

SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA



ITEM: 3.34
(ID # 26399)

MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, November 05, 2024

FROM : HUMAN RESOURCES AND DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES

SUBJECT: HUMAN RESOURCES AND DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES:
Classification and Compensation recommendation to adjust the salary of the Chief Veterinarian and Veterinary Surgeon; and amend Ordinance No. 440 Pursuant to Resolution No. 440-9457. All Districts. [Current year cost \$8,877, with an ongoing Cost of \$13,577] [Source of Funds – NCC]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the recommendation to adjust the salary of the Chief Veterinarian and Veterinary Surgeon classifications.
2. Amend Ordinance No. 440 pursuant to Resolution No. 440-9457.

ACTION:Policy

Kim Youngberg
Kim Youngberg

10/28/2024

Tami Douglas-Schatz
Tami Douglas-Schatz, Director of Human Resources

10/28/2024

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Jeffries, seconded by Supervisor Gutierrez and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended.

Ayes: Jeffries, Spiegel, Washington, Perez and Gutierrez
Nays: None
Absent: None
Date: November 5, 2024
xc: H.R., DAS

Kimberly A. Rector
Clerk of the Board

By: *Kimberly A. Rector*
Deputy

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost
COST	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
NET COUNTY COST	\$8,877	\$13,577	\$22,454	\$13,577
SOURCE OF FUNDS: NCC			Budget Adjustment: No	
			For Fiscal Year: 24/25	

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND:

Summary

The Riverside County Department of Animal Services (Department) promotes an environment of responsible pet ownership through progressive animal welfare initiatives, community outreach, and education. Its mission is to improve the County for residents and animals through education, humane sheltering, responsible pet placement, animal services enforcement, and reduction of pet overpopulation. The Department serves 1.82 million Riverside County residents, and 16 contract cities. Two classifications that are critical to the operation of the Department are the Chief Veterinarian and Veterinary Surgeon. The Chief Veterinarian is responsible for serving as the Director of Shelter Care and the County Veterinarian, with primary responsibility, through subordinate staff, to ensure thorough oversight of the health and well-being of shelter animals cared for at County facilities, all surgery programs, and medical oversight of the County animal foster care program. Similarly, but at a different scale, the Veterinary Surgeon classification is responsible for performing surgery in a County Spay and Neuter Clinic or in a Mobile Spay/Neuter Clinic and providing examinations and medical treatment to impounded animals. Incumbents in this class also supervise clinic activities. Both classifications perform critical shelter support activities that are of paramount importance to the County's successful operation of the County's shelters and programs.

According to the University of California, Davis, Koret Shelter Medicine Program, "more than 344,000 California shelter animals do not have adequate access to veterinary care staff," which highlights how veterinarian shortages are impacting the community's ability to respond. (*Study Confirms Statewide Veterinary Shortage* <<https://www.sheltermedicine.com/study-confirms-statewide-veterinary-shortage/>> posted Feb. 1, 2023). This lack of access to veterinary care in shelters means animals wait longer for care and face challenges in shelters, which negatively impact animals' physical and mental health, and can lead to overcrowding, increased spread of disease, and unnecessary hardship. The consequences of failing to have a fully staffed veterinary care support team to meet the needs of the County are significant. Animal Shelters' reduced ability to provide spay and neuter services was named as the most critical unmet need according to the article referenced above. To provide context as to the scope of demands, the Department has provided more than 10,000 surgeries in 2024 to date, but there is a need to increase that significantly to keep up with the demand.

In Riverside County, the shelter intake is in crisis. On average, the shelter receives approximately 32,000 animals on an annual basis. Of most concern is that the influx of animals

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reflects a younger population; more puppies and kittens are arriving at shelters than seen in the past and the overall intake sharply increased in 2022-2023. The increases in younger population of puppies, kittens, and adolescent large dogs, can be partially attributed to the lack of available veterinary care overall and lack of affordable spay/neuter surgery in the area.

The Board of Supervisors has significantly invested in funding additional veterinarian positions and mobile clinics. Recent recruitments to fill these critical positions at current salary levels have not been successful, indicating that we need to make adjustments to attract candidates into these crucial positions. While the Department has deployed varied tactics to ensure they can keep up with the operational demands, including the creation of a Per Diem Veterinary Surgeon Class in March of 2022, it cannot fill the gap for the growing demands. Many of the Per Diem Veterinarians cannot or do not wish to work full time for the County; therefore, the Department is not reaching the full desired impact with its animal population with the current staffing level.

