

U.S. Department of Energy
Washington, D.C.

ORDER

DOE 3511.1A

10-1-84

SUBJECT:

POSITION CLASSIFICATION

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1. Purpose. To Provide guidance instructions and responsibilities for classifying positions under the General Schedule (GS) and the Federal Wage System (FWS) and for processing position classification and job grading appeals within the Department of Energy (DOE). This Order is intended to supplement instructions in Office of Personnel Management (OPM) classification and job grading standards and in the Federal Personnel Manual (FPM).
 2. CANCELLATION. DOE 3511.1, POSITION CLASSIFICATION, of 5-7-80.
 3. EXCLUSIONS. The provisions of this Order do not apply to the following:
 - a. Personnel in recognized bargaining units who negotiate their wage rates with the power administrations.
 - b. Positions of experts and consultants, and positions above the GS-15 grade level, including positions in the Senior Executive Service (SES).
 4. REFERENCES.
 - a. Title 5, chapter 51, United States Code, which governs classification of General Schedule positions. Chapter 51 is implemented by FPM chapter 511 and OPM position classification standards.
 - b. "Position Classification Standards, General Introduction, Background, and Instructions" provides information pertaining to basic position classification. Additional guidance is contained in the OPM booklet, "Classification Principles and Policies," of 8-76.
 - c. FPM Supplement 532-1, "Federal Wage System," and FPM Supplement 512-1, "Job Grading System for Trades and Labor Occupations," which govern classification under the Federal Wage System.
 - d. FPM chapter 312, which provides guidance concerning position management.
 5. RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES.
 - a. Director of Personnel.
 - (1) Develops and promulgates Departmentwide policies, standards, and procedures concerning position classification.

DISTRIBUTION:

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All Departmental Elements

Office of Personnel

- (2) Evaluates the effectiveness with which classification authorities delegated within DOE are carried out.
- (3) Provides staff assistance on position classification.
- (4) Classifies positions of personnel officer and senior classification specialist.
- (5) Decides position classification and job grading appeals.
- (6) Requires the correction of classifications which are found, upon review, to be erroneous.
- (7) Approves exceptions to requirements of this Order.

| b. Heads of Field Elements with Delegated Personnel Authority

- (1) Assure that positions under their jurisdiction are classified only by employees who have sufficient training and experience to classify positions in accordance with sound classification principles and official OPM classification standards.
- (2) Refer to the Director of Personnel, for a classification advisory opinion, any proposed classification which the personnel officer believes is not in accordance with sound classification principles and official OPM classification standards.

c. Managers and Supervisors.

- (1) Ensure a review of each vacant position before it is filled and a determination as to whether job duties may be combined with other work assignments or abolished without seriously affecting the execution of essential functions.
- (2) Assign duties and responsibilities to positions and ensure that job descriptions accurately reflect the duties and responsibilities assigned to their subordinates.
- (3) Utilize employee details only for brief changes in assignment, and report to the servicing personnel office all details in excess of 30 days.
- (4) Ensure that each position as established or changed conforms to position management objectives of DOE.
- (5) Ensure the involvement of the personnel office staff in planning reorganizations or other management actions related to position management.

d. Servicing Personnel Officers.

- (1) Provide advice and assistance On all aspects of the classification program, assist in training supervisors, and ensure that the legality and integrity of the program are maintained.
- (2) Plan, schedule, and perform periodic position maintenance reviews.
- (3) Provide position management and job classification advice and assistance upon request.
- (4) Classify positions under their jurisdiction. All positions through which classification authority is delegated, including positions of personnel officer and senior classification specialist, must be classified at the next higher echelon with technical capability and delegated authority to classify positions (see page 12, paragraph 7j, and page 13, paragraph 7k).
- (5) Provide assistance and guidance to employees who file classification appeals.
- (6) Determine whether positions are exempt or nonexempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act.
- (7) Determine whether positions meet the criteria for inclusion in bargaining units.
- (8) Determine competitive levels of all positions.
- (9) Determine functional classification codes for all scientist and engineering positions.
- (10) Determine, with the assistance of line management, the coverage of employees in the merit pay system and notify employees of the determination.

