ASSISTANT DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR
TOTAL REWARDS
City of Durham, NC

The City of Durham is seeking a strategic, detail-oriented human resources leader to serve as its next Assistant Department Director with responsibility for the Total Rewards Division.

ABOUT DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Durham — the "Bull City" — is one of the fastest-growing cities in the country, and the growth shows no signs of slowing. Once defined by tobacco and textiles, Durham has reinvented itself as a center for higher education, biotechnology, and life sciences, anchored by Duke University, North Carolina Central University, Durham Technical Community College, and a research economy built on Research Triangle Park.

Downtown Durham has been transformed over the past two decades, with historic tobacco warehouses converted into offices, restaurants, and residences at the American Tobacco Campus, alongside a nationally recognized independent food scene, the Durham Performing Arts Center, and the Durham Bulls, the city's beloved Triple-A baseball team.

City of Durham by the Numbers

~310,000	Population
26	City Departments
~2,800	City Employees Served by HR
~$420,000	Median Home Value
170+	High-Tech Companies in Research Triangle Park
$81,600	Median Annual Household Income

Sources: US Census Bureau, City of Durham

Durham consistently ranks among the most diverse and highly educated cities in the Southeast, and residents enjoy a strong quality of life — a walkable downtown, an extensive greenway and trail network, a temperate four-season climate, and a cost of living that remains more attainable than many peer metro areas, all within a short drive of the mountains and the coast. For a builder-minded HR leader, Durham offers a rare combination: a city investing seriously in its workforce and public institutions and a community energetic enough to make that work feel personal.

ABOUT THE ASSISTANT DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR FOR TOTAL REWARDS

The Assistant Department Director for Total Rewards directs the design, administration, and continuous improvement of the City's compensation, classification, and employee benefits and wellness programs serving approximately 2,800 employees across 26 departments. With 6 - 8 direct reports, the Assistant Director ensures the City's total rewards strategy attracts, retains, and motivates a high-performing workforce while maintaining regulatory compliance and fiscal responsibility.

Reporting to the Chief Human Resources Officer, this position serves as a key member of the HR leadership team and partners closely with Budget Management Services, Finance, and department leadership to align total rewards programs with organizational priorities.

In alignment with the responsibilities of this position, the duties of the Assistant Department Director for Total Rewards span **four main categories**:

Division Management & Leadership

- Provide strategic leadership and day-to-day oversight of the Benefits and Compensation & Classification functions, including direct supervision of division managers and professional staff.
- Manage division operating budgets, vendor contracts, and RFP processes for benefits and compensation-related services.
- Present to City Council, make public presentations, and represent HR in cross-functional committees, working groups, and task forces.
- Manage vendor relationships, contracts, RFPs, actuaries, consultants, and third-party administrators supporting benefits and compensation programs.

Benefits & Total Rewards Administration

- Direct administration of employee benefits, including medical, dental, vision, life, disability, retirement, deferred compensation, flexible spending, and wellness programs.
- Manage annual benefits open enrollment, vendor negotiations, and plan design recommendations.
- Develop and deliver employee communications and education regarding total rewards programs, including new-hire orientation and open enrollment materials.

ABOUT THE ASSISTANT DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR FOR TOTAL REWARDS (CONT.)

Compensation, Classification & Compliance

- Oversee the City's compensation plan structure, including open-range plans for general government employees and step plans for sworn public safety positions.
- Lead classification studies, position reclassifications, and market salary surveys.
- Serve as a resource to department directors and managers on compensation philosophy, pay equity, and benefits interpretation.
- Develop compensation and benefits recommendations consistent with organizational policies and applicable regulations.
- Monitor federal, state, and local regulatory requirements—including ACA, COBRA, FMLA, HIPAA, FLSA, ERISA, and IRS requirements—and ensure compliance across total rewards programs.
- Partner with HRIS to ensure accurate configuration and reporting of benefits and compensation data within Oracle HCM Cloud.

Financial Planning & Budget Management

- Prepare total rewards analyses, cost projections, and recommendations for the CHRO, City Manager's Office, and elected officials.
- Oversee development of FY pay option scenarios, and collaborate with Budget Management Services on compensation-related budget impacts.
- Manage division operating budgets and financial implications of benefits and compensation programs.

Required Education and Experience

The qualified candidate will have earned a bachelor's degree in Human Resources, Public Administration, Business Administration, Finance, or a closely related field and gained a minimum of nine (9) years of progressively responsible professional experience in compensation, benefits, or total rewards administration, including at least five (5) years in a supervisory or management capacity. Municipal or public-sector experience is strongly preferred.

Preferred Qualifications

The ideal candidate will have the following credentials, experience, and knowledge:

- Master's degree in HR, Public Administration, Business Administration, or related field.
- Professional certification, such as SPHR, SHRM-SCP, CCP (Certified Compensation Professional), or CEBS (Certified Employee Benefits Specialist).
- Experience administering compensation and benefits programs for a workforce of 2,000+ employees.
- Demonstrated experience with Oracle HCM Cloud or comparable enterprise HRIS/ERP platform.
- Experience with self-funded medical plan management and vendor negotiations.
- Knowledge of North Carolina Local Government Employee Retirement System (LGERS) or similar public retirement systems.

Compensation

The salary midpoint for this position is **$150,366 annually**. The selected candidate's starting salary will be determined based on qualifications and experience.

The City of Durham also offers a competitive compensation and benefits package.

The typical work schedule for this position is Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

To Apply

The City of Durham has retained POLIHIRE to assist with the recruitment and selection of its next Assistant Department Director for Total Rewards.

For immediate consideration, interested candidates should attach 2 PDFs – a letter of interest and a resume – in an email to: **TotalRewards_Durham@polihire.com**.