



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Compensation Market Analysis and Classification Validation Study

Regional Council of Governments – Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging (RCOG-COAAA)

1. Introduction

The Regional Council of Governments – Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging (RCOG-COAAA) invites qualified consulting firms to submit proposals to conduct a two-phase Compensation Market Analysis and Classification Validation Study.

The RCOG-COAAA was established as an independent Council of Governments in July 2025 and began full operations on January 1, 2026. As a newly created public employer, the organization is in the process of establishing a compensation program that is competitive, equitable, fiscally responsible, and sustainable for the future.

The RCOG-COAAA's immediate need is to obtain current and reliable market compensation information regarding its existing salary grades and pay ranges. This information is needed to assist the organization in evaluating its current compensation structure, informing the upcoming annual budget process, and providing the Board of Directors with timely information regarding the competitiveness of compensation within the organization.

The RCOG-COAAA intends to structure this engagement in two phases. **Phase 1 will focus primarily on obtaining current market pay data and comparing the RCOG-COAAA's existing salary grades and pay ranges to appropriate external labor markets and comparable Area Agencies on Aging.** Phase 1 is the immediate priority of the organization and must be completed on an accelerated timeline.

Phase 2 will provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the organization's compensation program and classification structure. This phase would build upon the market data collected in Phase 1 and could address broader issues such as internal equity, classification validation, salary structure design, compensation philosophy, and long-term salary administration.

The RCOG-COAAA may elect to proceed with Phase 2 following completion and review of Phase 1. **The RCOG-COAAA is under no obligation to proceed with Phase 2, and the decision to authorize Phase 2 will be made at the organization's sole discretion based upon its needs, priorities, and available resources.**

2. Organization Background

The RCOG-COAAA serves older adults and individuals with disabilities throughout Central Ohio through a variety of federal, state, local, and contractual funding sources. The organization administers a broad range of aging and long-term care programs and employs approximately 370 employees.

The workforce consists of approximately 50 job classifications representing executive leadership, management, professional, clinical, technical, administrative, and support positions. Employees are currently assigned to a twenty-grade salary structure consisting of Grades G1 through G20.

As a newly established organization, the RCOG-COAAA is seeking objective and independent market information to evaluate whether its current compensation structure is competitive with appropriate labor markets and comparable organizations.

3. Project Objectives

The overall objective of this engagement is to provide the RCOG-COAAA with reliable compensation market data and, ultimately, a practical framework for managing compensation in a competitive, equitable, and fiscally responsible manner.

The immediate priority is to obtain timely market comparisons of the organization's existing salary grades and pay ranges. The RCOG-COAAA is particularly interested in understanding how its current pay ranges compare with relevant public-sector employers, organizations competing for similar talent, and other Area Agencies on Aging.

The longer-term objective is to use the market information developed in Phase 1 as a potential foundation for a more comprehensive review of the organization's compensation and classification system in Phase 2, should the RCOG-COAAA determine that such a review is necessary and appropriate.

4. Scope of Services

Phase 1 – Compensation Market Analysis

Phase 1 is the immediate priority of the RCOG-COAAA. The primary purpose of this phase is to obtain current, objective, and clearly presented market compensation data.

The primary focus of Phase 1 is base salary and salary range comparisons. Where reliable and readily available data exists, the consultant may also provide high-level information regarding employer-paid benefits or other significant elements of total compensation. A comprehensive analysis of total compensation, including detailed evaluation of benefits, retirement contributions, paid leave, and other compensation components, is reserved for Phase 2.

The consultant shall review the RCOG-COAAA's current salary structure, including its twenty salary grades and associated minimum, midpoint, and maximum pay rates. The consultant

shall identify appropriate benchmark positions and obtain comparable market compensation data for those positions.

The market analysis should include comparisons with appropriate public-sector employers in the Central Ohio and broader Ohio labor markets, as well as other organizations that compete with the RCOG-COAAA for similar employees. The consultant shall also make a specific effort to identify and analyze compensation information from comparable Area Agencies on Aging and, where appropriate, similar aging services or human service organizations.