6. POSITION DESCRIPTIONS.

- a. General. Organizations in the Payroll and Personnel (PAY/PERS) automated system must use Form DOE F 3200.5, "Position Description," in lieu of OPM Optional Form 8, "Position Description," for all positions in grades GS-1 through GS-15. Before filling a vacant position, personnel officers must review the position description to assure that it reflects current organizational assignments, functions, major duties, responsibilities, and supervisory relationships. Personnel officers must, of course, concurrently assure proper classification as to title, series, and grade according to current OPM standards.

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- b. Standard of Adequacy. Position descriptions must state the major duties, responsibilities, knowledge, skills, abilities, supervisory relationships, and other job factors clearly enough to provide information necessary for classification, position management, and placement purposes. Accurate and complete position descriptions are of great assistance in developing performance standards, in determining coverage under the merit pay system and the Fair Labor Standards Act, and in many other personnel matters. Inaccurate or carelessly prepared position descriptions are inimical to good personnel management; they are frequently at-least a contributing cause to serious problems in personnel management and employee relations.
- c. Preparation of Position Descriptions. Position descriptions will be prepared by, or under the direct supervision of, the immediate supervisor. It is a fundamental responsibility of supervisors to assign duties to their subordinates and to ensure that duties and responsibilities are accurately and fully recorded. Supervisors must certify to this effect on the position description. Signature of the personnel specialist on the description certifies that the description is properly classified by title, series, and grade. The personnel specialist taking action on the position is also responsible for resolving substantive questions regarding the accuracy of the position description.
- d. Format and Content of Position Descriptions.
- (1) Descriptions of GS positions for which standards have been issued under the Factor Evaluation System (FES) must be in the format prescribed for that system. (See "Instructions for the Factor Evaluation System" in Section VII, "Position Classification Standards General Introduction, Background and Instructions.") At the option of the servicing personnel office, the FES format may be used for nonsupervisory jobs whether or not FES standards have been issued.
 - (2) The following format is suggested when the FES format is not used. The servicing personnel office may prescribe different headings and organization, but all descriptions must provide the information described below and must meet the standard of adequacy outlined in paragraph 6b, above.
 - (a) Introduction. A brief statement of the basic purpose and scope of the position. For most positions, one or two sentences should suffice, but any general background information necessary for a full understanding of the position and not readily available elsewhere should be included as concisely as possible.
 - (b) Major Duties. Each duty which is significant enough to affect qualifications required to perform the job or to require a significant portion of the employee's time must be described. Related duties should be grouped together, and duties should be listed in some logical order such as the sequence in which they

are performed, in order of importance, or any other pattern which will facilitate description, understanding, and evaluation of the position. Recurring but occasional or minor duties may be very briefly mentioned at the end of this section, but generally they need not be described unless in the aggregate they constitute a significant portion of time. All major duties will be described so that knowledge, skill, and ability requirements of the job are clear enough to assist personnel specialists and managers in determining qualifications required for each job. Any specific authority placed in a position (e.g., authority to certify vouchers for payment) should be described. Particular care is necessary in describing any duties and responsibilities which require employees to make or influence decisions concerning plans or policies of the Department or any of its components. The extent, nature, and finality of such decisions and recommendations will determine whether positions at GS-13, 14, or 15 are covered by the merit pay system as management officials.

- (c) Supervisory Duties. Responsibility for the work of subordinates must be carefully described whenever the position is a working leader, a supervisor, or a manager. Normally, a separate paragraph should be used to identify: the organization or positions supervised; the approximate size of the staff and the kind and grade level of work they perform; and the scope and nature of supervisory responsibilities. Such supervisory responsibilities are planning, assigning, reviewing, and approving work; selection, training, appraising, rewarding, and disciplining subordinates; and responsibilities under the Equal Employment Opportunity Program. Duties which are personally performed by the incumbent of the position should be clearly distinguished from those which are usually assigned to subordinates. The "Supervisory Grade Evaluation Guide" may be useful as a checklist of major supervisory functions.
- (d) Supervisory Controls. The nature and extent of supervision received, from whom it is received, the kind and extent of instructions and guidelines under which the position operates, the kinds of problems or matters referred to the supervisor, actions not subject to controls, and the purpose and extent of any review of work must be described.
- (e) Physical Demands and Working Conditions. These should be described when the FES format is used and in non-FES cases where these are not normally typical of the job and occupation being described. -Frequent travel, unusual working hours, rotation of shift operations, and other conditions of employment should be spelled out for use in recruitment, although they will have little or no bearing on job classification.

