

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
DEPARTMENTAL MANUAL

Personnel

Part 370 DM Addition to FPM

Chapter 312 Position Management

370 DM 312,1.1

Subchapter 1. Position Management

1.1 Purpose. This chapter outlines the Department's policies, objectives and guidelines for the development, implementation and administration of effective position management programs. The provisions are directed to all personnel having responsibilities for position management and/or for planning, recommending, evaluating or approving organization and position structures.

1.2 Authority. This chapter implements and supplements the policies and instructions prescribed in Federal Personnel Manual Chapter 312, and certain aspects of Part 101, Departmental Manual on Organization Management.

1.3 Policy. It shall be the Department's policy that: positions are carefully planned, structured, and staffed to achieve the most effective use of human resources at the most economical expenditure levels; managers and supervisors are assigned specific roles in the operation of the position management systems; and there will be continual coordination among managers, personnel, equal opportunity, management analysis, and budget staffs in order to assure efficient planning and utilization of resources.

1.4 Objectives. The position management guidelines set forth in this chapter are designed to achieve the following specific Departmental objectives:

- A. Sound and economical organization and position structures which serve mission needs.
- B. Control of unwarranted average grade escalation.
- C. Overall reduction in operating costs as can be reflected through reductions in personnel and fiscal resources for given programs.
- D. Increased employee productivity through the most effective utilization of human resources and skills.
- E. Compatibility with and support for the Department's Upward Mobility, Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP), Affirmative Action, and Equal Opportunity Program.
- F. Participation by line and staff managers at designated levels in the analysis of organization and position structures.

1.5 Relationship to other Departmental Management Systems. The provisions of this chapter may be applied to or integrated with other Departmental management systems which are designed to manage and control Departmental resources. Organization and management studies, as appropriate, and personnel management evaluations will include an evaluation of the

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effectiveness of the position management programs. Where deficiencies are noted, they should be brought to the attention of appropriate line managers.

1.6 Responsibilities for Position Management.

A. The Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget will provide Secretarial leadership and coordination of position management in the Department. This includes assuring that position management is addressed in the Department's budget, planning, personnel, and evaluation processes. Where specific Secretarial corrective action or special study or analysis is indicated, the Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget will initiate such actions in collaboration with the concerned program Assistant Secretary and bureau head.

B. The Director of Personnel is responsible for the development of position management policies, guidelines, and instructions for the implementation of pertinent processes throughout the Department and for providing staff guidance and technical assistance for effective position management and prevention of unwarranted grade escalation. Through the functional Division Chiefs and their staff of personnel specialists, the Office of Personnel (PPM) will: utilize data from the Departmental Personnel Data File (DPDF) as well as ADP reports to monitor the Department's position management program with respect to changes in average grade, grade compression, number of deputy and special assistant positions, and recommend corrective actions where appropriate; conduct periodic position management reviews to assess the effectiveness of bureau systems; and develop or ensure development of training on position management to be included in Departmental and bureau training programs, as needed.

C. Bureau Heads, through their Personnel Officers, will establish and maintain a position management program in consonance with published Departmental policies and procedures.

1.7 Position Management Guidelines.

A. Program Description. Position management involves the structuring of positions, functions, and work groups in a manner that will best achieve the organizational goals of efficiency, productivity, and effectiveness within approved resource levels. The Department's position management program is designed to assist management officials in the achievement of these goals through the identification, prevention and elimination of: unnecessary organizational fragmentation; excessive layering; excessive use of deputies and assistants; improper design of jobs; and inappropriate span of control. In addition, to support a successful position management program, individual positions will be properly classified in accordance with published standards and guides and established classification principles and policies.

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B. Bureau Program Requirements. Each bureau and Departmental office will implement Departmental program requirements which are compatible with its own mission goals, adhering to the following guidelines.

(1) Assignment of Responsibility. Responsibility for position management rests at the highest level of line management and must be explicitly delegated to key line managers heading various segments of the organization.

(2) Utilization of Total Staff Resources. In carrying out their responsibilities, line managers shall utilize budget, planning, management analysis, personnel, and other administrative staff, to the extent that they are available, in the development and continuing operation of the position management systems. It is especially important that the work of the different staff elements be coordinated and mutually supporting.

(3) Position Authority. A position authorization and control procedure should be established to assure that existing and proposed work organization and staffing arrangements meet the requirements of good position management.

