

**MISSOURI**  
DEPARTMENT OF  
NATURAL RESOURCES

Mike Kehoe  
Governor


Kurt U. Schaefer  
Director

**MEMORANDUM**

**2026-002**

DATE: July 2, 2025

TO: All Soil and Water Conservation Districts

FROM: Jim Plassmeyer, Director   
Soil and Water Conservation Program

SUBJECT: **Fiscal Year 2026 Grants to Districts**

**Progression Line**

As many of you are aware, Governor Kehoe signed the fiscal year 2026 budget on June 30, 2025. This budget includes a years of service pay differential for state employees that have at least 2 years of continuous state service. Historically when state workers receive across the board pay increases, the Soil and Water Conservation Program has applied a similar rate to the District Specialist Progression Line.

Adjusting every district staff stipend based on years of service would significantly increase the administrative burden on program staff and result in hundreds of different salary levels instead of the ten that we currently administer. The program has made the decision to apply an adjustment to the stipend levels on the progression line that increases using DS level as a proxy for years of service. This adjustment will result in many more staff receiving a higher increase more quickly than if we used the exact same methodology as the state worker pay plan. The new progression line is attached and can be found on the soil and water districts intranet. The updated stipend levels are effective July 1, 2025 and can be applied to the first full pay period of the fiscal year. Please remember all staff salary increases must be approved by the board and documented in the official minutes.

**04 Administrative Grant**

As we are all aware, inflation has been significant for several years, and districts have expressed concern about the amount of funding available in the administrative grant. Currently, each district receives a minimum of \$13,000 annually with some additional funding available to districts that outsource payroll and those that are not co-located with the USDA. Effective this fiscal year (FY26) each district will receive an additional \$1,000 in your administrative grant. The administrative grant is typically split equally across all four quarters of the year, so you will see an additional \$250 each quarter thereafter.



Each district will receive an updated allocation sheet that includes this administrative funding and any increased employee stipends. If you have any questions, please reach out to your district coordinator.

### **Health Insurance Stipend**

The District Operations and Program Delivery Sub-committee has been discussing district employee health insurance for many years. In FY 25, a workgroup was formed to take a closer look at more affordable options for employee and family coverage. While this work is ongoing, beginning in FY26, the program will provide additional stipend to district employees that have children and/or spouses on their MCHCP coverage. An additional stipend of \$600 per month will be allowed for full time district employees that are covering additional family members on their MCHCP Health plan. If you currently have family on your plan, please email [soil&waterconservationprogram@swcd.mo.gov](mailto:soil&waterconservationprogram@swcd.mo.gov) and let us know that you would like to receive the additional funding. Attach your latest MCHCP invoice to the email. We will send the funding with the next regular quarterly allocation after we receive your request.

If you have any question, please contact your district coordinator. Thank you.