(f) Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Collateral Duty Assignments. Equal employment opportunity duties and responsibilities assigned to employees on a collateral basis must be described in an addendum to the description that covers the official position the employee occupies. The description of EEO collateral duties must describe the duties and responsibilities with sufficient clarity to determine the correct series and grade level of the work, the percent of the employee's worktime that is spent on the EEO assignment, and the supervisory relationships. EEO collateral duty assignments must not be grade controlling and must occupy less than 50 percent of the employee's worktime. For additional guidance, see FPM letter 713-37, "Documenting EEO Collateral Duties in Official Position Description," of 5-20-77.

(3) Federal Wage System (FWS). Job descriptions for PWS employees will conform to the format and content of OPM job grading standards. (See FPM supplement 532-1, S6-6.) Descriptions should normally be prepared in the following order:

- (a) General. A description of the nature and extent of the major duties performed.
- (b) Skills and Knowledge. A statement of the skills and knowledge required to perform the duties of the job. Specific attention must be given to knowledge, skills, and abilities required in mixed series jobs and to selective recruitment factors.
- (c) Responsibility. A description of the scope and complexity of the work assigned, the frequency and difficulty of judgment and decisions, the nature of supervision received, and the nature of regulations, standard operating procedures, and technical guides. If the position is supervisory, its responsibilities for planning, work direction, and administration must be described under this section. The numbers, grade levels, and occupations of subordinates must be identified. If any subordinates are supervised on a substantially less than full-time basis, the scope of such supervision should be described.
- (d) Physical Effort. A description of the nature, degree, frequency, and duration of physical exertion required to perform this work.
- (e) Working Conditions. A statement covering the hazards, physical hardships, and working conditions to which workers are exposed, the frequency and duration of such exposure, the adequacy of protective clothing and safety devices, and the possible effects on employees. Also, a statement as to whether working conditions are considered in the evaluation of the job or are compensated for by environmental or hazard pay. Special treatment must be

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accorded physical demands or working conditions that bear upon the evaluation of the job or selective factors in recruitment.

- (4) Shortcut Procedures. The following procedures are encouraged so long as they do not obscure essential job information.
- (a) Pen-and-Ink Changes. Instead of retyping the job description, pen-and-ink notations may be used where changes are very minor. They should never be used for changes in grade. Employees must be notified by means appropriate to the significance of the change.
 - (b) Position Amendments. More extensive but still minor changes (e.g., revision of a paragraph, addition or deletion of a duty which does not affect grade, series, or qualifications) may be made on DOE F 3200.5 or a locally prescribed amendment form. The form should be annotated "Amendment Number _____ to Position Number _____" and attached to all copies of the description without removing the original DOE F 3200.5, OPM Optional Form 8, or any previous amendments. No more than two amendments should be issued before the description is retyped. Distribution of copies is the same as for new descriptions.
 - (c) Additional-Identical Positions. When a position is identical in its major duties, responsibilities, and supervision received to another position which reports to the same supervisor, it is not separately described but instead is treated as an additional-identical (A-I) position; that is, the original description is reproduced and used as the official description for all such "A-I" positions. Organizations in the PAY/PERS system must follow instructions on position control numbers.
 - (d) Statement of Differences. When a position is substantially similar but not identical to another position reporting to the same supervisor, only the differences in duties and responsibilities need be described. The position description of such a position consists of the statement of differences a copy of the description for the similar position, and a DOE F 3200.5 or OPM optional Form 8, as appropriate. Except for positions in a career progression, statements of differences should not be used when the differences are significant enough to affect the grade, series, or qualifications required. However, statements of differences are acceptable when it is necessary to establish positions at several grade levels in a career progression. The full performance level position must be fully described, but a statement of differences may be used for every second grade level. For example, in a GS-5/7/9/11

progression, a statement of differences could be used at the GS-5 and GS-9 levels. Normally the restriction in the nature of assignments and/or the supervisory control will be described in the statement of differences.