The primary deliverable for Phase 1 shall be a clear comparison of the RCOG-COAAA's current salary grades and pay ranges against the selected market data. The analysis should allow the organization to readily determine where its salary grades and ranges generally fall in relation to the market, including appropriate percentile comparisons where sufficient data is available.

The consultant should provide actual market pay data for comparable positions to the extent available and should clearly distinguish between actual market data, consultant estimates, and other forms of compensation information.

The consultant should also identify any significant preliminary observations regarding the competitiveness of the RCOG-COAAA's salary structure. However, the purpose of Phase 1 is primarily to provide market pay comparisons rather than to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of internal equity, classification structure, or individual employee placement.

The consultant is not expected to conduct individual employee desk audits, determine whether individual employees are assigned to the correct classifications, or undertake a comprehensive review or rewrite of the organization's job descriptions as part of Phase 1.

Because the Phase 1 information is needed to support the organization's upcoming budget process and the Board of Directors' consideration of executive compensation, the RCOG-COAAA places a high priority on timely completion of this phase. **The RCOG-COAAA expects Phase 1 to be completed, with final market compensation results and the required deliverables provided, no later than October 16th, 2026.** Proposals should clearly identify the consultant's ability to meet this deadline and the anticipated timeline for completing Phase 1 and delivering preliminary and final market compensation results.

Phase 2 – Comprehensive Compensation and Classification Validation Study

Following completion and review of Phase 1, the RCOG-COAAA may, at its sole discretion, elect to proceed with Phase 2. Firms are asked to provide a separate proposal and price for

Phase 2 as part of their response to this RFP; however, **the RCOG-COAAA is not obligated to authorize or proceed with Phase 2.**

Phase 2 would provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the RCOG-COAAA's compensation program and would build upon the market information developed in Phase 1.

The consultant would review the organization's existing job descriptions, minimum qualifications, salary grade assignments, and compensation structure to evaluate whether the current classification framework appropriately supports the organization's compensation program.

The intent of this review would be to validate the overall classification structure and salary grade assignments rather than to conduct a comprehensive audit of individual employee duties or determine whether individual employees are assigned to the correct job classifications.

The consultant would evaluate whether the minimum qualifications, scope of responsibility, and salary grade assigned to each classification are appropriate in relation to comparable positions in the marketplace and consistent with the organization's overall compensation philosophy.

Phase 2 would also include an evaluation of internal equity and the organization's salary structure, including salary grade relationships, salary ranges, salary compression, promotional progression, recruitment competitiveness, and long-term sustainability.

As a newly established organization, the RCOG-COAAA may also seek a recommended long-term compensation philosophy to guide future compensation decisions. If Phase 2 is authorized, this philosophy should address the organization's desired market position, salary administration practices, promotional and hiring guidelines, management of salary compression, periodic market reviews, and other principles necessary to maintain a competitive and equitable compensation program over time.

The Executive Director position may be included in the broader compensation analysis conducted as part of Phase 2. However, recommendations regarding the compensation of the Executive Director shall be presented separately in recognition of the Board of Directors' sole authority to establish the compensation for that position.

5. Deliverables

Phase 1 Deliverables

The primary deliverable for Phase 1 shall be a concise written market compensation analysis presenting the RCOG-COAAA's current salary grades and pay ranges in comparison with relevant external market data.

The Phase 1 report should, at a minimum, identify the methodology used, the organizations and markets included in the analysis, the benchmark positions evaluated, and the resulting market pay comparisons.

The report should clearly present the RCOG-COAAA's salary grades and ranges in relation to the market and, where sufficient data is available, identify relevant market percentiles or other appropriate measures of competitiveness.

The consultant shall provide actual market pay data for benchmark positions to the extent available and should clearly identify the source and nature of the data used.