Without immediate action in the face of these trends, animal intakes, especially of puppies and kittens, will rise and there may be significant consequences to the shelter animal population and the Department's ability to provide critical life-saving services. Offering more competitive salaries to potential hires would greatly enable the Animal Services Department to fill these much-needed positions. The critical shortage of qualified veterinarians, coupled with the urgency at the shelters that are filled with animals needing humane care necessitates a broader view on how best to attract talented and passionate public servants willing to work in a challenging shelter environment and operationally demanding conditions.

The Department's experience has demonstrated that a proposal to adjust the salary of the Veterinary Surgeon to the standard five-County market mean would remain insufficient to attract and retain the qualified professionals necessary to enable the Department to meet and expand service provision demands. As a result, it is recommended that the County consider expanding the traditional market approach to include PayFactors salary survey data, with a focus on Southern California region, Government employers. Expanding the market to PayFactors data indicates the average salary for Veterinary Surgeon is approximately \$136,923 - \$219,077 annually, within Southern California among Government employers. This means that our Veterinary Surgeon is critically below market by approximately 17.6% at the minimum and 26.5% at the maximum of the range.

PayFactors is a modern compensation management platform that aggregates compensation survey data from a variety of sources and allows the County to compare our pay practices against industry benchmarks, ensuring that salaries are competitive and aligned with market standards. Utilizing PayFactors ensures data-driven decisions and allows a view of regional competition outside of the standard five-County comparable system, when necessary. Since Counties generally set and adjust salaries in relation to other Counties and Cities, they are slower to react with salary adjustments to other environmental factors like professional labor shortages or pandemics. The County has taken a similar approach using Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC) survey data to ensure health care positions are market competitive. By deploying this strategy for this specific case, given the operational justification, the

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Department will be better equipped to attract the talent necessary to meet the Department's most pressing needs. Given the market results, and review of the salary range, taking this justified atypical approach to elevate the salary range to a competitive rate given the national shortage will aid the Department in lowering their experienced turnover rates and increasing their market competitiveness.

Given the national crisis and the experience of the Department, the Human Resources Department recommends adjusting the Veterinary Surgeon class utilizing PayFactors market survey data exclusively, to enable the Department to be more competitive in this challenging labor market to attract and retain these mission-critical Veterinary professionals. The Human Resources Department also recommends setting the rate for the Chief Veterinarian at the new Veterinary Surgeon rate, using the PayFactors data, plus an additional 10% to ensure the class is appropriately separated given the much higher level of responsibility and impact to shelter operations. This approach will allow the Department to be more successful in attempting to fill these critical vacancies, thereby allowing them to better expand and fulfil their mission and vision to serve the County.

Salary Adjustment:

Chief Veterinarian: It is recommended to adjust the salary plan/grade from XMB 299 (\$125,030 - \$220,898 annually) to salary plan/grade XMB 400 (\$150,615 - \$240,985 annually).

Veterinary Surgeon: It is recommended to adjust the salary plan/grade from MCO 724 (\$112,826 - \$161,090 annually) to salary plan/grade MCO 743 (\$136,923 - \$219,077 annually).

Impact on Residents and Businesses

This request has the potential to create a significant positive impact for residents and the pet population in the County. Providing a market correction for these two critical veterinarian classes better enables the Department to competitively attract and retain qualified professionals willing to work in challenging shelter conditions. If the significant recruitment and retention challenges of these vital roles are alleviated, the Department will be better positioned to continue offering critical services for the County and its residents. The impact of the proposed adjustments will be closely monitored by Human Resources for their effectiveness in addressing the current recruitment and retention challenges faced by the Department.

Additional Fiscal Information

The total annual cost to adjust the salary of one Veterinary Surgeon incumbent whose current rate is below the proposed minimum base salary to the new minimum base salary is approximately \$13,577, including benefits and related employer costs. There is no cost associated with adjusting the Chief Veterinarian salary range at this time as currently there is no incumbent in this classification. The current year cost does not include any equity corrections that may be necessary for existing incumbents, nor does it take into account the cost for hiring new candidates at the higher rate of pay. The Department has stated the additional cost of adjusting the salary may be absorbed through the Net County Cost allocated to the Department. The Department has indicated that the adjustment would not require a budget adjustment.

