

104 CB



Margaret D. LaBrecque
Commandant

New Hampshire Veterans Home

139 Winter Street
Tilton, NH 03276-5415



Telephone: (603) 527-4400
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May 17, 2021

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
And the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

Pursuant to New Hampshire RSA 99:8, Increases for Recruitment Purposes and in accordance with Per 904.01 of the Rules of the Division of Personnel, Request for Temporary Increase, authorize the New Hampshire Veterans Home (NHVH) to request the fifteen percent (15%) base hourly wage enhancement to the two Dietitian III positions currently paid under the A 130 pay scale for recruitment and retention purposes. This request is projected to increase funding by \$33,820.80 over the two year period ending in FY 23. This enhancement would be effective upon Governor & Council approval for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023 or for a of 24 months from date of such approval, whichever is later.

Funding source is 38% Federal, 30% Agency Income, 2% Transfer, and 30% General Funds.

Funds are available due to vacancy savings in 05-00043-043-430010-5359, NH Veterans Home, Professional Services, as follows:

	<u>FY2022</u>	<u>FY2023</u>	<u>Total</u>
010-500100 Regular Officers and Employees	\$16,910.40	\$16,910.40	\$33,820.80

EXPLANATION

The NHVH continues to experience strong difficulty in filling the position of Dietitian III in the current labor market. The local and state unemployment rate has remained at or below 4 percent over the past 4 months, which indicates that the economy and employment are rebounding from the devastating impact of Covid-19 over the past year. Additionally, the labor force participation rate has experienced a structural decline over the past recent periods of low unemployment, and is currently at 66.5% compared to 72.6% in 2000 actively seeking employment. In the past, the labor force participation rate would increase in response to the greater demand. This is not occurring and is likely the result of the aging workforce and the Covid-19 Pandemic. In 2000, the median age of New Hampshire's residents was 37.1 as compared to 42.8 in 2015.

Table 1 New Hampshire Veterans Home Dietitians

Classified Position	Labor Grade	Authorized positions (2020)	Vacant 2020	Vacant 2019		
Dietitian III	21	2	1	1		
Vacancy rate			50%	50%		

As Table 1 illustrates, the vacancy rate for the position of Dietitian III is 50%. This has been constant even after upgrading the position from a Dietitian II to a Dietitian III in 2019, a LG increase from LG 19 to a LG 21. No applications were received for the Dietitian II posting. The Dietitian III posting has only received five applications since June 2020, none of which have certified.

The main factor contributing to the NHVH’s inability to compete for Dietitians is wages. (Table 2).

Table 2 NH Occupational Wages June 2020			
	Entry level wage	Median wage	Experienced wage
Registered Dietitian III	LG 21 Step 1	LG 21 Step 4	LG21 Step 8
State of NH current	\$22.11	\$26.00	\$29.72
State of NH with 15% Enhancement	\$25.42	\$29.90	\$34.17
Manchester Area	\$26.50	\$32.51	\$36.85
Greater Concord	\$24.32	\$27.70	\$28.68
Statewide	\$23.07	\$30.18	\$33.60

Table 2 reflects the difference in earnings throughout the state compared to the State of NH wages. Because most new employees will start at the entry-level wages, the State of NH is unable to compete effectively with other wages offered to new employees throughout the state. With the proposed enhancement, the NHVH would be in a better position to fill the vacant position as well as retain the experienced employee.

Unfortunately, the labor force continues to shrink while the Healthcare sector and occupations such as Dietitians continue to grow at accelerating rates. The projected growth rate for the occupations of Dietitians and Nutritionists in in New Hampshire through 2028 is 13 %. Complicating the availability of Registered Dietitians will be a new educational requirement that in 2024, all Registered Dietitians must have a Master’s Degree. Currently, only half of the Registered Dietitians in NH meet this educational requirement.

Private employers are able to quickly adapt to the increased competition for a limited supply of applicants. There are at least 12 licensed nursing homes in the Belknap /Merrimack area at this time. Hospitals also employ registered Dietitians and are much more aggressive in recruitment, offering competitive wages and sign on bonuses.

