

PERSONAL SERVICES QUESTIONS – 2007 SESSION

RESPONSES FOR THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, AGENCY 11040 January 23, 2007

1. Has the agency implemented a broad band pay plan, agency-wide or for selected jobs? If so, when was it implemented and what were the estimated cost increases in the year of implementation? How were these costs funded (by holding vacant positions open, appropriations for other purposes that were unexpended, etc)?

The Legislative Branch implemented a broadband pay plan effective June 24, 2006. The fiscal year 2007 estimated cost was \$426,981. The branch maximized vacancy savings by hiring at entry, delaying recruiting, and paying termination payouts from alternate funds. The branch's biennial appropriations were the key to sufficient funding and allowed the branch to apply both years' savings to second year expenditures.

2. At what percentage of market are new employees paid? How do employees progress to the market rate for their position? What is the agency's target percent of market? What is the agency average percent of market in FY 2006?

Generally, new employees, hired at entry level, are paid 80% of the market for the occupational wage range. Employees may progress with statutory increases (where the employee's salary is increased but the market of the occupational wage range does not change), promotions, or performance-based increases. Based on the results of a market analysis, audit positions are hired at a salary of 104% of the market for an Auditor I.

The agency's target percent of market is 100%; the average percent of market in fiscal year 2007 is 96%.

3. Did the agency have vacant positions for a significant portion (6 months or more) of FY 2006? If yes, how many and why were these vacant? How did the vacancies impact agency operations?

Legislative Services Division – The division experienced three vacancies during fiscal year 2006, one of which was vacant for more than six months. The position was initially recruited and offered but refused because of salary level. The position remained vacant while other options were considered; unit workload was reprioritized based on available staff resources.

Legislative Audit Division – The division experienced staff turnover in six positions during fiscal year 2006. Three staff members retired, two relocated from Helena, and one left for other reasons. Three of the vacated positions remained open for six months or longer. The division typically hires June graduates and offers audit internships.

Legislative Fiscal Division – One position was vacated near the end of fiscal year 2006 but was not open for more than six months.

4. Did the agency have authorized pay exceptions for pay plan 60 positions? If yes, why?

Not applicable—no pay plan 60 positions.

5. Did the agency have authorized position upgrades or downgrades for pay plan 60 positions? If yes, why?

Not applicable—no pay plan 60 positions.

6. What challenges does the agency face in recruiting and retaining staff? What actions has the agency taken to address recruitment and retention issues? Is the agency competing with other state agencies or the public sector for staff?

The branch faces issues related to market competitiveness, extended work hours, a lack of control over workload, and limited recruitment budgets.

To address market competitiveness, the branch implemented a pay plan in fiscal year 2006 where occupational wage ranges contain a market component updated every two years with market survey data. In addition, the pay plan includes a pay-for-performance component. While new hires are generally placed at entry (80% of market), a hire may be made at greater than entry level when circumstances are documented.

Extended work hours related to legislative sessions are expected of most branch employees. However, where extended work hours relate to lack of staff control over workload imposed by legislators, division management has opened discussions and obtained guidance from oversight committees.

Depending on the position being recruited, the Legislative Branch competes with other state agencies and with the public sector, and on a national level. To educate potential applicants about employment opportunities with the Legislative Branch, the branch participates in career fairs and advertises at colleges both inside and outside Montana.

7. Are agency staff members represented by collective bargaining units? How many of the agency staff are impacted by collective bargaining unit agreements? What provisions are included in bargaining unit agreements? How often are these agreements negotiated?

Legislative Branch staff members are not represented by collective bargaining units.

**Legislative Branch
2009 Biennium Budget
Elements of Change
Personal services excluding HB 447
1/22/2007 18:06**

Increase in addition to HB447 as identified for the subcommittee **\$362,302** **\$162,351** **\$265,608**

Impact of personal services changes from 7/1/04 to 6/30/06, annualized:

	Legislative Audit Division (LAD)	# of staff	Legislative Fiscal Division (LFD)	# of staff	Legislative Services Division (LSD)	# of staff
1. HB 13 25-cent increases, incorrectly identified in SABHRS	\$25,317	47	\$9,652	18	\$26,559	49
2. Market adjustments under pay plan in effect through May 2006	\$86,334	38	\$6,209	6	\$19,747	20
3. Implementation of Leg Branch Broadband Pay Plan in June 2006	\$3,974	5	\$85,059	16	\$180,063	37
4. Merit increases	\$56,009	37	\$6,105	2	\$0	0
5. End of training assignment	\$4,807	1	\$0	0	\$0	0

Total each fiscal year **\$176,441** **\$107,025** **\$226,369**

Biennial total **\$352,882** **\$214,050** **\$452,738**