

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY EMPLOYEE POSITIONS AND COMPENSATION

This memorandum provides information on the number of employee positions during the 1995 and 1997 legislative sessions and proposes the number of employee positions during the 1999 session, and also provides information on employee compensation during the 1997 session and proposes compensation levels for the 1999 session. This memorandum was prepared in response to a request for identification of the impact of computerization of both houses and the impact resulting from the creation of a generic "legislative assistant" position in 1997 to replace the positions of assistant sergeant-at-arms, desk page, page and bill book clerk, telephone attendant, telephone page, information desk attendant, bill room clerk, journal room clerk, and parking lot attendant. The purpose of the legislative assistant position is to allow employees in positions not requiring substantial technical skills to be transferred to other work assignments as needed.

PROPOSED AREAS OF CONSIDERATION

This portion of the memorandum suggests areas for consideration of whether current Legislative Assembly employee positions are appropriate for duties assigned to those positions. Each area is listed, followed by the rationale for consideration:

1. **Review the number of assistant sergeants-at-arms in the Senate and in the House.** The sergeant-at-arms is responsible for maintaining order in the chamber. The deputy sergeant-at-arms is responsible for delivering messages to the other house. The assistant sergeants-at-arms sort and deliver mail to members and assist where needed. Each house has a sergeant-at-arms and one deputy sergeant-at-arms. The Senate has two assistant sergeants-at-arms and the House has three. During the 1997 session, the Senate employed two assistant sergeants-at-arms and the supply room coordinator. Rather than employing an "additional" sergeant-at-arms (the supply room coordinator position originally came from the assistant sergeants-at-arms) in 1997, the coordinator came from one of the three Senate assistant sergeants-at-arms. Under the rationale used in 1997, the House may wish to consider reducing its number of assistant sergeants-at-arms from three to two in 1999 because it will be the House's responsibility to provide the supply room coordinator. The Senate may wish to consider reducing the number of Senate assistant sergeants-at-arms from two to one.

As described under subsection 2, this will leave seven employees available for tasks during the floor session.

Estimated savings from reducing the number of assistant sergeants-at-arms from five to three is \$8,120.

2. **Review the number of pages and bill book clerks in the Senate and in the House.** The page and bill book clerks maintain the bill books and journals for members without personal computers. The Senate has three page and bill book clerks and the House has six. The number of legislators with personal computers will increase from 75 in both houses in 1997 to most members in each house in 1999 (an estimated 43 of 49 Senate members and 90 of 98 House members). During the 1997 session, each page and bill book clerk was responsible for eight bill books in the Senate and eight bill books in the House. If legislators with personal computers do not have bill books, there will be six bill books in the Senate and eight bill books in the House. Another duty of page and bill book clerks is to deliver messages for members. Each member now has a telephone on the floor. During the 1995 session, 20 of 54 desks in the Senate chamber and 41 of 108 desks in the House chamber did not have a telephone. If the number of page and bill book clerks is tied to the number of bill books needed to be maintained, the Senate may wish to consider reducing the number of page and bill book clerks from three to two and the House may wish to consider reducing the number of page and bill book clerks from six to three. Applying the same formula for 1999 results in two Senate page and bill book clerks being able to maintain 16 bill books and three House page and bill book clerks being able to maintain 24 bill books. The number of bill books to be maintained could increase if the decision is made to have extra bill books on the floor available for reference by members who have personal computers.

If the Senate and House reduce the number of assistant sergeants-at-arms from five to three and the number of page and bill book clerks from nine to five, the Senate will have the sergeant-at-arms, one deputy sergeant-at-arms, one assistant sergeant-at-arms, the chief page and bill book clerk, two page and bill book clerks, and one desk

page (seven employees) available during floor sessions. The House will have the sergeant-at-arms, one deputy sergeant-at-arms, two assistant sergeants-at-arms, the chief page and bill book clerk, three page and bill book clerks, and one desk page (nine employees) available during floor sessions.

Estimated savings from reducing the number of page and bill book clerks from nine to five is \$16,240.

3. **Review the need for parking lot attendants.** The parking lot is maintained by Facility Management Division personnel. Signs at the ends of the lot notify unauthorized personnel that the parking spaces are reserved for legislators. Most legislators arrive at similar times, and during floor sessions and committee hearings, there is little movement in the lot. If the number of parking lot attendants were reduced from two to one, the parking lot attendant could alternate between the houses from session to session. If this position were a House employee position in 1999, there would be two alternating positions in each house.

Estimated savings from reducing the number of parking lot attendants from two to one is \$4,002.

4. **Review the number of telephone attendants.** The number of WATS line calls has gone down from 62,320 in 1993 to 31,541 in 1997 even if the number of fax messages is included in total "calls" received. Even if the

length of calls has increased due to the additional information needed to complete messages for the LAWS system, use of voice mail to leave messages will result in a more even distribution of workload throughout the week. During the 1999 session, information on the number of incomplete calls (or calls on hold) can be compiled, and these figures can be reviewed during the 1999-2000 interim to determine if the number of attendants can be further reduced without substantially impairing the quality of service. The number of needed telephone attendants could be affected by decisions concerning the type of service to be provided, such as whether recorded messages can be left at night requiring transcription the next morning.