- (e) Standard Position Descriptions. Approved multiposition descriptions can be utilized when they accurately reflect the duties and responsibilities of the position.

7. POSITION CLASSIFICATION.

- a. Position classification is the process of comparing jobs to appropriate standards to determine pay system, title, occupational series, functional code, and grade. The primary purposes of job classification are to determine the proper grade and series and identify the basic qualifications (knowledge, skill, and abilities) necessary to perform the job. Sound grade judgments are based upon a wide variety of considerations. If after available references are studied, a serious doubt exists as to the appropriate series, grade, or pay system, the question may be forwarded to the Office of Personnel for an advisory opinion.
- b. Determination of applicable pay system (GS or FWS) will be made for each job using the references on page 4, and particularly Section IV of the "Position Classification Standards, General Introduction, Background, and Instructions."
- c. Determination of Grade and Series.
 - (1) General. Proper occupational series, grade, and titles for all jobs will be determined in conformance with this Order and OPM position classification and job grading standards.
 - (2) Absence of Grade Level Criteria. When published grade level criteria are not available for specific series, standards published for related series must be reviewed to identify grade level criteria most appropriate to the job under study. Detailed guidance is found in FPM bulletin 511-14 "Classification of Nonsupervisory Positions for which There Are No Directly Applicable Evaluation Criteria," of 8-27-76.
 - (3) Classification Titles. Titles prescribed by classification standards must be used for all classes of positions which are included in the standard. Positions for which no titles are prescribed are to be titled in conformance with Section III, "Titling Practices," in the "Position Classification Standards, General Introduction, Background, and Instructions."

d. Standards.

- (1) **Use Required.** All jobs must be classified consistently with published OPM standards and with any evaluation decisions of OPM which have been certified to DOE. These decisions are controlling upon all DOE officials, and the classification of positions to which they apply may not be changed while the major duties and responsibilities remain substantially the same unless pertinent new standards are issued.
- (2) **Development of Occupational Standards.** DOE is responsible for furnishing information, appraisals, and recommendations to the OPM in the development of position classification standards. In carrying out these responsibilities, personnel officers and managers in the concerned occupations will be asked to review and comment on draft standards.

e. Treatment of Specific Job Situations.

- (1) **Classification of General Schedule Mixed Jobs.** Guidance on evaluation of mixed-grade positions is presented in OPM "Position Classification Standards, General Introduction, Background, and Instructions." The evaluation of GS jobs containing duties classifiable in two or more occupational series, but all at the same grade level, is discussed in an OPM issuance titled "Classification Principles and Policies," of 8-76.
- (2) **Grading of FWS Mixed Jobs.** Guidance on grading of mixed series and mixed grade level jobs is presented in the "Job Grading System for Trades and Labor Occupations," Part I.
- (3) **Interdisciplinary Professional Positions.** Any of a number of occupational series may be appropriate for some scientific, engineering, or research positions. Such positions involving two or more scientific, engineering, or research disciplines will be evaluated in accordance with Subsection j, "Classification of Interdisciplinary Professional positions," in the introduction to the General Schedule position classification standards. The personnel specialist will add a statement to the job description to record the various series considered appropriate.

f. Desk Audits.

- (1) Desk audits are first-hand inquiries about the work of a position through the use of interviews and observations of work operations. The interviews are typically conducted with supervisors of the positions and with the employees performing the duties or occupying the position being assessed by the personnel specialist. Desk audits are concerned primarily with obtaining information about the job rather than about the employee performing the work. The primary purpose of the desk audit is to obtain sufficient information, to support the basis for establishment of the position, to clarify,

supplement, or verify the information in the proposed position description, and to obtain sufficient knowledge and understanding of the major duties and supervisory controls of the position to permit accurate classification of the position.