(a) The authorizations and controls must be operated with the numbers of positions, ceiling controls and financial allowances authorized in the budget by the Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Secretary.

(b) The bureau may maintain detailed listings of individual positions on a decentralized basis, i.e., by regions, areas, States, or districts.

(c) Staffing tables should be approved by an appropriate higher level authority in the bureau when: new organizations are established; there are major modifications to existing organizations or groups of positions; or there are organizational or position changes that will result in adverse actions to groups of employees. Staffing tables should serve as a guide for the accomplishment of personnel management actions in each bureau or Departmental office.

(4) Staffing Planning Considerations. The position management program shall be developed as an integrated part of the administrative management planning process for a bureau, with due regard to work methods, equipment, facilities, procedures, techniques, skills and knowledges, as well as the following considerations.

(a) A minimum number of positions with as low a proportional ratio as possible of supervisory, managerial, and staff support positions to nonsupervisory operating positions, consistent with the need for effective execution of assigned programs and functions. This includes the avoidance of deputy, assistant (with limited responsibilities), assistant to, and

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comparable top level positions which increase management and supervisory overhead costs and which have a questionable impact on productivity. Additional supervisory or staff positions required for developing an inexperienced work force, performing a new mission, or implementing new laws, regulations, and procedures should be earmarked for review during evaluations to determine continuing need.

(b) A reasonable balance between professional and technical/support positions: specifically, a balance closely related to the frequency of professional and technical/support tasks in the organization's normal work cycle.

(c) A reasonable proportion of trainees and lower-graded employees to estimated replacement needs for full performance level and higher-graded employees, taking into account predictable requirements, past records of quits and transfers, expansion needs if pertinent, availability of trained replacements in the labor market, and training time required.

(d) A clear delineation of work assignments and job-to-job relationships which avoid excessive supervision and review, excessive staff advice and assistance, and overlaps, conflicts, and ambiguities in work assignments.

(e) Adequate opportunity for development and progression up a well-defined career ladder for those employees who show significant capability and potential for more responsible positions requiring planned experience at lower levels. Such opportunity need not be in a single organization if all steps are available by rotation among activities.

(f) Sufficient job interest to attract, retain, and motivate employees of the needed level of competence. Specifically, sufficient challenges, variety and responsibility to attract and hold professional, technical, and administrative competence where needed and sufficient opportunity to attract quality employees at the normal entry levels.

(g) A clear understanding and definition of the kinds and levels of skills and knowledges required for competent and safe performance of position duties. In staffing positions it is important to avoid the recruitment of over-qualified as well as under-qualified employees.

(h) A sound use of grade levels, resulting in a well-balanced position structure. In a well-balanced position structure the grades of positions are fully supported by essential work to be accomplished, and employees are fully utilized at the level of their positions.

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(5) Control of Vacancies and In-Hiring.

(a) Before any vacant position is filled, a review should be made by the line managers with advisory assistance from the personnel staff to determine whether the grade of the position is fully supportable and whether the duties of the position can be eliminated or assigned to other positions. In the case of full-time permanent vacancies, the hiring official should be aware of the provisions of part-time employment and consider the feasibility of converting a vacant position into one or more part-time position(s).

(b) Hiring should be accomplished to the fullest extent possible at the entry level. This policy should reflect conscious management decision due to private industry competition, career mobility, etc. Commitments to such programs as Upward Mobility necessitate that, where possible, vacancies that occur above entry level grades be restructured so that replacements can be hired at grade levels below those of the previous incumbents.

(6) Upgrading of Positions.

(a) Before a position is upgraded, the organizational work pattern should be thoroughly reviewed by the line manager to verify the necessity for assigning responsibilities as high as the grade being proposed.

(b) Any classification of positions or promotions of employees above the full performance level of each occupation must be handled as exceptions to normal staffing patterns with assurance that documentation of the reasons and appropriateness are contained in the case.

(7) Organizational Planning. An important element in a position management program is the development and maintenance of an organization structure designed to promote the effective accomplishment of program objectives. The factors that should be considered by a bureau in the development of its organization changes are set forth in Part 101 of the Departmental Manual on Organization Management.

(8) Analysis and Reporting.

