



## **Policy Statement**

This policy ensures that the evaluations of jobs in the public sector are undertaken using a standardised and uniform system approved by the Cook Islands Government.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all job descriptions for jobs across the Public Sector.

Exclusions are jobs for:

- Heads of Public Sector Agencies
- Independent Contractors
- Political Appointees

## **Principles**

The Public Service Act 2009 identifies the following values for public servants to adhere to:

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Honesty	acting honestly, being truthful, and abiding by the laws of the Cook Islands
Impartiality	providing impartial advice, acting without fear or favour, and making decisions on their merits
Service	serving the people well through faithful service to the Government of the Cook Islands
Respect	treating the people, the Government of the Cook Islands and colleagues with courtesy and respect
Transparency	taking actions and making decisions in an open and transparent manner
Accountability	being able to explain the reason for actions taken and taking responsibility for those actions
Efficiency and effectiveness	achieving good results for the Cook Islands in an economical way

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The duty to act as a good employer requires employers develop and implement personnel policies which ensure the fair and proper treatment of employees during employment, including the impartial recruitment of employees, employee capability development opportunities and good and safe working conditions.

## **Legislation and Regulations**

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Public Service Act 2009 and other relevant legislation.

## Definitions

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**Agency** means any public service department, instrument, or agent of the Government and includes a body corporate or organisation that is wholly owned or controlled by the Crown

**Contracted Employee** means an employee who works under contract for an Agency. The employee does not become a regular addition to the staff and is not considered a permanent employee. A contracted employee is hired for a specific job at a specific rate of pay

**Employee** means any person who is an employee of the Public Sector

**Employer** means the Public Service Commissioner and Heads of Public Sector Agencies or other agency or their delegated authority

**Independent Contractor** means an individual or firm engaged to provide services to an Agency with the Public Sector. The contractor is not a contracted employee

**Job** is a summary of key responsibilities which includes the general nature of work performed, the level of work performed, the knowledge, skills and attributes required to perform competently

**Job Description** is the document used to describe the job content, organisational context and specific competencies required to perform the job well and is used to determine the salary

**Job Evaluation** also referred to as job sizing is a systematic process for assessing a job

**Public Sector** includes Public Service Departments, Crown Agencies, Island Governments, State Owned Enterprises

**Public Service Commissioner** means the Public Service Commissioner appointed under Article 73 of the Constitution and Section 5 of the Public Service Act 2009

**Strategic Pay Limited** is a New Zealand based private company that owns the job evaluation system (SP10), used by the Cook Islands Government for the Public Service

## Procedures

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Employers are responsible for administering this policy along with the Office of the Public Service Commissioner. Employers are responsible for ensuring all policies are easily accessible to employees. Employees must read, understand, and comply with this and other relevant policies. A breach of the policy may be considered misconduct and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Accredited SP10 Job Evaluators are responsible for undertaking job evaluation in adherence to the SP10 Manuals provided by Strategic Pay Limited. Breaches of SP10 system quality control requirements may result in suspended use of the system.

## Job Evaluation

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Job evaluation is a systematic process for rationally assessing the 'size' of a job based on job content and context. Job evaluations enable internal relativities to be determined for each job.

### The Job Evaluation process is:

- Comparative – compares the sizes of jobs with one another and with a scale defined in the job related terms
- Systematic – a methodical approach is used to evaluate all job factors to enable sound judgement and minimise subjectivity. However interpreting facts and situations and applying the factor language still requires judgement which cannot completely eliminate bias.
- Analytical – relies on an analytical process of collecting information about jobs, analysing this and using this information to assess 10 job evaluation factors
- Structured – a framework of job factors for qualified job evaluators to make consistent judgements
- Job centred – allows qualified job evaluators to examine the content and context of the job

### Benefits of Job Evaluation

- Internal relativities - a process to equitably determine positions within the agency as set out in the SP10 framework
- Remuneration Framework – the total points of the job used to determine the salary band of employees
- Market Remuneration Comparison – the sizing of jobs enables comparisons across industries, sectors or job families through market surveys and other means
- Organisational Analysis – evaluating each job within an agency highlights staffing structures, job inter-dependence and relationships, and how jobs are organised for operational effectiveness e.g. relationships between managers and subordinates
- Succession Planning - while job evaluations focus on the job content, assessing the skills required for the job can also be used to assess suitable or potential candidates for a job
- Career Planning - the relative sizes of jobs, as determined in terms of bands, may be useful in mapping possible career paths across job disciplines

### Job Evaluation Factors

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The SP10 system evaluates jobs using ten job factors. Each factor is assessed and assigned a rating, with each level representing an additional degree of intensity. Each factor score ends up being expressed in an overall numeric score. Larger roles are expected to have higher points than smaller roles. The ten job factors evaluated are:

1. **Education** - the level of education necessary to perform the key functions of the job
2. **Experience** - the length of practical experience and nature of specialist or managerial familiarity required. This experience is in addition to knowledge in the education factor
3. **Complexity** is assessed in terms of:
  - The time taken to learn and adjust to the specific job requirements
  - The level to which job functions are defined and follow established and predictable patterns
  - The thinking challenge required to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances, and the innovative or conceptual thinking required to initiate new corporate directions