- (2) Generally, desk audits are conducted in cases of classification appeals and during cyclical position surveys, i.e., maintenance reviews. Additionally, desk audits should be conducted when: accretion of duties is stated as the basis for upgrading a position; positions above the journeyman or full performance level are requested to be established; the duties of the proposed position appear to overlap or conflict with other positions; the proposed classification is doubtful or controversial; sufficient time has elapsed after a projected position has been established, e.g., 90-120 days, to permit reevaluation of the position; and otherwise necessary to gain a full understanding of the position.

g. Use of Evaluation Statements.

- (1) Evaluation statements serve the following purposes:

- (a) The requirement to put one's thoughts in writing causes an evaluator to think more thoroughly about the position being analyzed and evaluated;
- (b) The process of judging a position factor by factor, i.e., in terms of the grade level criteria cited in position classification standards, guards against the possibility of an incorrect evaluation;
- (c) Evaluation statements serve as permanent records; consequently, the basis for a classification will not depend upon the memory or continued employment of the person who made the evaluation;
- (d) Written evaluation statements can eliminate the need for several oral explanations; and
- (e) Written statements contribute to greater classification consistency among positions by clearly presenting the underlying reasons for the selection of title, series, and grade.

- (2) Evaluation statements must be prepared in the following cases:

- (a) A classification is being appealed, either within DOE or to OPM;
- (b) A proposed classification requires Headquarters approval;
- (c) A classification advisory opinion is being requested from Headquarters; or

- (d) The classification changes affect large blocks of positions. (See paragraph 7i below.)
- (3) In addition, evaluation statements should be prepared whenever the classification decision is not self-evident, is likely to be seen as precedent, or there is reason to believe that the decision may later be questioned, as in the following examples:
 - (a) No directly applicable classification standards exist;
 - (b) The classification exceeds the grade levels specifically depicted in the classification standard;
 - (c) A mixed grade or a mixed series position is involved;
 - (d) The position is borderline as to grade, series, or pay system;
 - (e) The classification is affected by the impact of incumbent on the job;
 - (f) A classification error is being corrected;
 - (g) The position is classified under the "Research Grade Evaluation Guide" or the "Equipment Development Grade Evaluation Guide;" or
 - (h) A position is being classified at GS-13 or above.
- h. Content of Evaluation Statements. Evaluation statements must identify the position and its organizational location; provide any background necessary for a full understanding of the position which is not contained in the position description or in other readily available documents; discuss the choice of pay system, series, and title to the extent that they are at issue and not self-evident; and analyze the major duties in the light of grade-level criteria in the classification standards used. If the evaluation is intended primarily for personnel specialists or others who have ready access to the standards, the classification criteria relied upon can be briefly summarized. More detail and explanation is normally required if the evaluation is directed toward persons outside the personnel field, such as appellants or supervisors. The writer must sign and date the statement.
- i. Reporting Classification Actions Affecting Large Blocks of Positions. The Office of Personnel Management must approve the reclassification of positions when a classification decision changes 20 or more substantially similar positions from one grade to another or between the Federal Wage System (FWS) and the General Schedule. Note that this requirement covers cases where fewer than 20 positions are immediately affected but "ripple" effects may be expected at a later time or in other DOE organizations. All such contemplated actions must be reported to the Director of Personnel well in advance of any notification to employees, decisions, or

classification actions. The Director of Personnel will consult with OPM regarding the merits of the proposed classification actions. The following information should be submitted with the request:

- (1) A Memorandum which discusses the nature and background of the proposed action, the basis for it, and its impact on the organization including the number of upgradings, downgradings, or other changes by title, series, grade level, and location;
- (2) Accurate position descriptions that are representative of the positions involved;
- (3) Comprehensive evaluation statements which relate the proposed new classification actions to appropriate position classification standards; and
- (4) Other pertinent information which will assist in the analysis of the request.

j. Classification of Personnel Officer and Chief Classifier Positions. In accordance with appendix D of FPM chapter 511, positions of personnel officer and chief classification specialist, or equivalent, must be classified by or under the direction of the senior personnel officer at the next higher organization echelon. In most cases such classification will be done in Headquarters under the Director of Personnel (AD-50), but where a field element has subordinate offices with personnel officer and/or chief classification specialist positions, it will be done in the office and under the direction of the principal personnel officer for the field element. In no case may a personnel officer (or any of his or her subordinates) classify his or her position or that of his or her senior classification specialist. The following definitions apply.

