



**ALABAMA**  
**PORT AUTHORITY**  
PORT OF MOBILE

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Pay & Performance:

#### **How is performance reviewed in the Corporate System?**

*Employees in the Corporate System will continue to follow the Performance Appraisal process followed in the State of Alabama Merit System through the end of FY25. This includes pre, mid, and annual appraisals along with 0, 1, or 2 step pay increases on an employee's anniversary date in the Merit System.*

*The ASPA Leadership Team is currently piloting a new performance management process based on the Balanced Scorecard model. This strategic approach to performance review connects the goals of the employee to the organization's goals. Beginning in October of 2025, employees in the Corporate System will use the Balanced Scorecard to manage performance and workplace goals. During FY25, employees will work closely with their manager and/or Department Head to develop relevant goals that tie into ASPA's goals and begin to get familiar with the Balanced Scorecard process.*

*Performance for the prior year will be reviewed by the end of October each year with any relevant pay increases being effective on January 1<sup>st</sup>.*

#### **How is pay reviewed in the Corporate System?**

*After FY25, pay will be reviewed annually by the end of October with any performance-based increases going into effect on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Pay increases will not follow a step-model and will be more competitive than the current process that only allows for up to a 5% increase.*

#### **Will there be longevity bonuses in the Corporate System?**

*Yes. Employees in the Corporate System will be eligible if they have at least 5 years in either the Merit or Corporate Systems.*

#### **Will there be Cost of Living Adjustments in the Corporate System?**

*Yes. Any Cost of Living Adjustments approved by the Governor for Merit System Employees will be adopted and applied to the Corporate Pay Plan to be effective on September 1<sup>st</sup>. The ASPA Board of Directors may approve additional Cost of Living Adjustments for the Corporate Pay Plan. In the event Merit employees do not receive a COLA, the ASPA Board may approve a COLA for the Corporate Pay Plan.*



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### **How was the Corporate Pay Plan developed?**

*ASPA contracted with Evergreen Solutions, LLC to conduct a compensation study. Evergreen completed the study by analyzing data collected from other ports, our local competitors, and private data. Utilizing the data collected, Evergreen created a new pay scale, complete with new ranges providing a market competitive advantage for ASPA. Next, each classification was slotted into the pay scale based on market data. Finally, individuals have been slotted into the new pay grade, with consideration given to their time with ASPA as well as their time in their classification.*

### **How often will the Corporate Pay Plan be reviewed?**

*A comprehensive classification and compensation study will be conducted every 3 to 5 years.*

### **Will there be a discretionary performance bonus in the Corporate System?**

*Yes. As is the current process, the ASPA Board of Directors will review and approve the incentive plan in accordance with Ala. Code Section 33-1-5(c).*

### **Jobs, Promotions, Terminations, Etc.:**

#### **How do employees in the Corporate System apply for promotions or open positions?**

*Jobs will be posted internally. Applicants can complete an application. Candidates must possess the stated minimum qualifications (found in the posted job description) in order to qualify. Qualified candidates will have an opportunity to interview.*

#### **Is there a probationary period in the Corporate System?**

*Employees will work a 3-month probationary period upon initial employment or in the event of a promotion. Employees transferring from the Merit System to the Corporate System into a lateral job will not be subject to a probationary period.*

#### **How are job descriptions and qualifications created in the Corporate System?**

*ASPA HR has worked closely with Department Heads and Supervisors to develop job descriptions in the Corporate System. While jobs in the Corporate System may be similar to jobs used in the Merit system, they are geared more towards the specific work, business needs and organizational structure of the Port.*



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## **How are disciplinary actions handled in the Corporate System?**

*Supervisors and managers will coach employees and use a progressive discipline approach when necessary with Corporate Employees just as they do with Merit employees. Some disciplinary actions that are subject to due process in the Merit System (including demotion, suspension, & dismissal) do not have that same practice in the Corporate System. While Alabama is an at-will state, employees are always protected from discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, disability, and any other protected characteristics under the law.*

## **Can I still apply for promotions and other jobs in the Merit System?**

*Yes. ASPA will utilize the internal posting process referenced above but will no longer utilize the registers in the Merit System. If you appear on any registers, your only opportunity for being certified and appointed to a position will be limited to other State Agencies that utilize the Merit System.*

*ASPA Merit Employees wishing to transfer laterally to other Departments at ASPA may do so if staying in the same Merit position. (e.g., An ASA 1 could transfer from IT to McDuffie if staying in an ASA 1 position.)*

## **Benefits:**

### **Will I maintain my seniority that I had in the Merit System?**

*Yes—for purposes of leave accruals, retirement, and longevity bonuses.*

### **Will my retirement benefits change?**

*No.*

### **Will my medical benefits change?**

*No.*

## **Time Off:**

### **Will accruals for annual and sick leave be different in the Corporate System?**

*No. Your accruals will remain the same and will follow the same model you are accustomed to in the Merit System.*



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## **Will the Corporate System follow the same holiday schedule as the Merit System?**

Yes.

## **What additional leave is available in the Corporate System that is not provided in the Merit System?**

*Employees in the Corporate System are eligible for up to 4 weeks of paid parental leave. Employees are eligible if they qualify for parental leave under the FMLA.*

*Employees in the Corporate System will receive 2 personal days at the beginning of each calendar year. This leave does not carry over to the next year and is not payable at the time of separation of employment.*

*3-5 days of bereavement leave is available for Corporate System Employees in the event of the death of an immediate family member. Unlike the Merit System, this leave does not have to be “paid back” by the employee.*

## **Miscellaneous Questions:**

### **Can I remain a member of ASEA if I move to the Corporate System?**

*While ASPA plays no role in what employees are deemed eligible for membership in ASEA, it is our understanding that all State employees are eligible to join ASEA.*

### **If my offer does not indicate a pay increase as a result of transferring to the Corporate System, why would I do it?**

*There are many reasons why an employee might opt to move to the Corporate System even without an immediate increase in base pay. Ultimately, this will be a decision that each employee must make based on his/her personal situation and professional goals. Merit employees should take advantage of scheduling time with a member of the ASPA HR Team to discuss their unique situation and circumstances.*

### **If I do not accept the offer to join the Corporate System at this time, will I be able to do so at a later date?**

*There may be future opportunities to transition to the Corporate System although this cannot be guaranteed.*