

NRCS/KACD AGREEMENT FACTS

GOAL: APPLY MORE CONSERVATION ON THE LAND BY OBTAINING 50 SOIL CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN TYPE POSITIONS ACROSS THE STATE

NRCS will provide up to \$1.5 Million to KACD to meet this goal. This funding will be used to:

- Pay up to 75% of the Soil Conservation Technicians salary
 - Pay a portion of the employee's benefits
 - Pay a 10% indirect cost amount to KACD

In exchange for this, NRCS expects:

- Additional field staff (up to 50) to assist with conservation efforts across the state
- Staff to be available to work where conservation workload exists – Federal, State, or District
 - Have a voice in the hiring of staff
 - Be involved in performance reviews of staff
- Assist with locating employees where adequate resources exist

KACDs Role:

- Responsible for notifying Conservation Districts (CDs) of this agreement
- Be the primary point of contact for any questions or issues CDs may have regarding this agreement or its process
- Work with NRCS on determining staff locations
- Develop a process with participating CDs to provide reimbursement
- Provide reimbursement to districts
- Combine employee payment information and submit monthly or quarterly reimbursement request to NRCS
- Submit quarterly financial reports to NRCS
- Submit bi-annual performance reports to NRCS
- Responsible for working with each CD to address issues with employees, forms, payments, etc.
- Ensure employees hired under this agreement are being utilized as intended

Conservation Districts Role:

- Be the employers of the Soil Conservation Technicians
- Be able to provide adequate resources for employees (office space, internet connectivity, etc.)
- Submit required documentation to KACD for 75% reimbursement (KACD to determine process)
- Pay the employee \$16-\$20/hour (or \$20 - \$24/hour, inclusive of benefits).
- Ensure NRCS is involved in the hiring of staff
- Ensure NRCS is involved in performance reviews of staff
- Allow employee to work wherever workload needs exist, including outside county boundaries

NRCS/KACD AGREEMENT FAQs

1. What about districts who currently have a 50/50 agreement?
 - a. If a district wishes to keep their current 50/50 agreement, they may do so. NRCS will allow current agreement holders to close their existing agreement and opt into the NRCS/KACD agreement. However, NRCS will not be adding any additional money or extending the time on those agreements.
2. If a district currently has a 50/50 agreement and chooses to go into the NRCS/KACD agreement, what changes for them?

There would be several changes:

 - a. The biggest change is the district would only be required to pay for 25% of the employee cost instead of 50%. If they desire to do so, this would allow the district to double their partner staff for about the same cost.
 - b. The district employee would have to be paid in the range noted in the agreement (anticipated to be \$16-\$20 an hour). NRCS will also cost share on the employee benefit cost. This allows the district the opportunity to provide their employee with health benefits and retirement.
 - c. The district would no longer have to fill out the federal forms required for reimbursement from NRCS. They would provide whatever documentation KACD will need to process their payment request.
 - d. The district would need to include NRCS when hiring an employee and in performance reviews of that employee.
3. What is the salary range for the 75/25 employees?
 - a. The base salary range is \$16-\$20/hour. However, if the 75/25 employees will be offered benefits, the hourly range could be as much as \$20 to \$24/hour (which is inclusive of base salary pay and benefits).
4. Under the 75/25 NRCS/KACD agreement, why are districts required to pay a certain amount and offer benefits?
 - a. NRCS hopes that offering benefits and pay similar to a federal soil conservation technician, Districts will be able to retain employees for a longer time, resulting in less training and more efficient conservation delivery. Although strongly encouraged, offering benefits to employees is not required.
5. Do 75/25 employees have to be associated with multiple districts in order to get a position in their county?
 - a. No. A single county can work with KACD to employ a 75/25 technician. If a county would like to share the cost with another county, they can do so, but it is not a requirement to participate in this agreement with KACD.
 - b. If a county chooses to cost share their part with another district, KACD will still have the agreement through one conservation district or "lead district".
 - c. Note that regardless of if it's a single county or joint county position, the employee will be expected to work wherever workload needs exist, including outside county boundaries

NRCS/KACD AGREEMENT FAQs

6. If a district participates in the 75/25 NRCS/KACD agreement, will they still get the 10% indirect cost?
 - a. No. However, because the district is only required to pay 25% of the employee cost, there will be an overall saving of money even if they aren't getting the 10% indirect cost. Please see the example below that compares the 50/50 scenario with the 75/25 scenario.

