**Montgomery County Sign-On Bonus Policy**

**I. Purpose**

This policy establishes a formal structure for providing sign-on bonuses when warranted by extraordinary recruitment challenges.

**II. Policy Statement**

Montgomery County recognizes that certain titles may be subject to recruitment difficulties due to competitive job markets and salary disparities. In such cases, a sign-on bonus may be authorized to attract and retain qualified candidates. The sign-on bonus must be used strategically and only when justified by compelling recruitment or retention challenges.

**III. Eligibility**

To qualify for a sign-on bonus:

1. The candidate **must not be employed by Montgomery County** at the time of hire.
2. The position **must be outside of any collective bargaining unit** unless payment of sign-on bonuses has been formally approved by the bargaining unit.
3. The Personnel Officer must certify that the position presents **extraordinary recruitment difficulty**, supported by documentation (e.g., repeated failed recruitment efforts, market analysis, vacancy duration).

**IV. Bonus Structure**

For approved positions, the sign-on bonus shall be paid in **three equal lump-sum payments** in an amount determined by the County Executive not to exceed $15,000. The payment schedule shall be as follows:

* **First payment within 30 days of hire**
* **Second payment upon completion of 12 months of service**
* **Third payment upon completion of 24 months of service**

**Payments are contingent upon active employment** on the payment date and shall be rescinded in cases of separation.

**V. Procedure**

**1. Request for Bonus Consideration**

* + Department Heads must submit a formal request to the County Executive.
  + Request must include:
    - Recruitment history
    - Vacancy duration
    - Justification certification from the Personnel Officer

**2. Review and Determination**

* + County Executive will have the sole authority to approve or deny the request.

**3. Funding**

* All sign-on bonuses must be funded through the Personnel Other Compensation line.

**VI. Conditions and Limitations**

* If the employee **terminates employment voluntarily or is terminated for cause** prior to completion of the bonus term, Montgomery County shall retain the **unearned portions** of the bonus.
* This policy does **not supersede civil service rules, retirement system policies, or any applicable state law.**

**VII. Reporting and Oversight**

* The Personnel Officer shall maintain a log of all positions approved for sign-on bonuses.
* An **annual report** shall be submitted to the County Legislature summarizing:
  + Approved sign-on bonuses
  + Recruitment outcomes
  + Fiscal impact