



Board of Retirement Regular Meeting

Sacramento County Employees' Retirement System

Agenda Item 19

MEETING DATE: October 19, 2022

SUBJECT: Compensation Study

SUBMITTED FOR: ___ Consent X **Deliberation and Action** ___ **Receive and File**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board take the following actions:

1. Adopt the findings and recommendations of the 2022 Ralph Anderson & Associates Unrepresented Management Compensation Survey;
2. Adopt the recommended amendments to the Compensation Policy; and,
3. Direct the Chief Executive Officer to pursue approval of the recommended salary adjustments through the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors.

PURPOSE

This item complies with the SCERS' Compensation Policy (Policy) to conduct a compensation study every three years. The prior compensation study resulted in updated salary scales for the executive team that the Board of Supervisors approved in February 2019. This item also reflects the Strategic Management Plan goal to support a high-performance workforce.

DISCUSSION

Earlier this year, SCERS retained Ralph Andersen & Associates to conduct an analysis of the SCERS' unrepresented management "executive team," which include the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Investment Officer, General Counsel, Assistant Retirement Administrator-Operations (Chief Operations Officer), Assistant Retirement Administrator-Operations (Chief Benefits Officer), Assistant Retirement Administrator-Investments (Deputy Chief Investment Officer), and Assistant Retirement Administrator-Enterprise (Chief Strategy Officer). The results of the study compared the overall compensation packages of seven similarly situated public employee retirement systems identified in the Policy. The study is anchored by market position equal to the median or 50th percentile of the peer group.

The Policy provides a consistent framework for SCERS to conduct market comparisons and make compensation decisions, which helps assure that the compensation structure is addressed on a regular basis. Specific policy objectives include:

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- Ensure that SCERS has the ability to recruit and retain well-qualified employees;
 - Provide a defensible and rational basis for compensating employees;
 - Allow flexibility for making compensation decisions based on changing market conditions;
 - Recognize SCERS' responsibility as a public entity in establishing a compensation plan that is consistent with public practices; and,
 - Ensure that SCERS' compensation practices are competitive and consistent with those of comparable employers.

The Policy only applies to the civil service-exempt, unrepresented management positions for which the Retirement Board has established the job duties and compensation, which is then implemented through a salary resolution adopted by the County Board of Supervisors.

In accordance with the Policy (adopted in 2017), Staff retained a compensation consultant, Ralph Andersen & Associates, to conduct a compensation analysis of the unrepresented management salaries. Doug Johnson, Vice President of Ralph Andersen & Associates will present the results of the compensation study to assist the Board in comparing SCERS' unrepresented management staffs' compensation to the market median, and further serve as the basis for the Board to adjust compensation as it deems necessary.

Results: The results of the compensation analysis show that salary ranges for the executive team are 11.8% below median on average, and have a range of 6.8% to 18.4% below the market median of comparable employers—which, under some market conditions, could be a significant limiting factor in recruiting highly-qualified candidates and retaining incumbents.

Proposed Amendments to Compensation Policy

Pursuant to SCERS' practice of reviewing and refreshing policies approximately every three years, Staff has re-evaluated the Policy in light of practical experience and considered whether any amendments are necessary. In consultation with Ralph Andersen & Associates, Staff recommends the Board approve the following updates:

1. De-link the internal salary relationships among the Assistant Retirement Administrators to more accurately reflect market-driven data unique to each position and as reflected by the peer group. The original policy tied several of these classifications together.
2. Clarify the Board's intent for the executive management team to receive the same benefits package and cost-of-living adjustments as the County Unrepresented Management Unit (050), which conforms to existing practice. The current policy references this relationship but the phrasing could use more specificity.

Fiscal Impact

Assuming the salary adjustments are approved and would take effect on or about January 1, 2023, the aggregate cost would be \$107,000 for the remainder of the 2022-23 fiscal year, which can be absorbed in the SCERS operating budget.

ATTACHMENTS

- Board Order
- SCERS Unrepresented Management Compensation Survey 2022, Doug Johnson, Vice President, Ralph Anderson & Associates
- Proposed SCERS Compensation Policy – Redline Version
- Proposed SCERS Compensation Policy – Clean Version

Prepared by:

/S/

Margo Allen
Chief Operations Officer

Reviewed by:

/S/

Eric Stern
Chief Executive Officer



Retirement Board Order

Sacramento County Employees' Retirement System

Before the Board of Retirement
October 19, 2022

AGENDA ITEM:

Compensation Study

THE BOARD OF RETIREMENT hereby accepts the recommendation of Staff to (1) adopt the findings and recommendations of the 2022 Ralph Anderson & Associates Unrepresented Management Compensation Salary; (2) adopt the recommended amendments to the Compensation Policy; and (3) direct the Chief Executive Officer to pursue approval of the recommended salary adjustments through the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors as follows:

- a. Adjust salary range for Retirement Administrator (Chief Executive Officer) by 8.4%
- b. Adjust salary range for Chief Investment Officer – Retirement by 18.4%;
- c. Adjust salary range for Retirement General Counsel by 13.5%;
- d. Adjust salary range for Assistant Retirement Administrator – Operations (Chief Operations Officer) by 6.8%
- e. Set salary range for Assistant Retirement Administrator – Investments (Deputy Chief Investment Officer) 15% below Chief Investment Officer

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the above order was passed and adopted on October 19, 2022 by the following vote of the Board of Retirement, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

ALTERNATES:

(Present but not voting)

Keith DeVore
Board President

Eric Stern
Chief Executive Officer and
Board Secretary

SCERS

Unrepresented Management Compensation Survey 2022

Doug Johnson, Vice President

Ralph Andersen & Associates

Objectives of Market Surveys

- Retain and attract highly qualified employees
 - Keep turnover rates low
 - Maintain optimal, efficient workforce
 - Retain key skill sets
- Offer an overall compensation package which is at or above the industry market
 - Typically, 50th to 75th percentile
- Establish fair and equitable salary levels
- Ensure that salary and benefit decisions are data based

Why Market Surveys

Compensation surveys are a necessary part of assessing and updating an organization's compensation plan.

- Anticipate and understand what the labor market is doing
- Survey data **informs decision makers** and provides data-driven framework for allocating resources to wages and benefits
- Provide defensibility and public accountability for employee compensation
- **Optimize the ability to recruit and retain employees**

Public and Private employers both use market data to assess compensation; just a difference in accessibility and transparency of data.

Survey Agencies

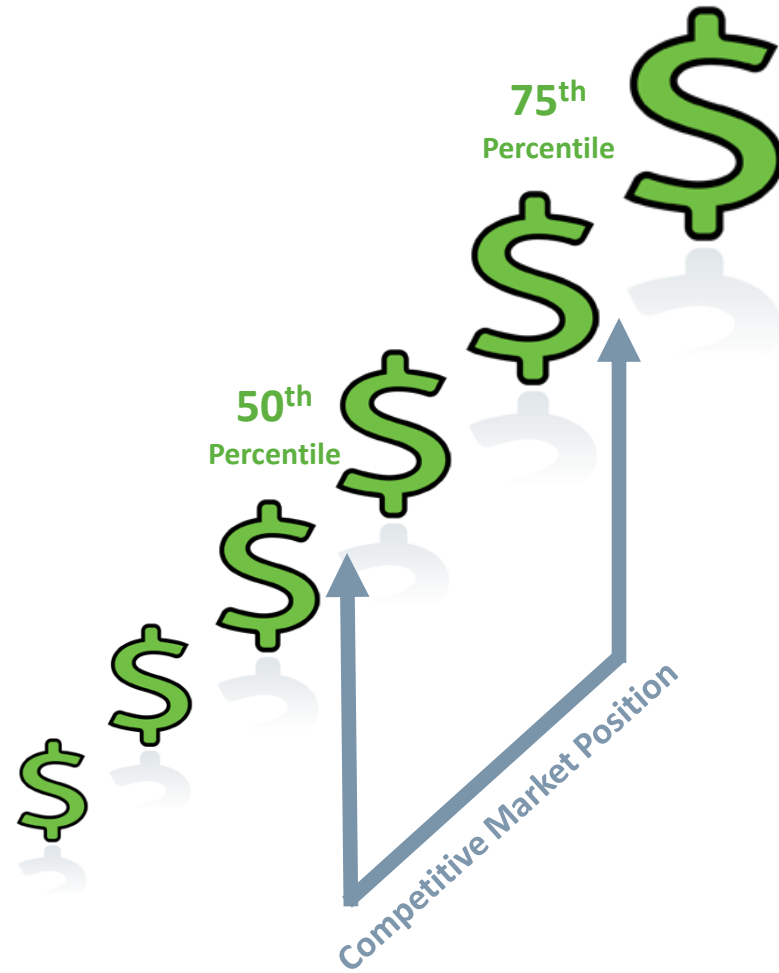
- Based on SCERS compensation policy
- Seven agencies of a similar size
- Higher and lower cost-of-living areas
- Additional reporting of PERS and STRS (informational only)

Agency	Assets	Members	ERI COL	ERI Wage
Sacramento County ERS	\$12.6 Bil	29,605	100.0	100.0
Kern County ERA	\$5.7 Bil	21,424	85.7	97.8
Contra Costa County ERA	\$12.1 Bil	24,115	104.0	109.7
Fresno County ERA	\$6.6 Bil	19,923	83.4	95.8
Alameda County ERA	\$11.8 Bil	25,010	135.4	111.2
San Bernardino County ERA	\$13.6 Bil	44,000	89.0	98.3
San Diego City ERS	\$11.2 Bil	20,724	133.8	100.7
Ventura County ERA	\$7.8 Bil	19,733	110.5	100.2

Source: 2021 Financial Reports; 2022 Economic Research Institute

Market Position

- Establishes competitive position
- Can vary based on recruiting issues
- Anchoring point for a pay range
- Historical practices and ability to pay may need to be considered