4. **Scope** – the breadth or scope of the job (i.e. span of influence within the agency)
5. **Problem Solving** – the nature and complexity of problem solving expected in the job. This considers judgement exercised, availability of rules and guidelines to assist in problem solving, the degree of analysis and research required, and the originality, ingenuity or initiative required to arrive at a solution
6. **Freedom to act** – the extent of supervision, direction or guidance imposed on the job holder and the freedom the jobholder has to take action
7. **Impact/Results of Decisions** – level of discretionary decision making delegated to the jobholder
8. **Interpersonal Skills** – the interpersonal skills required to deal with other personnel within the agency and external contacts
9. **Authorities** – authority levels expressed in terms of approving routine and capital expenditure, and recruiting and dismissing employees
10. **People Management** – the responsibility for the control and management of staff within the agency, including direct line management, project team management and other forms of supervision, direction, coordination or influence over other staff.

## **Job Descriptions**

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A well written job description should clarify the overall job purpose and work to be performed, linked to the broader purpose, vision, and outputs of the division and agency.

A job description should communicate:

- Why the job exists (i.e. its purpose)
- Where the job fits in the organisational staffing structure
- What the job holder is expected to achieve with key results and indicators
- Who the job holder will work with or relate to internally and externally (interpersonal skills)
- What combination of knowledge, experience, personal attributes and competencies the job holder needs to bring to the job

## **Role of Office of the Public Service Commissioner**

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Job evaluations measure the size of jobs within agencies linked to salary bands within the Cook Islands Government Remuneration framework. The Office of the Public Service Commissioner (OPSC) is responsible for administering this framework and supporting the job evaluation process by:

- Coordinating job evaluations to maintain SP10 quality control requirements
- Confirming the participation of accredited evaluators on Job Evaluation Committees (JECs)
- Ensuring job evaluators do not evaluate jobs from their own agency
- Confirming employer approval for job evaluator participation on JECs
- Managing any real or perceived conflicts of interest of job evaluators
- Keeping the identity of job evaluators on JECs confidential
- Maintaining a sufficient pool of SP10 accredited job evaluators

## **Job Evaluation Procedures**

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### **Before Job Evaluations are conducted, OPSC must ensure:**

- Job description must be on the SP10 job description template and approved by the employer before submitting for evaluation.
- A Job Evaluation Committee has a quorum of four (4) members
- Job descriptions are reviewed and queries, and responses are completed between OPSC and the Agency

### **During Job Evaluations, OPSC will:**

- Provide secretariat services for the JEC
- Facilitate other queries and responses between the JEC and agency
- Provide clarification on standards in the SP10 Job Evaluation Manual to the JEC
- Ensure the JEC reaches a unanimous decision on an overall rating for each job evaluated

### **After Job Evaluations are conducted, OPSC will**

- Provide formal notification to the employer of the job evaluation result
- Respond to employer queries on the job evaluation result

### **Appeals**

An employer may request one review of a decision made by the JEC and provide sound rationale for the request. The rationale must be linked to the process and decisions made in relation to the evaluation of that job or the factors identified in this policy. Changing any factor for the same job and resubmitting for further consideration will not be considered an appeal.

OPSC will consider the merits of the request and if approved, will organise a different JEC to conduct another job evaluation using the process outlined above.

The evaluation result from the second JEC will be final and will not be subject to further review.

## **Employer Obligations**

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Employers must:

- Ensure use of the government approved SP10 job description template
- Approve completed employee job descriptions
- Ensure all agency job descriptions are evaluated using the government approved SP10 system
- Ensure evaluated jobs are included on the organisational staffing structure
- Support accredited job evaluators within their agency to maintain their SP10 accreditation
- Release accredited job evaluators to conduct job evaluations coordinated by OPSC
- Respond to queries raised by the JEC relating to job evaluations in a timely manner
- Not harass job evaluators for their participation on job evaluation committees

## **Rules for Job Evaluators**

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The job evaluation process is designed to impartially determine the needs of jobs within an agency, through its staffing structure, job interdependence and relationships.

Rules to be followed when evaluating any job are:

- The current job must be evaluated without being influenced by what the job is likely to be in the future or what it may have been in the past
- The assessment of each factor is based upon the job being performed competently. The assessment of the jobholder's own performance is a separate exercise and should not be confused with the "job evaluation" score
- The job must be evaluated as described in the job description and documentation provided. If there are doubts about the accuracy of the information, this should be raised with the jobholder or manager. Responses from any queries directed to the jobholder should always be confirmed by the manager.

## **Other Provisions**

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All records relating to the job evaluation process must be kept for seven years and only accessible by the employer and/or authorised staff. After the seven year period, the agency may destroy the documentation in adherence with government official information management policies.

The Office of the Public Service Commissioner is responsible for reviewing and/or updating this policy and associated documents as the need arises.

## **Associated Documents**

Organisational Staffing Structure Policy  
Code of Conduct Policy  
Remuneration Policy

## **Other information**

For policy queries contact the Office of the Public Service Commissioner on phone (682) 29421 or email: [pscinfo@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:pscinfo@cookislands.gov.ck)