

# NEW CASTLE COUNTY

## PERSONNEL POLICY

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<b>DATE</b>	11/20/20

**SUBJECT:** LOCAL 1607 BILINGUAL BONUS

**APPROVED:**

*Josephine A. Gallo, Ed.D.*

**OBJECTIVE:** To set forth the guidelines for language proficiency testing and bonus payment for Union members in order to ensure compliance with the 1607 Contract language (84b) which stipulates a bonus to be paid members of the bargaining unit who use another language in the course of their duties.

**STATEMENT:** The County recognizes the importance of having members of the bargaining unit that are able to effectively communicate with the public. In order to recognize and compensate members of the bargaining unit who have the ability to converse in multiple languages and use the skill in the course of their duties with the public, the County shall pay a bonus to members of the bargaining unit who successfully pass a language proficiency test.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. The Office of Human Resources shall determine the language(s) for which the bilingual bonus is allowable. The determination may be based upon a review of the translation and interpretation needs from calls received by the Office of Human Resources. Members of the bargaining unit may request to have languages included by submitting a memorandum outlining a substantiated need for the requested language(s). The memorandum must be submitted to the Office of Human Resources no later than December 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.
2. By January 10th of each year, the President of Local 1607 shall provide to the Office of Human Resources a list of the union members who request to participate in a language proficiency test to be eligible for a bilingual bonus. The Office of Human Resources will coordinate the annual proficiency tests with the selected vendor during non-working hours. Make-up examinations will only be scheduled in cases of emergency as determined by the Chief Human Resources Officer.
3. Employees who achieve a rating of Independent Use (B1) according to the Common European Framework Reference Levels which is an acceptable level of proficiency shall be eligible for the bilingual bonus incentive and shall be required to re-test annually until they achieve the rating of Independent User (B2) or above.
4. Employees who achieve a preferred rating of Independent User (B2) or above shall be eligible for the bilingual bonus incentive and shall not be required to participate in future proficiency testing.
5. Employees will be notified in writing within five (5) business days after the last proficiency test date of the proficiency level achieved on the test. Local 1607 and the Payroll Division will receive notification by the Office of Human Resources of the individuals entitled to the bilingual bonus so that payment can be made within sixty (60) days of the employee's successful completion of the language proficiency test.
6. A list of employees who have the ability to converse in multiple languages and have received a bonus to use the language skill in the course of their work shall be made available to the Office of Finance – Payroll Division, Office of Human Resources, Local 1607 and the Executive Office.
7. Employees who accept the bilingual bonus incentive shall submit a monthly log to their General Manager, which demonstrates continued use of the language during their course of duty. The Office of Human Resources shall provide departments with Translation Logs. The data provided on the logs submitted shall be used to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of the bonuses being paid. The GM will provide the Office of Human Resources with a list of members of the bargaining unit who submitted a log so that the employees may be included in the following years' list of individuals eligible for subsequent bilingual bonus payments to the Office of Finance – Payroll Division for payment. *Individuals receiving (B1) ratings will be required to recertify.*

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**APPROVED:**

*Josephine A. Johnson, Ed.D.*

8. Employees who accept a bonus for their bilingual ability are expected to be readily available to translate and interpret conversations for the public and their fellow employees when called upon in the course of their duties. Failure to do so can result in reasonable disciplinary action, including non-consideration for future bilingual bonus incentives.

9. The Department of Human Resources shall provide each department with an annual listing of all 1607 employees participating in the New Castle County bilingual bonus program. Management should utilize the individuals on the annual log except in emergencies or necessity.

**REQUIRED ACTION:** The Office of Human Resources and the President of Local 1607 are responsible for the implementation of and compliance with this policy.

Established: 11/20/20