Compensation Data Usage

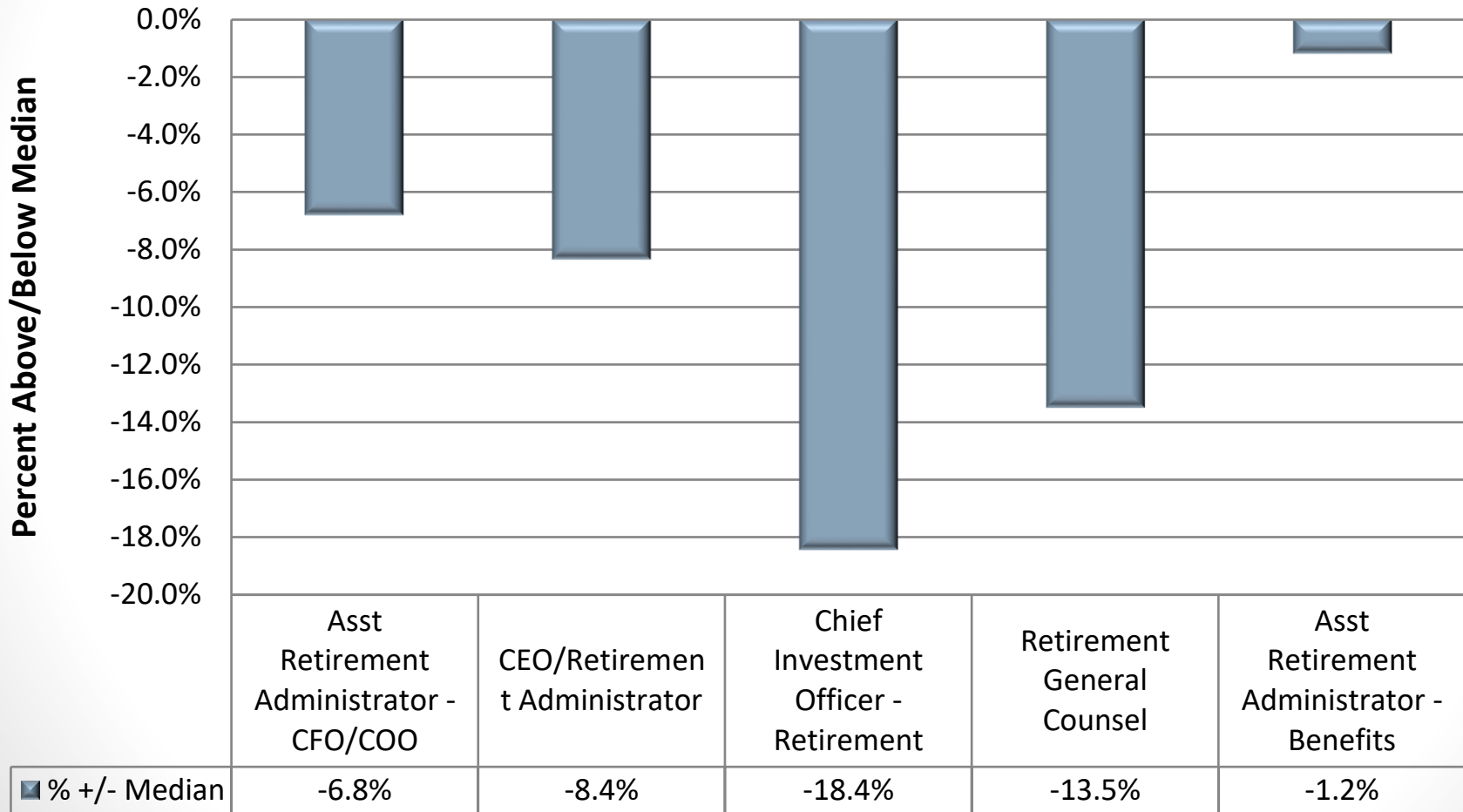
- Seven CA retirement systems
- Market position equal to the median (50th percentile)
- No adjustment for market location
 - Seven survey agencies represent a balanced view of the market with higher, lower, and similar economic areas
 - Relative wage index (ERI) demonstrates insignificant differences
 - Recognizes the state-wide recruitment market for managers

Compensation Policy

- Compensation Policy
 - Formal document established by SCERS
 - Establishes agencies, market position
 - Salary and benefits assessment
 - Benchmark classifications and internal alignments
- Benchmarks
 - Chief Executive Officer/Retirement Administrator
 - Chief Investment Officer – Retirement
 - Retirement General Counsel
 - Assistant Retirement Administrator (each assessed based on data)
- Internal Salary Alignments
 - Deputy Chief Investment Officer set 15% below Chief Investment Officer
 - Chief Benefits Officer and Chief Strategy Officer set at same level
- Internal alignments based on scope, role, autonomy, decision making, resource responsibility, and working relationships