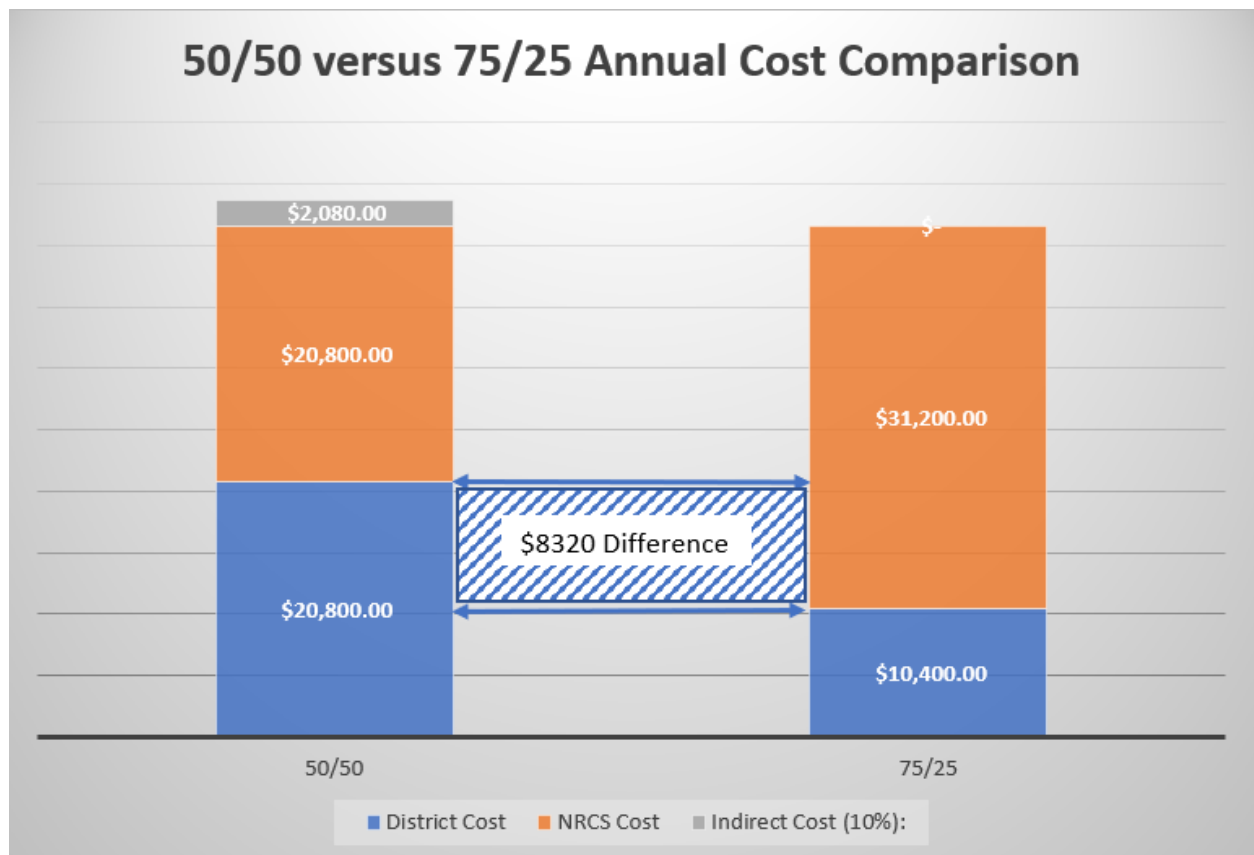
COST COMPARISON EXAMPLE:

In this example, the employee cost is \$20/hour.

Hourly Rate (including benefits):	\$ 20.00
Hours per year:	2080
Total Cost per Year:	\$ 41,600.00

In this example, under the 50/50 scenario, the district would be reimbursed \$22,880 (half of the employee cost per year (\$20,800) plus the 10% indirect cost (\$2080)). Under the 75/25 scenario the district would be reimbursed \$31,200 (75% of the employee cost per year). Utilizing the 75/25 scenario resulting in a savings of \$8,320 per year.

Below is a chart that visually shows this comparison:



NRCS/KACD AGREEMENT FAQs

7. What will be the requirements for the Soil Conservation Technician positions?
 - a. Please see attached position description.
 - b. There is no training requirement for these positions, although it is encouraged. NRCS training to 75/25 employees will be offered as available. Most training will be on the job training, working in the field with NRCS employees.
 - c. Obtaining apprentice level planner certification and appropriate job approval authority will be encouraged, but not required. The District and NRCS will work together to determine which employees should work toward these items.
8. Will NRCS provide anything else in addition to 75% of the salary?
 - a. NRCS will provide computers and access to NRCS systems.
 - i. 75/25 employees will have to go through a background check and complete the onboarding process to have access to NRCS systems.
 - ii. Districts will need to ensure they have the office space and computer connection needed to accommodate employees.
 - b. 75/25 employees will have access to NRCS fleet vehicles as available.
 - i. If no NRCS fleet vehicle is available 75/25 employees may be eligible for mileage reimbursement on their personal vehicle.
 1. Mileage reimbursement will equate to the current IRS Standard Mileage Rates which are updated annually.
 2. This will be approved on a case-by-case basis.
 - c. NRCS training to 75/25 employees will be offered as available. There is no training requirement for these positions, although it is encouraged.