

Approved: 04-01-2015

SUBJECT: POSITION MANAGEMENT AND CLASSIFICATION

1. PURPOSE. To establish departmental requirements and responsibilities for classifying positions using the general schedule (GS) and the federal wage system (FWS) standards, and to develop and administer a sound position management and classification program within the Department.
2. CANCELLATION. This Order cancels Chapter VII, Position Classification, of DOE O 320.1, *Acquiring and Positioning Human Resources*, dated 11-21-03.
3. APPLICABILITY.

- a. Departmental Elements. Except for the exemption provided for in paragraph 3.c, this Order applies to all Departmental elements, including the Bonneville Power Administration, with responsibility for position management and classification programs and actions.

The Administrator of NNSA will assure that NNSA employees and contractors comply with their respective responsibilities under this directive. Nothing in this Order will be construed to interfere with the NNSA Administrator's authority under section 3212(d) of Public Law (P.L.) 106-65 to establish Administration-specific policies, unless disapproved by the Secretary.

- b. DOE Contractors. Except for the exemption in paragraph 3.c, the Contractor Requirements Document (CRD) sets forth requirements of this Order that will apply to contracts that include the CRD. The CRD must be included in contracts involving the employment of trained position classifiers who may assist in the preparation of a new organization or reorganization package, the writing of position descriptions, and/or the evaluation of positions. This Order does not apply to facility management contractors, but does apply to position classifiers employed as contractors.
 - c. Equivalencies/Exemptions. In accordance with the responsibilities and authorities assigned by Executive Order 12344, codified at 50 U.S.C. sections 2406 and 2511, and to ensure consistency through the joint Navy/DOE Naval Propulsion Program, the Deputy Administrator for Naval Reactors (Director) will implement and oversee requirements and practices pertaining to this Directive for activities under the Director's cognizance, as deemed appropriate.
4. REQUIREMENTS.
 - a. At a minimum, position descriptions (PDs) must be recertified at least once every 5 years, including when filling a vacant position or for all personnel actions

involving a change in position; e.g., when an employee is appointed, promoted, reassigned, demoted, detailed for more than 120 days, or transferred into the position. This requires managers and supervisors to certify that the duties and responsibilities of their subordinate PDs are described accurately. Issues identified during the recertification process must be rectified within 1 year.

- b. PDs must be written at least at the full performance-level and every second grade level below that level.
 - (1) Statements of differences may be used at intervening levels providing that meaningful distinctions are described.
 - (2) When a separate number is established at the time an employee is assigned to it, servicing human resources staffs may establish a separate tracking process when more than one employee occupies a similar position since the Department's current automated process does not provide that capability.
 - (3) Pen and ink changes are authorized when no substantive change, i.e., one that would affect the original classification determination or a major duty or responsibility is added, is occurring.
 - (4) An online library of properly classified PDs with evaluation statements that are common within one or more than one Departmental element will be established and maintained by the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer that will be available to supervisors and servicing human resources staffs to assist with writing and evaluating PDs.
 - (5) Standardized PDs are authorized for positions which provide identical work and are classified with the same title, series, and grade.
 - (6) The Office of Personnel Management position (risk) designation tool will be used to determine position sensitivity for all positions and then recorded on the PD coversheet.
- c. PDs that are determined to be inaccurate, i.e., they do not adequately describe the duties and responsibilities that an employee is performing, must be redescribed and reclassified. If the grade level of a position is determined to be higher, the PD must be rewritten to reflect the higher level duties and/or responsibilities and the position advertised under merit promotion procedures unless the accretion-of-duties criteria at paragraph 4.j. is met as an exception to the competitive process.
- d. Evaluation statements are required for
 - (1) all full performance-level positions for newly established positions and existing positions when vacant and are being used to recruit.