Base Salary Survey Results

Base Salary Comparisons



All Survey Jobs

Current Salary Alignments

- Current compensation policy
- Recent historical benchmarks and alignments
- New survey data, new benchmark and internal alignment assessment

Class Title	Current Benchmarking/Internal Alignment
CEO/Retirement Administrator	Benchmark; set to market
Retirement General Counsel	Benchmark; set to market
Chief Investment Officer - Retirement	Benchmark; set to market
Asst Retirement Administrator - Investments	Same as Asst Retirement Administrator - CFO/COO
Asst Retirement Administrator - CFO/COO	Benchmark; set to market
Asst Retirement Administrator - Benefits	Same as Asst Retirement Administrator - CFO/COO
Asst Retirement Administrator - Ent Solutions Mgmt	Same as Asst Retirement Administrator - CFO/COO

Alternate Salary Alignments

- Utilizes benchmark data where sufficient data exists
- No changes in benchmarks unless more than 5% below median (threshold sensitivity factor)
- Utilizes internal relationships based on most recent policy
- Based on current job roles and responsibilities

Class Title	Current Monthly Max	Market Deviation	Recomm. Monthly Max	Percent Change	Explanation for Adjustment
CEO/Retirement Administrator	22,909	-8.4%	24,823	8.4%	Benchmark; set to market
Retirement General Counsel	21,192	-13.5%	24,055	13.5%	Benchmark; set to market
Chief Investment Officer - Retirement	23,152	-18.4%	27,422	18.4%	Benchmark; set to market
Asst Retirement Administrator - Investments	19,878	N/A	23,845	20.0%	15% below Chief Investment Officer
Asst Retirement Administrator - CFO/COO	19,878	-6.8%	21,234	6.8%	Benchmark; set to market
Asst Retirement Administrator - Benefits	19,878	-1.2%	19,878	0.0%	Benchmark; set to market (No Change if <5%)
Asst Retirement Administrator - Ent Solutions Mgmt	19,878	N/A	19,878	0.0%	Same as Asst Retirement Administrator - Benefits

Summary

- Four benchmarks are below market median
 - 11.8% below median on average
 - 6.8% to 18.4% below median
- One benchmark within 5% of median (no change)
- Analysis does not indicate significant differences in benefits
- SCERS benefits are within 2.0% of market trends for all benefit categories
- Internal alignments options
 - Current
 - Alternate (more market based)



REDLINE VERSION

COMPENSATION POLICY

PURPOSE

Establish a sound compensation policy to address SCERS' personnel needs that, along with an effective job classification system and the requisite authority to establish the necessary and appropriate staff size, structure and compensation, provide the cornerstone for SCERS' ability to successfully carry out its mission.

DEFINITIONS

Appendix A identifies the SCERS unrepresented management employees this policy applies to.

Appendix B contains the Labor Market Definition for this policy.

Appendix C lists the benchmark classes and describes the internal salary relationships for this policy.

POLICY

SCERS compensation policy provides consistency with respect to how compensation decisions are made, and helps assure that compensation is addressed on a regular basis, and not allowed to languish such that 'marking to market' is a difficult and problematic exercise. Specific policy objectives include:

- Ensure that SCERS has the ability to recruit and retain well-qualified employees;
- Provide a defensible and rational basis for compensating employees;
- Allow flexibility for making compensation decisions based on changing market conditions;
- Recognize SCERS' responsibility as a public entity in establishing a compensation plan that is consistent with public practices; and
- Ensure that SCERS' compensation practices are competitive and consistent with those of comparable employers.

I. COMPENSATION STUDIES

A central component of this policy is the use of properly constructed compensation studies conducted by qualified compensation professionals to assess SCERS' competitiveness with market practices. Study data is necessary because labor

markets are constantly changing in response to the availability of skill sets and fluctuations in economic conditions. These changes can vary among regions and across industries and employer types. Thus, an effective compensation study will provide:

- Market data that allows SCERS to be deliberate in making compensation-related decisions by reducing guesses or reliance on indices that may not reflect compensation practices.
- Detailed data that allows SCERS to anticipate changing market conditions and understand what peer employers are doing with respect to compensation and benefits.
- Transparency for employees and other stakeholders of the compensation data used in developing SCERS' compensation plan.

A. Study Objectives

A properly constructed compensation study will achieve the following objectives:

1. Collect and analyze salary and benefits data from employers similar to SCERS.
2. Document comparisons with the SCERS compensation plan and identify any issues with the data, comparable jobs, or comparable employers.
3. Conduct an internal relationship analysis and develop internal relationship guidelines.
4. Present specific salary recommendations for a competitive compensation plan based on the results of the market survey and internal relationship analysis.

The compensation study and subsequent analysis provides a 'picture' of wage practices in the labor market for comparable jobs, and documents how SCERS' compensation for benchmark job classifications compares to similar employers. The results of the compensation study, therefore, provide a basis for compensating employees in a consistent, equitable, defensible, and competitive manner.

