



United States Office of Personnel Management

Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness

Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions

December 2002

Article No. 29-03

Standard: Secretary Series, GS-318 (January 1979) [\[PDF\]](#)[\[TXT\]](#)

Factor: Factor 2, Supervisory Controls

Issue: Influence of organizational size and scope on freedom from supervision

Identification of the Classification Issue

The appellant's position was classified as Secretary (Office Automation), GS-318-7. The appellant provided clerical and administrative support to her supervisor and a small staff of Federal employees. She also provided limited support to an agency committee and members of county offices associated with her employing agency. The agency credited Factor 2 at Level 2-3; she believed that her position should be credited at Level 2-4.

Resolution

The appellant supported a small organization that the supervisor controlled primarily through face-to-face contacts. In this case, the supervision provided to the appealed position was directly related to the complexity of the organization served. Work issues did not require consultation with the supervisor on developing deadlines and the work to be done. The supervisor made most staff assignments and representational commitments herself. Representational substitutions were based on established program responsibility. Each of the small number of program components maintained its own technical records. While the appellant occasionally provided materials from her office files, e.g., maps and historical records, those duties did not require extensive fact gathering and review of information. She occasionally drafted letters of acknowledgement; however, they were limited in number and frequency and did not involve review of periodicals, publications, and speeches. The appellant disseminated procedural instructions and notices issued by other organizations. The small size of the staff did not present the opportunity for or the necessity of devising and installing formal office procedures or developing the notices and

instructions. An administrative branch was responsible for all complex administrative matters and program issues. These conditions limited the appellant's ability to exercise the discretion and judgment on complex issues required to meet Level 2-4. OPM agreed with the agency's crediting of Level 2-3.

“Back to the Basics”

When evaluating a secretarial position, the actual requirements of the organization supported control the factor levels that can be credited. For example, supervisory controls for a position cannot be viewed in isolation from the work situation credited in Factor 1. For the appealed position, the limited size of the staff, the nature of the organization supported, and the supervisor's involvement in administrative issues precluded crediting Level 2-4.

Link to C-0318-07-04 [\[PDF\]](#) [\[TXT\]](#)