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Attachments:

1. Resolution No. 440-9457
2. Market Data for Chief Veterinarian and Veterinary Surgeon.


Cesar Bernal, PRINCIPAL MGMT ANALYST 10/31/2024

1 RESOLUTION NO. 440-9457

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3 BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Riverside, State of California, in
4 regular session assembled on November 5, 2024, that pursuant to Section 8(c) of Ordinance No. 440, the
5 Director of Human Resources is authorized to amend the Class and Salary Listing of Ordinance No. 440,
6 operative at the beginning of the pay period following the date of approval, as follows:

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8 <u>Job Code</u>	<u>Class Title</u>	<u>From Salary Plan/Grade</u>	<u>To Salary Plan/Grade</u>
9 73469	Chief Veterinarian	XMB 299	XMB 400
10 73468	Veterinary Surgeon	MCO 724	MCO 743

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15 ROLL CALL:

16 Ayes: Jeffries, Washington, Spiegel, Perez, and Gutierrez

17 Nays: None

18 Absent: None

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20 The foregoing is certified to be a true copy of a resolution duly adopted by said
Board of Supervisors on the date therein set forth.

21
22 KIMBERLY A. RECTOR, Clerk of said Board

23 By: 
24 Deputy

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27 /kc
10/28/2024
440 Resolutions\KC

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REVISED

RESOLUTION NO. 440-9457

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Riverside, State of California, in regular session assembled on November 5, 2024, that pursuant to Section 8(c) of Ordinance No. 440, the Director of Human Resources is authorized to amend the Class and Salary Listing of Ordinance No. 440, operative at the beginning of the pay period following the date of approval, as follows:

<u>Job Code</u>	<u>Class Title</u>	<u>From Salary Plan/Grade</u>	<u>To Salary Plan/Grade</u>
<u>73523</u>	Chief Veterinarian	XMB 299	XMB 400
<u>73524</u>	Veterinary Surgeon	MCO 724	MCO 743

ROLL CALL:


Ayes: Jeffries, Washington, Spiegel, Perez, and Gutierrez

Nays: None

Absent: None

The foregoing is certified to be a true copy of a resolution duly adopted by said Board of Supervisors on the date therein set forth.

KIMBERLY A. RECTOR, Clerk of said Board

By: 
Deputy

/kc
Revised
11/06/2024

Item 3.34
11/05/2024

/kc
10/28/2024
440 Resolutions\KC

Classification Name: Veterinary Surgeon

Riv Co Class Code: 73524

Market Research

Survey Data

Jurisdiction	Title	Job Code	Min Salary	Max Salary	Spread	Midpoint		Outlier	PF Annual	PF 50%
Los Angeles County	Veterinarian	5728	\$126,684	\$180,240	42.28%	\$153,462	\$73.78	e		
Orange County	Veterinarian	5150HP	\$144,352	\$184,288	27.67%	\$164,320	\$79.00	e		
San Bernardino County	No comparable classification	n/a				\$0	\$0.00	e		
San Diego County	Veterinarian	4225	\$119,995	\$147,514	22.93%	\$133,754	\$64.31	e		
Ventura County	Veterinarian	363	\$126,688	\$177,363	40.00%	\$152,025	\$73.09	e		
PayFactors	Veterinary Surgeon		\$136,923	\$219,077	60.00%	\$178,000	\$85.58		\$177,400	

County Mean: \$136,923 \$219,077 60.00% \$178,000
 County Median: \$136,923 \$219,077 60.00% \$178,000
County Mean plus 10% (Chief Veterinarian) \$150,615 \$240,985 60.00% \$195,800

Riverside County [Veterinary Surgeon](#) 73524 \$112,826 \$161,090 60.00% \$136,958
[Chief Veterinarian](#) 73523 \$125,030 \$220,898 76.68% \$172,964

Dollar difference from Mean: **-\$24,097** **-\$57,987**
 Percentage difference from mean: **-17.60%** **-26.47%**
 Dollar difference from median: **-\$24,097** **-\$57,987**
 Percentage difference from median: **-17.60%** **-26.47%**

PICs:

Notes:

Run Date: 4/17/2024

Date Prepared/Revised: 9/17/2024