B. Study Elements

1. Labor Market Definition

One of the most important components of this policy is the definition of the employers or data sources that are used to measure the labor market within which SCERS must compete and for purposes of developing and maintaining SCERS' compensation plan. There are typically five important criteria used in identifying the employers that comprise an employer's labor market:

- a. **Historical Practices** — Over time, an employer will develop some level of continuity regarding labor market comparable employers for the purpose of conducting compensation studies. SCERS has a long history of surveying a specific set of employers and these historic practices are an important consideration if for no other reason than deviating from the long-term historical practice typically requires a strong, defensible rationale.
- b. **Nature of Services Provided** — In order to ensure comparable jobs are found when conducting a compensation study, it is important to use employers that provide similar services to SCERS. Employers who provide similar services are most likely to compete with one another for employees and will have similar organizational and operational characteristics. For that reason, SCERS uses public retirement systems as the primary source of employers used to measure the labor market.

SCERS may wish to consider comparisons to employers conducting a similar line of business in other segments of the marketplace, such as corporate pension plans, or endowments and foundations. While such employers, and their specific sub-market, may not be as comparable as other public retirement systems, they do compete for employees with the same skills as those at SCERS, and at a minimum, can provide context and another point of reference for assessing the compensation paid to SCERS' employees.

- c. **Geographic Proximity** – Geographic proximity of potential employers is one of the most important factors in identifying an organization's labor market. This factor is particularly useful because it identifies those employers that directly compete with SCERS to recruit and retain personnel. If a sufficient number of comparable agencies exist within close proximity to SCERS, the defined geographic area may be the local region. If comparably sized or similar services do not exist within close proximity, a wider geographic region may be necessary. SCERS' uses a statewide market to identify public retirement systems that have similar functions, services and jobs as the primary source of comparable employers.
- d. **Employer Size** — The more similar employers are in size and complexity, the greater the likelihood that comparable positions exist within both organizations. This factor is less important for jobs where employer size makes little difference in the nature of duties, and more important where employee levels or other resources are a defining characteristic of the job. For those jobs where size differences appear to influence wages, these differences can be factored into the data analysis. SCERS' includes a balance of larger and smaller employers and makes appropriate adjustments when size impacts job comparability.
- e. **Economic Similarity** — While there are a number of economic factors that can be compared among employers, the most important factor related to

compensation is cost of living. In some regions, living costs can vary significantly and have an important impact on how potential candidates evaluate compensation. This factor can be important if labor market employers are used beyond the local market, or if there are significant differences in the cost of living. Given that SCERS uses a statewide labor market that includes both higher and lower cost of living areas when compared to SCERS' location, no adjustments are made to reflect differences in cost of living.

2. Labor Market Position

The relative position an organization maintains in the market to ensure its recruitment and retention needs are met within available financial resources. If the list of labor market employers is comparable overall, most public employers will adopt a market position at the middle of the market. Statistically, the middle of the market is the 50th percentile (median) with half the agencies above this point and half below. While this remains SCERS' typical practice under this policy, there may be circumstances where flexibility is warranted. For example, if SCERS experiences significant recruitment and retention challenges, SCERS may establish salary ranges above market median for select positions.

3. Benefits Assessment

SCERS' compensation includes both base salary and employer-paid benefits. In order to understand how SCERS' benefits compare to the market, compensation studies will include an assessment of benefits. The results of a market benefit study can either be used to adjust salaries using a total compensation model, or the data can be used to adjust specific benefits. The major benefit categories a compensation study might include are:

- a. **Cash Equivalent Benefits** – These are benefits that are usually treated as cash and have a direct impact on how competitive the organization is relative to other employers. Examples of cash benefits include longevity pay, deferred compensation, and cafeteria plan allowances.
- b. **Insurance Benefits** – These benefits can be surveyed to determine trends for insurance costs, but this data should not be used for setting salary ranges since the fixed dollar amounts will have different impacts on jobs depending on whether they are high or low wage jobs.
- c. **Leave Benefits** – Accrual and cash-out benefits do not change frequently so they may only need to be surveyed when a specific issue or concern is identified. They are not used to compute total compensation.

- d. **Retirement Benefits** – Employer paid retirement costs are not typically included in total compensation surveys since rates typically don't reflect benefit levels. Rates can be influenced by workforce/retiree demographics, investment performance, benefit tiers, rate buy downs, and other factors. Social Security costs can be included, but it needs to be recognized that this benefit has a cost to the employer and the employee.
- e. **Other Benefits** – There are other benefits such as car/technology allowances, shift pay, furloughs, assignment pays, etc. which SCERS may want to analyze on an ad-hoc basis.

4. Benchmark Classes and Internal Salary Relationships

The methods used to maintain internal equity across jobs and minimize salary compaction. SCERS Compensation plan is developed with a primary emphasis on market data, and secondary emphasis on internal salary relationships and job worth. A market-based compensation study identifies wage differences for “benchmark” classes; positions that are easily compared with other agencies. Where a benchmark class has several levels that are interrelated, one class may be benchmarked to market and the compensation for the other classes in the ‘series” may be set relative to this benchmark using salary differentials. For non-benchmark classes, compensation levels are established using internal relationship guidelines among related jobs.