Estimated savings from reducing the number of telephone attendants from eight to seven is \$4,060. The reduction could be from the house that employs the chief telephone attendant.

The total estimated savings of \$32,422 is based on the 1997 compensation of \$58 per day for 69 legislative days and one training day for all positions except the parking lot attendant. The estimates do not include savings resulting from reduced workers' compensation and Social Security contributions.

The following table lists employment positions during the 1993, 1995, and 1997 legislative sessions and proposed employment positions for the 1999 legislative session:

EMPLOYMENT POSITIONS - 1993-99 SESSIONS								
Employee Position	Number of Employees 1993		Number of Employees 1995		Number of Employees 1997		Proposed Number of Employees 1999	
	Session Senate/ House	Total	Session Senate/ House	Total	Session Senate/ House	Total	Session Senate/ House	Total
Secretary of the Senate/Chief Clerk	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Assistant secretary of the Senate/assistant chief clerk	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Desk reporter	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Bill clerk	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Sergeant-at-arms	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Secretary to the Speaker	0/1	1	0/1	1	0/1	1	0/1	1
Secretary to the majority leader	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Staff assistant to the majority leader	1/1	2	1/2 ¹	3	1/2 ²	3	2/2	4
Secretary to the minority leader	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Staff assistant to the minority leader	1/1	2	2/2 ¹	4	2/2	4	2/2	4
Chief stenographer and payroll clerk	1/1	2	0/0	0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Payroll clerk ³	0/0	0	1/0	1	0/1	1	1/0	1
Stenographer	4/5	9	0/0	0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Typist	0/2	2	0/0	0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Chief committee clerk	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Appropriations Committee clerk	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Assistant Appropriations Committee clerk	1/3	4	1/3	4	1/3	4	1/3	4
Committee clerk	10/10	20	10/9 ⁴	19	10/10	20	10/10	20
Assistant committee clerk	1/1	2	1/2 ⁴	3	1/2	3	1/2	3
Deputy sergeant-at-arms	2/1	3	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Assistant sergeant-at-arms	3/7	10	3/3	6	2/3	5	1/2	3

EMPLOYMENT POSITIONS - 1993-99 SESSIONS								
Employee Position	Number of Employees 1993		Number of Employees 1995		Number of Employees 1997		Proposed Number of Employees 1999	
	Session Senate/ House	Total	Session Senate/ House	Total	Session Senate/ House	Total	Session Senate/ House	Total
Supply room coordinator ⁵	1/0	1	0/1	1	1/0	1	0/1	1
Chief page and bill book clerk	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Desk page	1/3	4	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Journal page	1/1	2	0/0	0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Calendar clerk	0/0	0	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Page and bill book clerk	8/17	25	5/9	14	3/6	9	2/3	5
Chief telephone attendant ⁶	0/1	1	1/0	1	0/1	1	1/0	1
Telephone attendant	4/3	7	4/4	8	4/4	8	3/4	7
Telephone page	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Information desk attendant	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2
Chief bill and journal room clerk ⁷	1/0	1	0/1	1	0/0	0	0/0	0
Bill room clerk	4/4	8	3/3	6	0/0	0	0/0	0
Journal room clerk	2/2	4	3/2	5	0/0	0	0/0	0
Parking lot attendant	1/1	2	1/1	2	1/1	2	0/1	1
Total	59/77	136	51/58	109	41/51	92	39/46	85

¹ Reflects addition of one staff assistant for each leader, as recommended by the Legislative Management Committee during the 1993-94 interim, rather than assignment of a legislative interim to each caucus.

² Although a total of four staff assistant positions were authorized, the majority leaders employed three staff assistants (recorded in the total as one Senate and two House) and reallocated pay for four positions during the 1997 legislative session.

³ The payroll clerk is a part-time position that alternates between the Senate and House from session to session.

⁴ In 1995 the House assigned its chief committee clerk to a committee, rather than employing 10 committee clerks, and increased the number of assistant committee clerks, from one to two.

⁵ The supply room coordinator is one of three positions that alternates between the House and Senate from session to session.

⁶ The chief telephone attendant is one of three positions that alternate between the Senate and House from session to session.

⁷ The chief bill and journal room clerk used to alternate between the House and Senate, but the position was abolished in 1997 when bill and journal room services were provided under contract with a private party.

SESSION EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

The most recent general increase in legislative session employee compensation was in 1991. In 1995, committee clerk compensation was revised. Generally, committee clerk compensation was increased by \$2 per day, but the compensation of assistant Appropriations Committee clerks and three-day committee clerks was increased by \$6 per day—establishing a three-tier structure, with \$4 per day separating each tier (Appropriations Committee clerk, assistant appropriations committee clerks and three-day committee clerks, and two-day committee clerks).