- (2) any position audited (see paragraph 4.f. regarding when a position must be audited).
 - (3) all classification appeals.
- e. Evaluation statements must fully support the classification determination by reflecting the evaluation of the paramount work assigned and provide sufficient detail that someone other than the original Classifier can determine the rationale behind the classification determination.
- f. Audits are required
 - (1) for an accretion-of-duties situation, i.e., when an employee's assignments and responsibilities have expanded (see paragraph 4.j. regarding accretion-of-duties).
 - (2) when requested by management.
 - (3) when requested by an employee as part of a complaint process.
 - (4) for a classification appeal (see Appendix C. regarding the appeals process).
- g. Positions that are determined to be misclassified, i.e., the title, series, and/or grade/level is incorrect, must be corrected as follows.
 - (1) If the title and/or series are/is incorrect, it must be corrected promptly, normally by the next pay period unless the applicable supervisor(s) does not agree, in which case the DOE conflict resolution process described at Appendix B is utilized.
 - (2) If the grade level of a position is determined to be *higher*, follow the procedure at paragraph 4.c.
 - (3) If the grade level of a position is determined to be *lower*,
 - (a) if vacant, it must be corrected before the position is advertised.
 - (b) if encumbered, every effort must be made to add additional duties and/or responsibilities to support the grade level, in which case the position will be treated as a newly established position and the incumbent reassigned to it. If the position cannot be rewritten to support the current grade level, the conflict resolution process at Appendix A must be pursued. If more than one position is affected by this action, then the other employees' positions are to be treated the same. In the event that the grade of the position is determined to be unsupported, the position will be marked on the cover sheet "Incumbency Only" and retained

until a change occurs, including the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) directing the change.

- h. A Departmental position classification conflict resolution process is established to resolve disagreements between supervisors and their servicing Classifiers at Appendix B.
- i. In accordance with OPM's Introduction of the Position Classification Standards, a Departmental position classification appeals process is established at Appendix C for employees or their representatives to challenge a DOE classification determination, i.e., the title, series, and/or grade/level of their positions. If the employee disagrees with the description of his/her duties and/or responsibilities, then the grievance process available to the employee must be used to resolve that issue before an appeal will be accepted.
- j. When an employee's duties and responsibilities have expanded, which can occur because the scope of the work has increased over time, usually as an evolutionary process and not specifically as a result of management assigning new work or responsibilities, or the impact of the person in the job, this situation is regarded as an accretion-of-duties.
 - (1) In order for the employee to be promoted as an exception to merit promotion procedures, all of the following criteria must be met.
 - (a) The employee continues to perform the same basic function.
 - (b) The majority (more than 50%) of the major duties of the former position are absorbed into the new position; the former position description must be cancelled.
 - (c) The new position has no further promotion potential.
 - (d) No other positions within the organizational unit, whether encumbered or not, are adversely affected by the action; e.g., the new duties were moved from another position in the organization and that position's grade is jeopardized as a result.
 - (e) The new duties could not reasonably be assigned to any other position within the organization.
 - (f) The new position does not involve the addition of project leader, group leader, team leader, or supervisory duties to a non-supervisory or non-leader type position.
 - (g) The new position is not a reclassification from a one-grade interval to a two-grade interval position; e.g., from an Accounting Technician, GS-525 to an Accountant, GS-510.

- (h) The new position must be in the same series as the former position.
 - (i) There is no reduction-in-force or transfer of function being planned or implemented within the organization.
 - (j) The employee has met all of the eligibility requirements for the new position.
- (2) Accretion-of-duty promotions are authorized up to grade 14 or the equivalent, but should be rare.
- (3) The situation requires an audit and evaluation statement and must be approved by the applicable Human Resources Director (HRD).
- k. All Classifiers must complete a comprehensive, fundamental course on position classification before they are authorized to classify new positions or recertify existing ones. Human Resources Directors (HRDs) will determine when a staff member will be delegated authority to classify positions and at what level based on their competencies.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES.

- a. Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer.
 - (1) Develops and promulgates Departmental policies, standards, and guidance concerning position management and position classification.
 - (2) Evaluates the effectiveness with which position classification authorities within DOE are carried out. Ensures that jobs are accurately classified in accordance with published position classification standards and supplemental DOE classification guides, if applicable. This is accomplished through the Human Capital Management Accountability Program (see DOE O 328.1¹)
 - (3) Requires the correction of classification actions that are determined to be misclassified because of classification errors, the application of new or revised standards, or a classification determination by OPM.
 - (4) Provides assistance on position management and classification issues and actions.
 - (5) Provides for a conflict resolution process to resolve disagreements between supervisors and Classifiers.
 - (6) Resolves classification issues that are common to more than one servicing human resources office.

¹ DOE O 328.1, Human Capital Management Accountability Program, is being revised.

- (7) Adjudicates position classification and job grading appeals within the Department.
- (8) Establishes and maintains an online library of properly classified PDs with evaluation statements to assist supervisors and Classifiers write and evaluate positions. Establishes controls that ensure the integrity of the PDs.
- (9) Classifies all HRD and Classifier positions.

b. Servicing Human Resources Offices.