(a) The position management program should provide for periodic review and analysis to provide essential data as may be requested by the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of Personnel Management, and the Congress. For a bureau as a whole, as well as for each major subordinate organization unit at headquarters and in the field, analyses should include summaries such as the following: review of statistical trend data on the proportion of managerial and supervisory to nonsupervisory positions, administrative to program positions, and professional to technical/support positions; examination of the number of positions

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authorized and the number occupied by GS grade, the average GS grade, the percentage of employees in each GS grade, turnover, promotions, training, career development, incentive awards, and other activities related to staff utilization; and information on new arrangements entered into for the provision of services by contract, identifying dollar savings resulting from the conversion to contract services, and the number, titles, and grades of positions required to administer the contracts.

(b) Line managers, bureau classification chiefs, and designated position management officers should coordinate and conduct an annual assessment of the overall position management program (as of September 30). The Annual Position Management Analysis is designed to encompass the annual assessment and planning requirements of the Department's Position Management Program. Accordingly, the Office of Personnel (PPM) will provide selected numerical position management indicators, computer-generated from the Departmental Personnel Data File (DPDF), each year by November 15 to Bureau Directors, through the appropriate Assistant Secretary, for their use in comparatively assessing each assigned Bureau's position management posture. The DPDF data should be addressed as part of the year-end assessment of established position management program goals and incorporated in the Annual Position Management Analysis. In addition to the DPDF data, specific position management issues may also be presented as appropriate and available for the consideration of the Assistant Secretary and the Bureau Director.

(c) Each bureau will develop its Annual Position Management Analysis for submission to the Office of Personnel (PPM) by December 15. The Annual Position Management Analysis will contain: (1) an assessment of DPDF data; (2) a narrative summary of progress in achieving position management goals which may have been established within the bureau; (3) a description of remedial actions to be implemented to resolve apparent position management problems; and (4) a commitment to specific position management improvement goals to be achieved in the fiscal year. Coverage should be as complete and comprehensive as possible and major position management program elements should be addressed fully.

(d) Appendix A, this chapter, provides a model for the development and administration of a position management program. It is intended to serve as only the framework of a position management program, upon which each bureau will establish individual action items according to the internally assessed needs.

1.8 Analysis, Evaluation, and Monitoring. The Office of Personnel (PPM) and each bureau are responsible for implementing the necessary management information system to track progress on position management objectives.

A. Analysis. It is the responsibility of the Office of Personnel (PPM) to conduct continuing analyses of the factual data available from automated personnel systems and other sources regarding: grade structures

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of occupations across bureau lines; ratios of entry level, journeyman and supervisory positions by occupations across bureau lines; historical patterns of average grade levels by occupations and bureau; and similar statistical information regarding position management. As the results of these analyses are made available to bureaus, PPM will call attention to questionable areas and unusual patterns for the bureaus to study. Bureaus are responsible for similar analyses of occupational characteristics as they affect bureau position management plans.

B. Evaluation and Monitoring. The Office of Personnel (PPM) and each bureau are responsible during the fiscal year for evaluating and monitoring performance as related to goals established in the Annual Position Management Analysis. A specific evaluation system will be maintained by each bureau in cooperation with PPM for carrying out such activities as classification audits, occupational reviews and analyses, staff utilization studies, and similar surveys. This system will include the bureau's own monitoring and evaluation activities as presented in the Annual Position Management Analysis. Updated information regarding significant changes which produce major alterations in the plans, e.g., new missions, organizational changes, employment ceilings should be provided to PPM as appropriate.

1.9 Labor Management Relations Considerations. As appropriate, employee organizations holding exclusive recognition and/or national consultation rights should be notified of changes in personnel policies, practices, and conditions of work that may result from implementation of this chapter.

1.10 Control of Positions in the Senior Executive Services (SES), GS-16 and above, and those established under 5 U.S.C. 3104 (PL-313). Information on the role of the Executive Resources Board and the Departmental control of the SES, GS-16 and above PL-313 type positions is contained in 370 DM 920.

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MODEL POSITION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Action Items

Responsible Official or Function

I. POLICY ISSUANCES

A. Issue a written policy statement to reaffirm responsibility for and support of the Bureaus' position management program efforts. Issuance should communicate the basic principles of sound position management and its importance, and set forth guidelines for the exercise of position management authorities and responsibilities.

Head of Bureau, Departmental Office or equivalent organization; Regional Director or equivalent official.

B. Disseminate guidelines and instructions setting forth position management policy and procedures to managerial and supervisory personnel at all organizational levels. Guidelines should (a) clarify the roles of management -- line and staff -- and the servicing personnel function in accomplishing sound position management practices; and (b) define position management delegations of authority. Sufficient authority should be assigned to assure efficient and effective position management measures. This may be accomplished through the development of a "Position Management" chapter for inclusion in the bureau administrative handbook or manual.