The consultant shall identify significant preliminary observations regarding the competitiveness of the organization's current salary structure but is not expected to provide a comprehensive evaluation of internal equity or classification structure as part of Phase 1.

The consultant shall provide a preliminary presentation of Phase 1 findings to the Executive Director and designated executive leadership. The consultant may also be asked to provide a presentation or briefing to the Board of Directors or a Board committee regarding the market findings, if requested by the RCOG-COAAA.

The consultant shall also provide a separate confidential Executive Director Compensation Summary for the Board of Directors. **This summary should focus primarily on the Executive Director's base salary in relation to appropriate comparable organizations and market data. It should describe the methodology used, identify the organizations used for comparison, present relevant salary information, and provide an independent assessment of the competitiveness and appropriateness of the Executive Director's base salary. Where reliable and readily available information permits, the summary may also provide a high-level comparison of significant employer-paid benefits or other major elements of the Executive Director's total compensation. A detailed analysis of total compensation is not required as part of Phase 1 and may be addressed as part of Phase 2, if authorized.**

The Executive Director Compensation Summary shall be prepared for the Board of Directors because the Board is solely responsible for establishing the compensation of the Executive Director.

All Phase 1 deliverables must be completed and provided to the RCOG-COAAA no later than **October 16th, 2026**.

Phase 2 Deliverables

If the RCOG-COAAA elects to proceed with Phase 2, the consultant shall provide a comprehensive written report describing the methodology, market analysis, findings, and recommendations.

The Phase 2 report should include recommendations regarding the existing classification framework, salary grade assignments, salary structure, internal equity, compensation administration, and long-term compensation philosophy, as appropriate.

The consultant shall present the completed Phase 2 study to the Executive Director and the Senior Executive Team and shall prepare a concise Executive Summary suitable for presentation to the Board of Directors.

The Board Executive Summary should clearly communicate the purpose of the study, key findings, recommended actions, estimated financial impacts, and suggested implementation approach in a format appropriate for Board review and policy discussion.

Electronic copies of all reports, presentation materials, and supporting documentation shall be provided in Microsoft Office-compatible formats and PDF.

6. Consultant Qualifications

The RCOG-COAAA seeks a consulting firm with demonstrated experience conducting compensation market analyses and, preferably, broader compensation and classification studies for public-sector organizations.

Experience working with Ohio governmental entities, Area Agencies on Aging, Councils of Governments, or similarly sized human service organizations is preferred.

Proposals should identify the project manager and key personnel who will perform the work, summarize the firm's experience with comparable engagements, and provide references for at least three recently completed projects.

Firms should demonstrate the ability to complete Phase 1 on the required accelerated timeline and should clearly identify the resources that will be dedicated to meeting the organization's immediate need for market compensation data.

7. Proposal Requirements

Proposals should include an overview of the consulting firm, the proposed methodology for Phase 1, the proposed methodology for Phase 2, the anticipated project schedule, qualifications of the project team, relevant project experience, and at least three client references.

The proposal should clearly identify the anticipated timeline for completion of Phase 1 and demonstrate the firm's ability to provide all Phase 1 deliverables no later than **October 16th, 2026**.

Separate Phase Pricing

Because the RCOG-COAAA may elect to proceed with Phase 1 but not Phase 2, **proposers must provide separate and independent pricing for each phase of the engagement.**

The cost proposal shall clearly identify:

1. **Phase 1 – Compensation Market Analysis:** A fixed fee for all services and deliverables associated with Phase 1, including the market compensation analysis, market comparisons, presentations, and the separate Executive Director Compensation Summary.
2. **Phase 2 – Comprehensive Compensation and Classification Validation Study:** A separate fixed fee for all services and deliverables associated with Phase 2.

The cost proposal should identify any optional services, hourly rates that may apply to services outside the proposed scope, and anticipated reimbursable expenses.

The pricing for Phase 2 should not be incorporated into or dependent upon the pricing for Phase 1. The RCOG-COAAA must be able to authorize Phase 1 independently and, if desired, determine at a later date whether to proceed with Phase 2.