- (1) Administer the position management and classification program.
- (2) Assist their serviced organizations with the development and administration of an effective position management program, including the establishment of new organizations or reorganizations, to ensure that positions are properly aligned.
- (3) Providing technical advice and assistance on applying applicable laws, regulations, and other guiding policies on the classification of positions to promote effective human resources decision-making that supports DOE's mission in accordance with merit system principles.
- (4) Assist supervisors in writing PDs.
- (5) Ensure evaluation statements fully explain why a position was placed in a specific pay plan and series and assessed at the grade or level.
- (6) Administer recertifications of positions (see paragraph 4.a.).
- (7) Resolve disagreements between supervisors and Classifiers as the Deciding Officials for individual positions or groups of positions that are limited to their serviced organizations.
- (8) Determine the level of authority that subordinates will be delegated to classify positions based on their competencies.
- (9) Ensure supervisors and managers understand the principles of position management.

c. Supervisors and Managers.

- (1) Ensure positions are properly aligned within their organizations.
- (2) Determine the need for positions, including full assistant or alter ego "Deputy" positions.
- (3) Determine the duties and responsibilities of positions.

- (4) Certify that PDs accurately reflect the duties and responsibilities of a position.
- (5) Work with Classifiers to resolve differences of opinions regarding classification determinations, including realigning duties and responsibilities to support positions determined to be over graded to the extent possible, and establishing new positions at lower grades when positions determined to be over graded are vacant.
- (6) Provide supporting documentation when utilizing the conflict resolution process described in Appendix B.
- (7) Ensure the principals of position management are reviewed to ensure no over-lapping positions, adequate growth potential, and organizational charts are accurate, and supervisory positions are placed appropriately.

6. REFERENCES.

- a. Title 5 United States Code (U.S.C.) Chapter 23 Merit System Principles, which ensure equitable treatment for accretion-of-duties situations.
- b. Title 5 U.S.C. Chapter 51, Classification, which provides for a position classification system.
- c. Title 5 U.S.C. 5346, Job Grading System, which provides for the classification of wage grade or wage board positions.
- d. Title 5 CFR 335, Promotion and Internal Placement, which ensure equitable treatment for accretion-of-duties situations.
- e. Title 5 CFR Part 511, Classification Under the General Schedule, which provides for a position classification system of “white collar” positions.
- f. Title 5 CFR 532 Subpart F, Job Grading System, and Subpart G, Job Grading Reviews and Appeals, which provides for an appeals process of classification determinations.
- g. DOE O 320.1, *Acquiring and Positioning Human Resources*², which has identified the office that has been responsible for classifying Human Resources Director and senior Classifier positions to date.
- h. DOE O 328.1, *Human Capital Management Accountability Program* (see footnote 1 above), which provides for the review of position classification and management programs throughout the Department.

² This directive is being revised. Chapter V, Merit Promotion, will be in the new DOE O 325.3, Staffing and Placement. This Order replaces Chapter VII, Classification.

- i. DOE O 342.1, *Grievance Policy and Procedures*, which provides a process for employees to resolve concerns that they have with the accuracy of their position descriptions.
- j. *The Classifier's Handbook*, which provides general classification guidance on many different subjects regarding classification.
- k. *Handbook of Occupational Groups and Families* (Part 1 and II), which provides the full occupational structure established by OPM for the General Schedule. It lists and defines each occupational group and series in the classification system.
- l. *Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions*, which contain summaries of classification decisions and opinions, which may have Government-wide impact.
- m. Position Classification Standards, including Job Family Standards and the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, which are the OPM standards used to classify positions.
- n. Position Classification Functional Guides, which provides OPM guidance regarding the classification process.

7. DEFINITIONS

- a. Classifier. A member of a human resources staff who makes position classification determinations, i.e., determines the title, series, pay plan, and grade or level of positions.
- b. Position Management: The assignment of work to positions within an existing or planned organization in a manner that will best achieve mission goals, efficiency of operations, and effective employee utilization within approved resource levels, while also promoting employee development.
- c. Incumbency Only. The designation that a position description is not to be used at the same title, series, and/or grade or level when the incumbent vacates the position. This designation is also referred to as “red lining” a position.

8. CONTACT. Questions concerning this directive should be addressed to the Human Capital Policy Division, Office of Human Capital Policy, Accountability, and Technology, Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer at 202-586-3868.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY:



ELIZABETH SHERWOOD-RANDALL
Deputy Secretary

CONTRACTOR REQUIREMENTS DOCUMENT (CRD)

The following are the requirements and responsibilities that apply to contracts involving the employment of position classifiers.