Jointly: Management and servicing Personnel Office.

II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

A. Delineate and assign staff responsibility for assisting the line managers in the accomplishment of the program.

Head of Bureau; Regional Director or equivalent official.

B. Establish a Review Committee, Board or similar entity consisting of joint representation from line and staff management, and Personnel Management to oversee, monitor, coordinate and evaluate position management efforts, and review position management aspects of proposed line management actions.

Jointly: Headquarters - Management and Bureau Personnel Officer; Regional Director and Regional Personnel Officer.

Responsible Official or Function

Personnel Officer; Chief of Classification.

Employee Development Staff

Personnel Officer

Jointly -- Management and Employee Development Staff

Employee Development Officer

Chief of Classification or designated Position Management Officer

Action Items

- C. Advise and assist line managers to assure effectiveness of position design and structure.

III. TRAINING

- A. Encourage and/or nominate managers and supervisors to participate in position management courses offered by the Office of Personnel Management.
- B. Ensure that all senior position classification specialists are adequately trained in the wide range of considerations that enter into good position management.
- C. Explore feasibility and practicality of conducting a series of in-house courses (by contract or use of in-house resource personnel) and/or workshops to provide position management orientation and training for supervisors and managers.
- D. Review ongoing supervisory training course material to ascertain the inclusion of a segment or session on position management. If none exists, work toward that effort.
- E. Promote acceptance of bureau's position management program and principles by distributing to managers and supervisors informational literature; establishing position management network with counterparts, supervisors and managers within serviced organization.

Action Items

Responsible Official or Function

IV. POSITION MANAGEMENT REVIEW MECHANISMS

A. Include position management implications as an integral part of the onsite review program procedures of:

1. Personnel Management Evaluations
2. Cyclic audits (classification maintenance reviews).
3. Organizational Analyses

1. Personnel Officer and Chief of Personnel Management Evaluation
2. Personnel Officer and Chief of Classification
3. Personnel Officer and Management Analysis Staff

B. Conduct special position management reviews as necessary to determine problem areas to be targeted for remedial action.

Jointly: Personnel and Management

C. Involve servicing Position Classification Specialists in front-end planning stages of organizational changes in order to avoid organizational weaknesses, e.g., fragmentation, excessive layering, ineffective span of control, etc.

Management Analysis Staff

V. REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A. General Indicators of Program Effectiveness:

Bureau position management improvement efforts should result in the identification, prevention, and elimination of such common faults as:

1. unnecessary organizational fragmentation;
2. excessive supervisory layering;
3. excessive use of deputies, assistants to and special assistants;
4. grade compression;
5. improper design of positions;
6. inappropriate span of control.

Action Items

B. Quantitative Indicators: Bureau system should include tracking of specific numerical indicators as follows:

1. Average Grade:

Average grade record should be maintained and available by specific series (by installation, by bureau, etc.).

2. Average Salary:

Fluctuation in average salary (by installations, by bureau, etc.) may reflect management changes in position structure.

3. Ratios:

- a. Supervisory to non-supervisory positions;
- b. Full performance level to trainee or junior level positions;
- c. Positions above the full performance level as a percentage of all positions;
- d. Professional to nonprofessional positions;
- e. Professional and technical positions (combined) to support (clerical) positions;
- f. Administrative overhead costs to line program operation costs.

Action Items

Responsible Official or Function

C. Analysis and Reporting: Annual Position Management Analysis.

The regularly planned assessment of the position management program should culminate in the presentation of specific findings and recommendations to responsible levels of bureau management. Corrective/remedial actions are taken where needed.

Position Management Reviewers, e.g., Boards, Committees, PME Teams, etc., Personnel Staff.

Position management improvement -- proposed and/or completed -- are recorded and submitted to the Department's Office of Personnel (PPM) by December 15 annually in accordance with Annual Position Management Analysis requirements and format set forth in 370 DM 312,1.7B(8). Report should include an action plan which establishes position management goals (action items) with time frames, responsible officials, and monitoring and evaluation procedures.

Bureau Personnel Officer

IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Assure individual accountability of managers and supervisors through the performance appraisal process.

Bureau Management

Utilize the incentive awards program to encourage and recognize managers/supervisors who excel in meeting the position management program objectives.

Jointly: Management and Employee Relations Staff