Without the timely intervention of an enhancement of the Dietitian III positions salary schedule, NHVH will not be able to fill critical mission positions and will lose ground in attracting competent new talent. As positions take longer to fill, an increased workload on existing employees will have a detrimental effect on the quality of services as well as increase the already high level of turnover of staff. This vacancy will also affect the NHVH's ability to accept new residents as the numbers go up. The current Dietitian III at NHVH has been working an average of 15 hours of overtime weekly.

Your favorable action on this request is appreciated.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret D LaBrecque

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New Hampshire Veterans Home
Proposal to Address Dietitian III Shortage
Fiscal Impact of 15% Base Rate Enhancement
40 Hour Pay Scale (A130) Effective January 4, 2019
05/11/2021

FY 2022														
# Positions	Title	LG	Step	Hourly Rate	Annual Salary	Annual for # of Positions	New Hourly rate	15% Enhanced Pay Annual Salary	Enhanced \$ for # of Positions	Fund	Agency	Orgn	Cls	Hours Wk
2	Dietitian III 42651 & 30243	21	6	\$27.10	\$56,368.00	\$112,736.00	\$31.17	\$64,823.20	\$129,646.40	10	43	5359	10	40
2						\$112,736.00			\$129,646.40					
	Enhancement cost								\$16,910.40					
FY 2023														
# Positions	Title	LG	Step	Hourly Rate	Annual Salary	Annual for # of Positions	New Hourly rate	15% Enhanced Pay Annual Salary	Enhanced \$ for # of Positions	Fund	Agency	Orgn	Cls	Hours Wk
2	Dietitian III 42651 & 30243	26	6	\$27.10	\$56,368.00	\$112,736.00	\$31.17	\$64,823.20	\$129,646.40	10	43	5359	10	40
2						\$112,736.00			\$129,646.40					
	Enhancement cost								\$16,910.40					
TOTAL ACTUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT FY 22 & 23.									\$33,870.80					

LaBrecque, Margaret

From: Leeming, Alice
Sent: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 9:17 AM
To: LaBrecque, Margaret; Wolf, Arthoen
Subject: FW: Request to enhance Dietitian III positions

This is good to go to G& C now.
Alice

From: Rudis, Lorrie <Lorrie.A.Rudis@das.nh.gov>
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 2:34 PM
To: Leeming, Alice <Alice.M.Leeming@nhvh.nh.gov>; Moranti, Michael <Michael.J.Moranti@das.nh.gov>
Subject: RE: Request to enhance Dietitian III positions

In accordance with Personnel Rule 904.01. This request is approved.

From: Leeming, Alice <Alice.M.Leeming@nhvh.nh.gov>
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 3:49 PM
To: Rudis, Lorrie <Lorrie.A.Rudis@das.nh.gov>; Moranti, Michael <Michael.J.Moranti@das.nh.gov>
Subject: FW: Request to enhance Dietitian III positions
Importance: High

Hi Lorrie and Mike,

I am following up on this request I sent to see if there is anything you need from us to help move this along. We are hoping to get this to G& C for the June 2nd meeting and therefore need your response before May 17.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please note we still have received no applications for this position.

Sincerely,

Alice Leeming, SPHR
New Hampshire Veterans Home
139 Winter Street
Tilton, NH 03276
Phone: 603 527-4405
Fax: 603 286-3689

From: Leeming, Alice
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2021 8:23 AM
To: Rudis, Lorrie <Lorrie.A.Rudis@das.nh.gov>
Cc: Moranti, Michael <Michael.J.Moranti@das.nh.gov>
Subject: Request to enhance Dietitian III positions

Good morning Lorrie

Per 904.01 of the Rules of the Division of Personnel, Request for Temporary Increase, the New Hampshire Veterans Home is requesting to increase the compensation of the Dietitian III by 15% due to the extreme difficulty the Home is experiencing recruiting and retaining this position. Attached for your review is an analysis of the current labor market conditions that are

affecting the Home's ability to compete in the market as well as the detailed plan illustrating how the salaries would be adjusted. Please note that the Veterans Home has the necessary funding in its budget to support this request.

Please advise if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Alice Leeming, SPHR
Administrator IV
New Hampshire Veterans Home
139 Winter Street
Tilton, NH 03276
Phone: 603 527-4405
Fax: 603 286-3689