- (1) Personnel Officer or Equivalent. The position responsible for directing a personnel management program, i.e., the senior personnel management position in an organization, and one to which part 1 of the GS-201 personnel management position classification standard applies. The position may include other responsibilities such as organization and management and/or contractor industrial relations (for example, organization and personnel directors in DOE Field Offices), but normally it will be the senior position devoted largely or exclusively to Federal personnel management, and the one which has final technical responsibility for personnel management, including the classification of positions in the organization.
- (2) Chief Classification Specialist. The senior position responsible for supervision and/or performance of position classification functions in an organization large enough to warrant such specialization.

Vertical line denotes change.

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- k. **Classification of Positions Through which Classification Authority is Delegated.** All managerial positions through which classification authority is delegated must be classified at the next higher organization echelon, in the same manner as personnel officers and chief classification specialists.

8. **CLASSIFICATION AND JOB GRADING APPEALS.**

a. **Coverage.**

- (1) Except as enumerated on page 1, paragraphs 3a and b, procedures in this Order apply to any employee who believes the classification of his or her position to be incorrect.
- (2) This Order establishes procedures under which an employee may seek adjustment within DOE of the pay system, title (if one is prescribed), series, or grade of a position. A request for such adjustment will be accepted only from the employee officially assigned to the position.
- (3) All levels of management and supervision are responsible for protecting and publicizing the employee's right to seek adjustment in the pay system, prescribed title, series, or grade of the position, and for ensuring that employees may exercise this right without restraint and without fear of reprisal or subsequent prejudice.

b. **Exclusions.**

- (1) Complaints about the accuracy of position descriptions, but not involving classification matters (pay system, title, series, or grade), are not covered by this Order. However, any doubt concerning the accuracy of the position description must be resolved, by desk audit if necessary, before the proper classification can be determined. This does not in any way diminish the exclusive responsibility of management to decide what duties will be assigned and performed.
- (2) Employees may not appeal the correctness of Opposition classification or job grading standards, guides, or DOE supplemental classification guides, although they may appeal the application of standards and guides to their position. Employees also may not appeal:
 - (a) The classification of their position based on comparisons with other positions and not published OPM standards;
 - (b) The classification of a position which has been certified by OPM as a result of a DOE or employee appeal when there has been no change in major duties or the standards and/or guides used to classify the position; or

(c) The classification of a position to which they are detailed or temporarily promoted.

- c. Classification Appeal Rights. Employees may appeal the classification of their official position at any time. GS employees may appeal within DOE under the provisions of this Order or may elect to appeal directly to the OPM under the provisions of FPM chapter 511, subchapter 6. Prevailing rate employees must file appeals within DOE, and upon receipt of a decision, may continue the appeal with the OPM under the provisions of FPM supplement 532-1.
- d. Representation and Use of Official Time. Employees have the right to a representative of their choice in preparing their classification appeal. The representative must be designated in writing by the employee. If the choice will result in a conflict of interest or position, unreasonable costs to the Government, or undue interruption of the representative's official duties as determined by the supervisor, it may be disallowed. Official time is authorized only when it is necessary to obtain information not available during nonwork hours. Designation as a representative does not convey a right to the representative to be present during any factfinding session.
- e. Reduction in Grade or Pay.
- (1) Notice to Employee Not Entitled to Grade Retention. When a position to be downgraded has not been classified at the current or higher grade for at least a year, the Incumbent is not eligible for grade retention and the demotion is an adverse action. It must be effected in accordance with 5 CFR, part 752, and normal procedures for adverse actions, including at least 30 days advance written notice. The notice must state *why* the position is being downgraded; what efforts have been made to avoid demoting the employee; and why the efforts failed. It should not imply that a final decision has been made to demote the employee, though it is proper to state that it has been decided to downgrade the position. After the notice period, if it is decided that the demotion cannot be avoided, the employee must be given a written notice of that decision. It must explain the employee's right to appeal the adverse action or, if applicable, to grieve it under a negotiated grievance procedure. It must also explain the employee's right to file a classification appeal and the time limits for filing in order to preserve any retroactive benefits, and it should explain the employee's entitlement to pay retention.
- (2) Notice to Employee Entitled to Grade Retention. When a classification decision will result in a loss of grade and the affected employee is entitled to grade retention, the downgrading is not an adverse action. However, the servicing personnel office must notify the employee

