

Milwaukee Supervisor Wasserman: To propose pay caps tied to County Exec's salary

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MILWAUKEE – County Supervisor Sheldon Wasserman is planning to bring a resolution to the County Board that would prohibit all but a few county employees from receiving a higher annual salary than the Milwaukee County Executive.

“It’s a common practice not to pay government employees any more than the highest ranking executive official, whether that’s the President, a governor, county executive, or a mayor,” said Wasserman.

“There is too much confusion and ambiguity about what is an appropriate salary limit for political appointees, department heads, or other senior staff. Capping the salaries of county employees at the County Executive’s pay is a simple, commonsense solution that is fair and reasonable.”

Wasserman’s proposal would allow for limited exceptions to the policy. For example, positions that are highly skilled or require specialized training or experience, would remain in a pay grade with an upper limit well above the county executive’s current salary of \$129,115.

Currently, the county's [top pay grade](#) maxes out at \$275,000, and includes only a handful of individuals – the Medical Examiner and four other positions in the medical examiner's office.

The issue of setting salaries and awarding raises – either by moving employees within ranges, reallocating positions to new ranges with higher limits, or reclassifying employees to different positions – was the subject of a recent [lawsuit](#) between the County Board and the County Executive.

A Milwaukee County Circuit Court ruled in April that the County Board [has the authority](#) to “provide, fix, or change” the compensation of county employees, and that the Board acted within its authority in 2013 when it adjusted pay ranges and reallocated employees from one range to another.

The County Executive and the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors have different interpretations of certain portions of the court's ruling. County Executive Abele and Board Chairman Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., are planning to meet on August 15 for a [mediation session](#) to work out those differences.

Wasserman hopes that his proposal can serve as a compromise solution that resolves the dispute and brings the parties to mutual agreement.

The Milwaukee County Executive's salary has remained unchanged since 2004. The County Board has the authority to set the County Executive's salary, but may do so no sooner than 90 days prior to any election held to fill that office.