A number of employee responsibilities increasingly have become converted from manual to computerized procedures. The position that most reflects this continual computerization is that of committee clerk. Committee hearing schedules have progressed from chalkboards, to typewriters, to the computerized committee hearing system. Committee reports are now entered in the committee report hearing system and transmitted directly to the desk reporter for

inclusion in the journal. Amendments are prepared on the computerized amendment system rather than by typewriters. All of these changes require training on the various computer systems involved. The telephone attendants and information desk attendants also require training in the bill status system (to answer inquiries) and the LAWS system (so messages can be included in that system).

The following table illustrates the effect of a seven percent across the board pay increase, rounded to the nearest dollar, for all positions. A seven percent increase results in compensation ranging from \$7.75 to \$12.75 per hour. In addition, a skills recognition adjustment is provided for certain legislative session employees to recognize supervisory, technical, and communication skills. The skills recognition adjustments range from an additional \$1 to \$11 per day. As a result of this additional adjustment, compensation would range from \$62 to \$102 per day.

Proposed Number of Employees	Position	Salary Per Position			
		1997 Daily Salary	Seven Percent Increase	Skills Recognition Adjustment	1999 Daily Salary
2	Secretary of the Senate/Chief Clerk	\$95	\$6.65		\$102

2	Assistant secretary of the Senate/Assistant chief clerk	\$80	\$5.60		\$86
2	Desk reporter	\$89	\$6.23	\$1	\$96
2	Bill clerk	\$74	\$5.18	\$1	\$80
2	Sergeant-at-arms	\$74	\$5.18	\$1	\$80
1	Secretary to the Speaker	\$74	\$5.18	\$1	\$80
2	Secretary to the majority leader	\$80	\$5.60	\$8	\$94
4	Staff assistant to the majority leader	\$74	\$5.18	\$1	\$80
2	Secretary to the minority leader	\$80	\$5.60	\$8	\$94
4	Staff assistant to the minority leader	\$74	\$5.18	\$1	\$80
1	Payroll clerk	\$70	\$4.90	\$1	\$76
2	Chief committee clerk	\$78	\$5.46	\$11	\$94
2	Appropriations Committee clerk	\$78	\$5.46	\$11	\$94
4	Assistant Appropriations Committee clerk	\$74	\$5.18	\$11	\$90
10	Committee clerk - three day	\$74	\$5.18	\$11	\$90
10	Committee clerk - two day	\$70	\$4.90	\$9	\$84
3	Assistant committee clerk	\$62	\$4.34	\$8	\$74
2	Deputy sergeant-at-arms	\$62	\$4.34		\$66
3	Assistant sergeant-at-arms	\$58	\$4.06		\$62
1	Supply room coordinator	\$58	\$4.06		\$62
2	Chief page and bill book clerk	\$68	\$4.76		\$73
2	Desk page	\$58	\$4.06		\$62
2	Calendar clerk	\$74	\$5.18	\$1	\$80
5	Page and bill room clerk	\$58	\$4.06		\$62
1	Chief telephone attendant	\$68	\$4.76	\$3	\$76
7	Telephone attendant	\$58	\$4.06	\$2	\$64
2	Telephone page	\$58	\$4.06		\$62
2	Information desk attendant	\$58	\$4.06	\$2	\$64
1	Parking lot attendant	\$58	\$4.06		\$62
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The 1997 concurrent resolution setting compensation levels also provided for additional compensation of \$1 per day per session worked, up to a maximum of \$10 per day. During the 1997 session, one Senate employee received an additional \$8 per day and one received an additional \$7 per day. The remaining Senate employees received from \$0 to \$4 per day. Four House employees received an additional \$10 per day, one received an additional \$8 per day, and two received an additional \$7 per day. The remaining House employees received from \$0 to \$6 per day.

North Dakota Century Code Section 54-03-10 requires the compensation of Legislative Assembly employees to be set by concurrent resolution. In 1997 the concurrent resolution establishing employee positions did not include specific names or identify specific individuals. This avoided special action to hire an employee after adoption of the resolution. By designating positions, rather than naming employees, a report by an Employment Committee that names an employee is sufficient to identify that employee, the

position, and the compensation level. The concurrent resolution establishing employee positions has also authorized the Employment Committees to convert full-time positions to part-time positions, as appropriate; and has provided for a generic position of "legislative assistant" for employees not requiring technical skills so those employees may be transferred to work assignments as needed. The legislative assistant position covers positions formerly classified as assistant sergeant-at-arms, supply room coordinator, desk page, page and bill book clerk, telephone page, and parking lot attendant. Telephone attendants and information desk attendants are not included in the definition of legislative assistant due to a compensation level above the "entry" level of legislative assistants.

The estimated cost of the compensation adjustments, as proposed, is \$788 per day which totals \$54,372 for 69 legislative days, not including Social Security and workers' compensation contributions.