The RCOG-COAAA encourages firms to explain what distinguishes their approach and how their methodology will provide reliable market data that can be used for immediate decision-making while also establishing a sound foundation for any future comprehensive compensation study.

8. Evaluation of Proposals

Proposals will be evaluated based upon the consultant's qualifications, experience with similar organizations, proposed methodology, ability to meet the Phase 1 deadline, qualifications of the project team, references, and overall value to the RCOG-COAAA.

Because Phase 1 is the immediate priority, particular consideration will be given to the firm's demonstrated ability to obtain and analyze reliable market compensation data and deliver meaningful results within the organization's required timeframe.

The proposed cost for Phase 1 will be considered as one component of the evaluation. The proposed cost for Phase 2 will also be evaluated for reasonableness and value but will not be determinative of whether the RCOG-COAAA ultimately elects to proceed with Phase 2.

Cost will be considered as one component of the overall evaluation but will not be the sole determining factor.

The RCOG-COAAA reserves the right to request additional information, interview selected firms, negotiate the scope of services, award Phase 1 and Phase 2 separately or together, and elect not to proceed with Phase 2.

9. Anticipated Project Schedule

The RCOG-COAAA intends to move forward with Phase 1 as quickly as reasonably possible following selection of a consultant and execution of a contract.

The anticipated schedule includes issuance of the Request for Proposals, a period for written questions, proposal submission, consultant selection, contract execution, project kickoff, completion of Phase 1, and presentation of Phase 1 findings.

All Phase 1 deliverables must be completed and provided to the RCOG-COAAA no later than October 16th, 2026.

The consultant's proposal should provide a specific timeline for completion of Phase 1 and identify any information or assistance required from the RCOG-COAAA to meet this deadline.

The RCOG-COAAA anticipates that Phase 2, if authorized, will be conducted following completion and review of Phase 1 and may be completed under a separate schedule established by mutual agreement between the RCOG-COAAA and the selected consultant.

The RCOG-COAAA reserves the right to authorize Phase 2 at a later date or elect not to proceed with Phase 2.

Specific dates for the procurement process and project milestones will be established by the RCOG-COAAA.

10. Submission of Proposals

Proposals shall be submitted electronically in PDF format no later than August 14th, 2026.

Completed submissions as well as questions regarding this Request for Proposals shall be submitted in writing to:

Bayley Allen

Human Resources Specialist

Regional Council of Governments – Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging

Regional Council of Governments for the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging • Katie M. White, Executive Director

Serving: Delaware • Fairfield • Fayette • Franklin • Licking • Madison • Pickaway • Union Counties

Email: ballen@coaaa.org

The RCOG-COAAA reserves the right to issue written addenda to clarify or modify this solicitation.

11. Reservation of Rights

The RCOG-COAAA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive minor irregularities, request clarification of proposals, negotiate with one or more proposers, cancel or reissue this solicitation, or award a contract in the manner determined to be in the best interest of the organization.

The RCOG-COAAA may elect to award Phase 1 and Phase 2 as a single engagement, award only Phase 1, or negotiate and authorize Phase 2 at a later date. **The RCOG-COAAA is not obligated to proceed with Phase 2, and the award or completion of Phase 1 shall not create any obligation or expectation that Phase 2 will be authorized.**

If the RCOG-COAAA elects to proceed with Phase 2 at a later date, the organization may negotiate the timing and final scope of Phase 2 with the selected consultant or may, at its discretion, elect to solicit proposals for Phase 2 through a separate procurement process.

The issuance of this Request for Proposals does not obligate the RCOG-COAAA to award a contract or reimburse any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal.

The RCOG-COAAA appreciates the interest of qualified consulting firms and looks forward to receiving proposals that will assist the organization in obtaining timely and reliable compensation market information and, if determined appropriate, establishing a competitive, equitable, and sustainable compensation program for the future.