C. Study Frequency and Application to Compensation Plan

For purposes of maintaining competitive salary ranges, compensation study data should be collected every three years. While study data provides a precise measure of market trends for specific jobs and skill sets, significant market changes do not typically occur between jobs from year to year.

Consistent with current and past practice, it is intended that the SCERS' executive management team continue to receive the same benefits package, cost-of-living adjustments, pay differentials, and other applicable allowances provided to the County's Unrepresented Management Unit (050) or similarly situated exempt employees (such as department heads). ~~For non-compensation study years, cost-of-living adjustments as provided by the County to unrepresented management employees, consistent with historical practice, will apply to SCERS exempt positions.~~

Market comparisons use a +/- threshold whereby no salary adjustments are made if market deviations are less than five percent (5%). Thresholds above this amount may introduce salary inequities and are not recommended.

The objective of the market study is to anticipate and understand market trends, with salary adjustments being a deliberate change to maintain market position. If a job is significantly above the market, salary range adjustments should be frozen until the job drifts back to the desired labor market position.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to SCERS unrepresented management employees as identified in Appendix A.

Results of compensation studies conducted and proposed compensation plans prepared pursuant to this policy will be submitted to the Board as part of SCERS administrative budget process to ensure triennial compensation studies are conducted and compensation plans developed pursuant to this policy.

BACKGROUND

Currently, SCERS' staff falls into two categories with respect to how compensation is addressed:

County Civil Service - The majority of SCERS' staff positions are within the County Civil Service structure, and the compensation for those positions is determined either through collective bargaining, a County directed equity adjustment or a County-conducted salary study. The compensation is then implemented through a salary resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

Exempt - SCERS' unrepresented management employees are outside the County Civil Service structure. The position, job duties and compensation are established by the SCERS Board. However, the compensation for the exempt executive positions is implemented through a salary resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Owner: Chief Executive Officer

POLICY HISTORY

Date	Description
<u>10-19-2022</u>	<u>Board approved revised policy</u>
10-20-2021	Updated to new policy format
08-01-2018	Renumbered from 064
11-30-2017	Board revised Appendix C
10-18-2017	Board approved new policy

**SCERS UNREPRESENTED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES
FUNCTIONAL TITLES AND COUNTY JOB CLASS TITLES**

SCERS FUNCTIONAL TITLE	COUNTY JOB CLASSIFICATION	CLASS CODE
Chief Executive Officer	Retirement Administrator	28318
General Counsel	Retirement General Counsel	29215
Chief Investment Officer	Chief Investment Officer - Retirement	27736
Deputy Chief Inv. Officer	Asst. Ret. Administrator - Investments	29448
Chief Benefits Officer	Asst. Ret. Administrator - Benefits	29089
Chief Operations Officer	Asst. Ret. Administrator - Operations	29090
Chief Strategy Officer	Asst. Ret. Administrator - Enterprise Solutions Mgmt.	29581

SCERS LABOR MARKET DEFINITION

Alameda County ERA
City of San Diego ERS
Contra Costa County ERA
Fresno County ERA
Kern County ERA
San Bernardino County ERA
Ventura County ERA

This set of survey agencies represents public retirement systems throughout California that are closely aligned in terms of size (both assets and members) and comparable to SCERS.

Because SCERS is located in Sacramento, it is important to consider all local retirement organizations, including CalPERS and CalSTRS which, while significantly larger than SCERS, have a significant impact on local market conditions. Data will be collected from these agencies for each compensation study. Analysis and use of the data will be done in a way to ensure that skewing impacts of an unrepresentative sample of agencies do not occur, and to account for the impact of significant size differences.

SCERS BENCHMARK CLASSES AND INTERNAL SALARY RELATIONSHIPS

The following positions will be used as benchmark classes:

Chief Executive Officer / Retirement Administrator
Chief Investment Officer - Retirement
Retirement General Counsel
Assistant Retirement Administrator – Chief Operations Officer
Assistant Retirement Administrator – Chief Benefits Officer
Assistant Retirement Administrator – Chief Strategy Officer

The compensation of the Deputy Chief Investment Officer will be set 15% below the Chief Investment Officer. ~~The compensation of all other Assistant Retirement Administrators (Chief Operations Officer, Chief Benefits Officer, and Chief Strategy Officer) is set at the same level.~~



COMPENSATION POLICY

PURPOSE

Establish a sound compensation policy to address SCERS' personnel needs that, along with an effective job classification system and the requisite authority to establish the necessary and appropriate staff size, structure and compensation, provide the cornerstone for SCERS' ability to successfully carry out its mission.

DEFINITIONS

Appendix A identifies the SCERS unrepresented management employees this policy applies to.

Appendix B contains the Labor Market Definition for this policy.

Appendix C lists the benchmark classes and describes the internal salary relationships for this policy.