1. Requirements.

- a. Prepare evaluation statements that are acceptable to the servicing human resources staff for
 - (1) all full performance-level positions for newly established positions and existing positions when vacant and are being used to recruit.
 - (2) any position audited (see paragraph b. regarding when a position must be audited).
 - (3) all classification appeals.
- b. Conduct audits of positions
 - (1) for an accretion-of-duties situation, i.e., when an employee's assignments and responsibilities have expanded.
 - (2) when requested by management.
 - (3) when requested by an employee as part of a complaint process.
 - (4) for a classification appeal.
- c. Provide documentation that a comprehensive, fundamental course on position classification was completed or that appropriate experience demonstrates a sound working knowledge of position classification.

2. Responsibilities.

- a. Assist supervisors and Federal position classifiers in administering local position management and classification programs.
- b. Assist supervisors and Federal position classifiers with writing and updating position descriptions.
- c. Assist supervisors, managers, and applicable management officials with the preparation of new organization or reorganization packages, including the preparation of organization charts, staffing lists, and position descriptions.

Note: Certifying position descriptions is regarded as an inherently governmental function, so contractors are not authorized to sign off on position descriptions.

APPENDIX A

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

The conflict resolution process is an internal DOE procedure for resolving disagreements with classification determinations between servicing human resources staffs and their customers. The procedures are as follows.

1. The first step is to have another Classifier perform an independent review of the position. This is normally a co-worker or supervisor of the original Classifier, but may be a Classifier from another servicing human resources office. Every effort should be made to support the current classification or what the customer is seeking.
2. In the event that there is still disagreement with the outcome following step one, the second step is to have a final determination rendered at a higher level. This step involves the submission of all pertinent information from the applicable management official(s) and the Classifiers.
 - a. For Departmental elements other than those serviced by NNSA, the Director, Office of Human Capital Policy, Accountability, and Technology will make the final determination.
 - b. For NNSA, NNSA's Director, Office of Human Capital Management will make the final determination.

APPENDIX B

CLASSIFICATION APPEALS PROCESS

1. An appeal may be submitted at any time once an employee has been assigned to a position with a Standard Form (SF) 50 Notification of Personnel Action.
2. The GS or equivalent pay plan employee has the right to file an appeal directly to OPM or through DOE to OPM in accordance with Subpart F of 5 CFR 511, but may not file an appeal with DOE and OPM concurrently. If filed through DOE, then the DOE appeal process will be used and the proposed outcome provided to OPM.
3. A wage grade employee is required to file an appeal first with DOE in accordance with Subpart G of 5 CFR 532.
4. An appeal filed with DOE must be submitted to the Director, Human Capital Policy Division, Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer.
 - a. If the classification determination was made by the servicing Classifier, the applicable Human Resources Director will review the appeal and provide a recommendation to the Director, Office of Human Capital Policy, Accountability, and Technology who will make the agency determination.
 - b. If the classification determination was made by the applicable conflict resolution official in paragraph 2 of Appendix B, the agency determination will be made by the Director, Office of Human Capital Management.
5. An appeal of a classification determination is submitted as a memorandum or letter that must include the following information.
 - a. the employee's full name, home or office mailing address, email address, applicable telephone number, and days and times normally available to be contacted.
 - b. if a representative is used, the same information as in subparagraph a). (Note: DOE may disallow an employee's representative when the individual's activities as a representative would cause a conflict of interest or position; the employee who cannot be released from his or her official duties because of the priority needs of the Government; or the representative is an employee whose release would give rise to unreasonable costs to the Government.)
 - c. a description of the organization location of the position, including, the organization title at the lowest level; include a current organization chart and functional statement that reflects the location of the position if possible; if the organization information on the PD coversheet is not accurate, then that issue must be resolved through the available grievance process before submitting the appeal.

- d. a copy of the current PD showing the title, pay plan, series, and grade/level, and position number.
 - e. the requested title, pay plan, series, and/or grade/level.
 - f. the reason(s) for the request, including the basis for why the current classification is believed to be incorrect; a comparison of the applicable standard(s) to the position that were used to classify the position, along with any standard(s) that the employee believes should have been considered; and any additional information that the employee feels should be considered.
6. A final agency determination will be rendered within 60 calendar days of receipt and acceptance of the appeal.