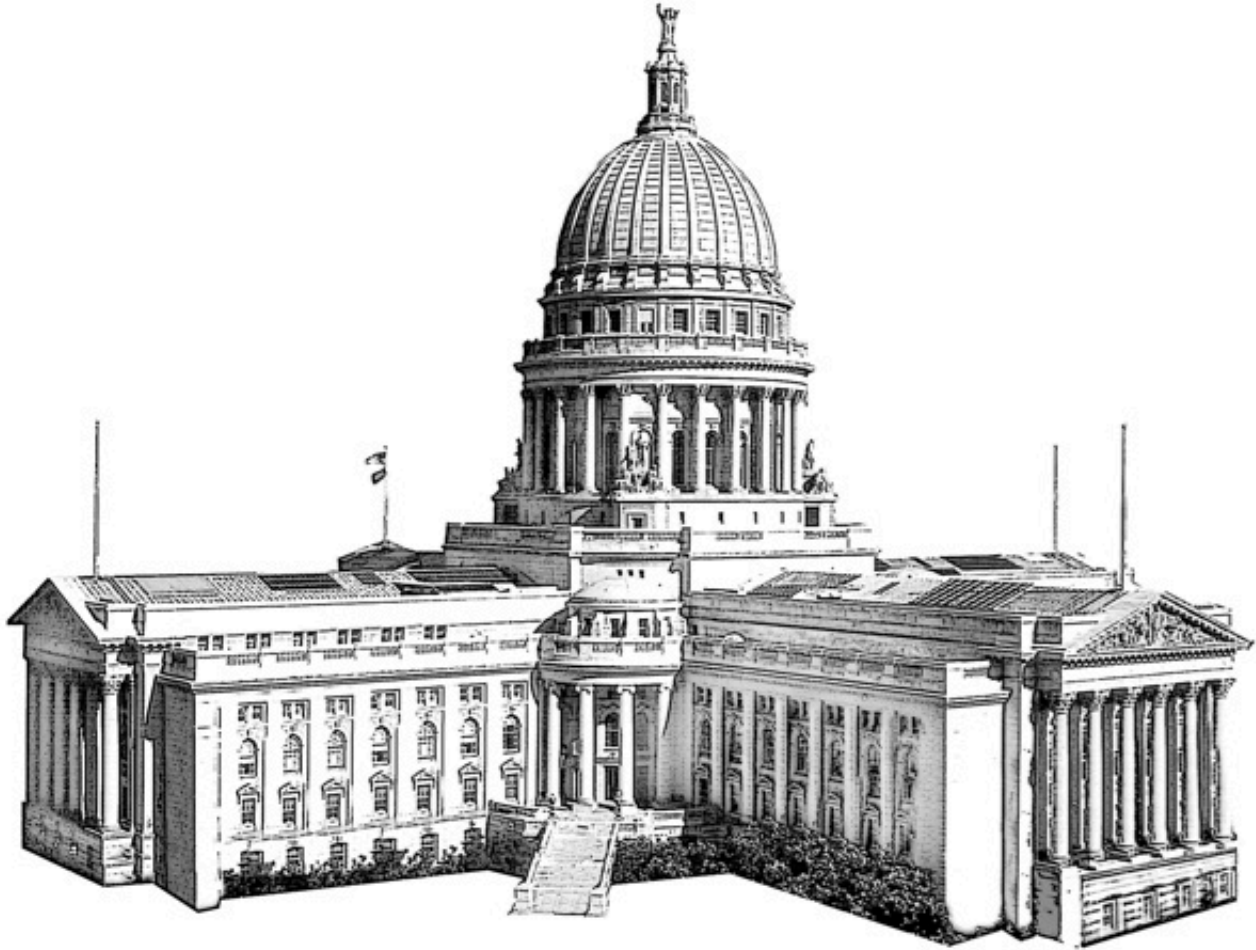


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ACE Newsletter

March 2023



Raised Minimum Rates (RMR) for State Employees

In our October 2022 newsletter (<https://acemployees.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/ace-newsletter-2022-10-05.pdf>) we described the action of the Division of Personnel Management (DPM) to raise the minimum salaries of a large number of class titles in non-broadband, non-professional pay ranges. Since then, we have received a number of questions about the fate of these Raised Minimum Rates (RMRs) since they are considered temporary in nature.

One reassuring fact about receiving a pay increase due to a RMR is that once an employee's wage is set by it, that amount becomes the employee's base wage and continues at that level even if the RMR expires. After expiration, new hires would get whatever minimum pay is specified in the Compensation Plan for the appropriate schedule and range.

Once an employee's base wage is set, the only way that it can be reduced involuntarily is through a disciplinary action resulting from serious misbehavior. This is clearly stated in s. 230.34 (1) (a) Wis. Stats.: "An employee with permanent status in class may be removed, suspended without pay, discharged, reduced in base pay, or demoted only for just cause."

The RMRs have an indefinite life span. Generally, they expire when changes in the labor market create a better recruiting situation for the State or when the Compensation Plan is updated to raise the standard pay range minimums to meet or exceed the raised minimum rate.

It is unusual for the State to establish as many RMRs as it did last Fall. The following table shows the number of titles (classifications) covered by raised minimums over the last five years. (The years from 2001 – 2017 had very few RMRs.)

Year	Titles
2018	6
2019	9
2020	19
2021	30
2022	279

The fact that the numbers of RMRs in the last four years have increased so rapidly is a testimonial to the problems the State has had in recruiting. On a positive note, at least it shows that the State is attempting to do something about it.

Wisconsin Department of Administration State Employee Handbook

The Department of Administration, under Governor Tony Evers, completed a State Employee Handbook to be provided to new state employees and for general use. This is separate from and written in a broader way than the Department of Personnel Management Human Resources Handbook meant for human resources professionals but often used by others to understand employee work rules.

In its introduction, the handbook observes that “state employees provide critical services to the people of the State of Wisconsin, including conservation, consumer protection, economic development, education, emergency management, health care, public health and safety, transportation, veterans’ services, and worker training. Every day, state employees strive to perform their jobs with professionalism and deep commitment to public service and the people of the State of Wisconsin.”

A useful diagram of state government organization, as a whole, is provided showing the equal but separate status of the legislature, executive branch, and judiciary in government operations. In addition to the Governor, the Wisconsin Constitution provides for the election of five other “constitutional officers”: Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Attorney General, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Currently, there are approximately 30 State of Wisconsin departments and independent agencies. There are also special committees, boards, commissions, and councils in the executive branch that have been created by statute or by the Governor that are designed to address specific issues.

Information about the civil service system includes a diagram of the regulatory framework of Wisconsin civil service laws and policy structures. It describes the role and function of administrative rules, public records, and open meetings.

The majority of the handbook provides a framework of general information and resources related to state employment. Information is provided on the various classes of employment. While the handbook covers work practices, work rules, policies, and expectations that apply to all State of Wisconsin employees, it is not intended to list all policies or to interpret how they might apply to individual situations. Additional work rules, practices, and expectations are established by each agency to address unique requirements of the agency or as circumstances require.

The entire State Employee Handbook can be found on the ACE Website at:

[State of Wisconsin State Employee Handbook \(pdf as of February 2023\)](#)

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