POLICY

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markets are constantly changing in response to the availability of skill sets and fluctuations in economic conditions. These changes can vary among regions and across industries and employer types. Thus, an effective compensation study will provide:

- Market data that allows SCERS to be deliberate in making compensation-related decisions by reducing guesses or reliance on indices that may not reflect compensation practices.
- Detailed data that allows SCERS to anticipate changing market conditions and understand what peer employers are doing with respect to compensation and benefits.
- Transparency for employees and other stakeholders of the compensation data used in developing SCERS' compensation plan.

A. Study Objectives

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1. Collect and analyze salary and benefits data from employers similar to SCERS.
2. Document comparisons with the SCERS compensation plan and identify any issues with the data, comparable jobs, or comparable employers.
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B. Study Elements

1. Labor Market Definition

One of the most important components of this policy is the definition of the employers or data sources that are used to measure the labor market within which SCERS must compete and for purposes of developing and maintaining SCERS' compensation plan. There are typically five important criteria used in identifying the employers that comprise an employer's labor market:

- a. **Historical Practices** — Over time, an employer will develop some level of continuity regarding labor market comparable employers for the purpose of conducting compensation studies. SCERS has a long history of surveying a specific set of employers and these historic practices are an important consideration if for no other reason than deviating from the long-term historical practice typically requires a strong, defensible rationale.
- b. **Nature of Services Provided** — In order to ensure comparable jobs are found when conducting a compensation study, it is important to use employers that provide similar services to SCERS. Employers who provide similar services are most likely to compete with one another for employees and will have similar organizational and operational characteristics. For that reason, SCERS uses public retirement systems as the primary source of employers used to measure the labor market.

SCERS may wish to consider comparisons to employers conducting a similar line of business in other segments of the marketplace, such as corporate pension plans, or endowments and foundations. While such employers, and their specific sub-market, may not be as comparable as other public retirement systems, they do compete for employees with the same skills as those at SCERS, and at a minimum, can provide context and another point of reference for assessing the compensation paid to SCERS' employees.

- c. **Geographic Proximity** – Geographic proximity of potential employers is one of the most important factors in identifying an organization's labor market. This factor is particularly useful because it identifies those employers that directly compete with SCERS to recruit and retain personnel. If a sufficient number of comparable agencies exist within close proximity to SCERS, the defined geographic area may be the local region. If comparably sized or similar services do not exist within close proximity, a wider geographic region may be necessary. SCERS' uses a statewide market to identify public retirement systems that have similar functions, services and jobs as the primary source of comparable employers.
- d. **Employer Size** — The more similar employers are in size and complexity, the greater the likelihood that comparable positions exist within both organizations. This factor is less important for jobs where employer size makes little difference in the nature of duties, and more important where employee levels or other resources are a defining characteristic of the job. For those jobs where size differences appear to influence wages, these differences can be factored into the data analysis. SCERS' includes a balance of larger and smaller employers and makes appropriate adjustments when size impacts job comparability.
- e. **Economic Similarity** — While there are a number of economic factors that can be compared among employers, the most important factor related to

compensation is cost of living. In some regions, living costs can vary significantly and have an important impact on how potential candidates evaluate compensation. This factor can be important if labor market employers are used beyond the local market, or if there are significant differences in the cost of living. Given that SCERS uses a statewide labor market that includes both higher and lower cost of living areas when compared to SCERS' location, no adjustments are made to reflect differences in cost of living.

2. Labor Market Position

The relative position an organization maintains in the market to ensure its recruitment and retention needs are met within available financial resources. If the list of labor market employers is comparable overall, most public employers will adopt a market position at the middle of the market. Statistically, the middle of the market is the 50th percentile (median) with half the agencies above this point and half below. While this remains SCERS' typical practice under this policy, there may be circumstances where flexibility is warranted. For example, if SCERS experiences significant recruitment and retention challenges, SCERS may establish salary ranges above market median for select positions.

3. Benefits Assessment

SCERS' compensation includes both base salary and employer-paid benefits. In order to understand how SCERS' benefits compare to the market, compensation studies will include an assessment of benefits. The results of a market benefit study can either be used to adjust salaries using a total compensation model, or the data can be used to adjust specific benefits. The major benefit categories a compensation study might include are:

- a. **Cash Equivalent Benefits** – These are benefits that are usually treated as cash and have a direct impact on how competitive the organization is relative to other employers. Examples of cash benefits include longevity pay, deferred compensation, and cafeteria plan allowances.
- b. **Insurance Benefits** – These benefits can be surveyed to determine trends for insurance costs, but this data should not be used for setting salary ranges since the fixed dollar amounts will have different impacts on jobs depending on whether they are high or low wage jobs.
- c. **Leave Benefits** – Accrual and cash-out benefits do not change frequently so they may only need to be surveyed when a specific issue or concern is identified. They are not used to compute total compensation.