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promptly in writing before the action is taken. The notice should specify: why the position is being downgraded; what efforts have been made to reassign the employee; and why the efforts have failed. It must also inform the employee of the right to appeal the classification decision and of his or her entitlement to grade retention, as required by 5 CFR 536.304, "Issuance of Employee Letters."

- (3) Time Limits. In certain circumstances, employees not entitled to grade retention may suffer a loss in pay when they are downgraded. Such an employee who wins a timely appeal is entitled to back pay retroactive to the date of the downgrading. However, in order to be timely, the appeal must be filed no later than 15 calendar days after the effective date of the downgrading. Any further appeal from a final decision within DOE must be filed with OPM no later than 15 calendar days after receipt of the DOE appeal decision, or 15 calendar days after the effective date of the action taken as a result of the classification decision, whichever is later. Employees must be fully informed of all applicable time limits at the time they are given the decision. In certain cases extensions may be granted as provided in the FPM. Note, however, that nothing in this paragraph diminishes an employee's right to file a classification appeal at any time.
- f. Availability of Job Standards. Position classification standards and job grading standards are to be available for review in the servicing personnel office.
- g. Classification Appeal Procedure. A classification appeal is a formal request in writing by the employee for review of the employee's official job title, series, grade, and/or pay system, to correct what the employee believes is an incorrect classification. Appellants and designated representatives may draw upon members of the servicing personnel office for assistance of a regulatory and procedural nature.
 - (1) Content of Appeal. Employees must include the following information in an appeal:
 - (a) Name, mailing address, and office telephone number;
 - (b) Employing office location and the location of the official headquarters;
 - (c) Exact location of the employee's position in the organization structure of the office to which assigned (e.g., division, branch, section, etc.);
 - (d) Present series, title, and grade of the position;

- (e) Requested series, title, and grade or other classification action;
 - (f) A copy of the official position description and, if appropriate, a statement that the appellant considers the official position description to be complete and accurate. (Wherever possible the employee and the supervisor should agree on the description before an appeal is filed.)
 - (g) Reasons for the appeal;
 - (h) Statement of any facts that the employee believes may affect the appeal.
- (2) Office to Which Appeals Should be Addressed.
- (a) General Schedule Positions. Although employees may appeal the classification of GS positions directly to OPM, both OPM and DOE prefer that appeals be filed first with DOE since this helps to establish a sound factual basis for a fair and accurate evaluation, and it provides an opportunity for resolution of the problem within DOE.
 - 1 Employees electing to appeal within DOE should first request their local personnel office to reconsider the classification. The request must include the information specified in paragraph 8g(1). Wherever possible the classification shall be reviewed by a different personnel specialist from the one who made the original decision. The local personnel office will promptly review the classification and reply to the employee in writing.
 - 2 If the employee is dissatisfied with the result of this review, he or she may appeal the classification to the Director of Personnel, providing a Copy of the information submitted in the request for review. The Director of Personnel will assure that the appeal is promptly considered within DOE or will refer the appeal to the appropriate OPM office within 30 calendar days of its receipt. When DOE elects to refer an appeal to OPM which was addressed internally, the employee must be notified in writing and must concur in this determination. If the employee does not want the appeal forwarded to OPM, DOE will cancel the appeal.
 - 3 If the employee is not satisfied with the decision of the Director of Personnel, the appeal may then be filed with the appropriate office of the OPM, as listed in appendix B, FPM chapter 511.

- 4 Employees electing to appeal directly to OPM are urged, although they are not required, to file their appeal through the personnel office that made the original classification decision. (DOE is responsible for ensuring that the appeal file contains all of the information required by appendix A-3 to FPM chapter 511.) Such appeals should be addressed to the appropriate OPM office, but transmitted through the DOE personnel office. It is mandatory (FPM chapter 511, S6-d) for the personnel office to forward such appeals to the appropriate OPM office within 60 calendar days of their receipt from the employee. Upon request, all information submitted by DOE concerning an employee's appeal will be made available to the employee.
- (b) FWS Positions. OPM requires that job grading appeals under FWS be submitted initially to DOE. Only one review level may be established within the Department.
- 1 All FWS job grading appeals must be addressed to the Director of Personnel through the local personnel office. The local personnel office will assure that all required information is included and will promptly forward the appeal to the Director of Personnel.
 - 2 The Director of Personnel will promptly decide the appeal and provide the employee with a written decision. If the employee is not satisfied with the decision, an appeal may then be filed with the appropriate OPM office as listed in appendix B, FPM chapter 511. When a DOE decision sustains the employee's appeal, the effective date for the change in the grade may not be later than the beginning of the first pay period which begins after the 60th day from the date the appeal was filed.
- (c) Effect of Appeal on Pending Classification Actions. Filing an appeal with either the DOE or OPM, whether GS or FWS, does not automatically stop a classification action. Such actions may be taken either by the DOE on its own motion or under order from OPM.
- h. Requests for Reconsideration. OPM may, at its discretion, reopen and reconsider an OPM classification appeal decision when either the Department or the affected employee presents written information which establishes a reasonable doubt as to the technical accuracy of the decision. Requests for reconsideration must be submitted, within 45 days of the original decision, to the Chief, Classification Appeals Office, Washington, D.C. 20415. Requests by the Department require endorsement by the Director Of Personnel and should be submitted to Headquarters well in advance of the 45-day time limit in order to permit an adequate review of the request. See FPM chapter 511, 56, and FPM letter 511-9, of 3-20-80, for further information.

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- i. Suspension of OPM Appellate Decisions; Temporary Compliance Authority. When an operating personnel office intends to request reconsideration of an OPM appellate decision, the office should, in certain circumstances, consider the use of temporary compliance authority to effect the decision unless a suspension of the decision has been granted by OPM. For further information on requests for such suspensions and on the use of temporary compliance authority, see FPM chapter 511, S6, and FPM letter 511-9, of 3-20-80.
9. POSITION CLASSIFICATION ACCOUNTABILITY. DOE officials who have been delegated classification authority are responsible for the proper exercise of that authority. Positions must be classified in accordance with published OPM standards and guides, DOE guides, and established classification policies and principles. Positions must be classified by individuals who have had proper training in position classification; normally, this means the personnel office staff. In situations where higher level officials who have classification authority disagree with series, title, or grade-level determinations made by the personnel office staff, the position description, evaluation statement, and any other documentation necessary for its proper classification must be forwarded to the Director of Personnel for an advisory opinion as to the proper classification of the position. The Director of Personnel will promptly issue an advisory opinion. Any official who classifies a position contrary to the advisory opinion is personally responsible for providing justification for his or her action as requested, and will be held fully accountable for the classification.
10. EFFECTING CLASSIFICATION ACTIONS.
 - a. All identified classification errors must be corrected by the beginning of the fourth pay period from the date the error is determined.
 - b. New classification standards must be implemented within 6 months from the date of receipt. The Director of Personnel must be notified when it is determined that the established time limit cannot be met.
 - c. Vacant positions identified for downgrading or upgrading because of Classification error, receipt of new standards, or action taken by higher authority may not be refilled prior to correcting the classification error.

11. CLASSIFICATION MAINTENANCE REVIEWS. Classification maintenance reviews will be conducted as a part of the overall DOE position management program. Classification maintenance review requirements and other position management requirements will be published in an Order on position management.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY:



WILLIAM S. HEFFELFINGER
Director of Administration