- d. **Retirement Benefits** – Employer paid retirement costs are not typically included in total compensation surveys since rates typically don't reflect benefit levels. Rates can be influenced by workforce/retiree demographics, investment performance, benefit tiers, rate buy downs, and other factors. Social Security costs can be included, but it needs to be recognized that this benefit has a cost to the employer and the employee.
- e. **Other Benefits** – There are other benefits such as car/technology allowances, shift pay, furloughs, assignment pays, etc. which SCERS may want to analyze on an ad-hoc basis.

4. Benchmark Classes and Internal Salary Relationships

The methods used to maintain internal equity across jobs and minimize salary compaction. SCERS Compensation plan is developed with a primary emphasis on market data, and secondary emphasis on internal salary relationships and job worth. A market-based compensation study identifies wage differences for “benchmark” classes; positions that are easily compared with other agencies. Where a benchmark class has several levels that are interrelated, one class may be benchmarked to market and the compensation for the other classes in the ‘series’ may be set relative to this benchmark using salary differentials. For non-benchmark classes, compensation levels are established using internal relationship guidelines among related jobs.

C. **Study Frequency and Application to Compensation Plan**

For purposes of maintaining competitive salary ranges, compensation study data should be collected every three years. While study data provides a precise measure of market trends for specific jobs and skill sets, significant market changes do not typically occur between jobs from year to year.

Consistent with current and past practice, it is intended that the SCERS' executive management team continue to receive the same benefits package, cost-of-living adjustments, pay differentials, and other applicable allowances provided to the County's Unrepresented Management Unit (050) or similarly situated exempt employees (such as department heads). Market comparisons use a +/- threshold whereby no salary adjustments are made if market deviations are less than five percent (5%). Thresholds above this amount may introduce salary inequities and are not recommended.

The objective of the market study is to anticipate and understand market trends, with salary adjustments being a deliberate change to maintain market position. If

a job is significantly above the market, salary range adjustments should be frozen until the job drifts back to the desired labor market position.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to SCERS unrepresented management employees as identified in Appendix A.

Results of compensation studies conducted and proposed compensation plans prepared pursuant to this policy will be submitted to the Board as part of SCERS administrative budget process to ensure triennial compensation studies are conducted and compensation plans developed pursuant to this policy.

BACKGROUND

Currently, SCERS' staff falls into two categories with respect to how compensation is addressed:

County Civil Service - The majority of SCERS' staff positions are within the County Civil Service structure, and the compensation for those positions is determined either through collective bargaining, a County directed equity adjustment or a County-conducted salary study. The compensation is then implemented through a salary resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

Exempt - SCERS' unrepresented management employees are outside the County Civil Service structure. The position, job duties and compensation are established by the SCERS Board. However, the compensation for the exempt executive positions is implemented through a salary resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Owner: Chief Executive Officer

POLICY HISTORY

Date	Description
10-19-2022	Board approved revised policy
10-20-2021	Updated to new policy format
08-01-2018	Renumbered from 064
11-30-2017	Board revised Appendix C
10-18-2017	Board approved new policy

**SCERS UNREPRESENTED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES
FUNCTIONAL TITLES AND COUNTY JOB CLASS TITLES**

SCERS FUNCTIONAL TITLE	COUNTY JOB CLASSIFICATION	CLASS CODE
Chief Executive Officer	Retirement Administrator	28318
General Counsel	Retirement General Counsel	29215
Chief Investment Officer	Chief Investment Officer - Retirement	27736
Deputy Chief Inv. Officer	Asst. Ret. Administrator - Investments	29448
Chief Benefits Officer	Asst. Ret. Administrator - Benefits	29089
Chief Operations Officer	Asst. Ret. Administrator - Operations	29090
Chief Strategy Officer	Asst. Ret. Administrator - Enterprise Solutions Mgmt.	29581

SCERS LABOR MARKET DEFINITION

Alameda County ERA
City of San Diego ERS
Contra Costa County ERA
Fresno County ERA
Kern County ERA
San Bernardino County ERA
Ventura County ERA

This set of survey agencies represents public retirement systems throughout California that are closely aligned in terms of size (both assets and members) and comparable to SCERS.

Because SCERS is located in Sacramento, it is important to consider all local retirement organizations, including CalPERS and CalSTRS which, while significantly larger than SCERS, have a significant impact on local market conditions. Data will be collected from these agencies for each compensation study. Analysis and use of the data will be done in a way to ensure that skewing impacts of an unrepresentative sample of agencies do not occur, and to account for the impact of significant size differences.

**SCERS BENCHMARK CLASSES AND
INTERNAL SALARY RELATIONSHIPS**

The following positions will be used as benchmark classes:

Chief Executive Officer / Retirement Administrator

Chief Investment Officer - Retirement

Retirement General Counsel

Assistant Retirement Administrator Chief Operations Officer

Assistant Retirement Administrator – Chief Benefits Officer

Assistant Retirement Administrator – Chief Strategy Officer

The compensation of the Deputy Chief Investment Officer will be set 15% below the Chief Investment Officer.