

**OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
ATLANTA OVERSIGHT DIVISION  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA**

**CLASSIFICATION APPEAL DECISION**

Under section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code

**Appellant:** [Appellant]

**Position:** Secretary, (Office Automation)  
GS-318-05

**Organization:** Naval Criminal Investigative Service  
Regional Forensic Laboratory  
[installation]

**Decision:** Secretary, (Office Automation)  
GS-318-05  
(Appeal denied)

**OPM decision number:** C-0318-05-02

Kathy W. Day  
Classification Appeals Officer

Date:8/21/97

RD # 0318057A.AT

## **Background**

On May 16, 1997, the Atlanta Oversight Division, Office of Personnel Management, accepted an appeal for the position of Secretary (Office Automation), GS-318-05, at the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS), Regional Forensic Laboratory, [city state]. In November 1996, the Department of Defense Civilian Personnel Management Service conducted a desk audit of the position which resulted in a downgrade from GS-6 to GS-5. The appellant is requesting that her position be classified as Administrative Support Assistant, GS-303-6 or 7.

The appeal has been accepted and processed under section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code. This is the final administrative decision on the classification of the position subject to discretionary review only under the limited conditions and time outlined in part 511, subpart F, of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

## **Sources of Information**

This appeal decision is based on information from the following sources:

1. The appellant's letter dated May 9, 1997, appealing the classification of her position.
2. The agency's letter of June 2, 1997, providing position and organizational information.
3. A telephone interview with the appellant on July 18, 1997.
4. A telephone interview with the appellant's supervisor, on July 18, 1997.

## **Position Information**

The appellant is assigned to Position Number ZD206 which was classified on January 6, 1997. The appellant and the supervisor have certified to the accuracy of the position description.

The appellant serves as the principal clerical and administrative assistant to the Laboratory Director of the Regional Forensic Laboratory which includes the Military Working Dog (MWD) and the Consolidated Evidence Facility programs. She performs a variety of clerical and administrative duties such as controlling incoming correspondence; screening incoming and outgoing mail; maintaining files, records, and control logs; typing drafts in final form ensuring accuracy of grammar, spelling, and punctuation; composing routine correspondence; maintaining the calendar for the chief; compiling, assembling, and preparing recurring reports; maintaining the supply inventory; making travel arrangements; and advising the staff on applicable procedures and instructions. The secretarial work is performed 70 percent of the time and represents the paramount work of the position.

Budget duties performed by the appellant consist of tracking and maintaining an accurate account of expenditures for two separate budgets for the MWD program and the laboratory. She ensures the effective utilization of funds, submits quarterly proposals for approval, and prepares purchase requisitions. This work is performed 25 percent of time.

Personnel duties performed by the appellant consist of maintaining the personnel files for employees, preparing requests for personnel actions; and providing advice and assistance to employees in the areas of training, benefits, ratings, timekeeping, promotions, etc. She also prepares the requests for the annual medical examinations for employees. These duties are performed approximately 5 percent of time and are not grade determining.

The appellant receives direction from the Laboratory Director who assigns work and provides general instructions. The appellant plans and carries out her own assignments independently, referring only unusual problems to the supervisor. Work is spot checked by the supervisor for compliance with policy and procedures.

### **Standards Referenced**

Secretary Series, GS-318, January 1979.

Office Automation Grade Evaluation Guide, November 1990.

Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-303, January 1979.

Budget Clerical and Assistance Series, GS-561, March 1983.

### **Series and Title Determination**

#### Series:

The appellant believes that the Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-303, more accurately reflects the duties of her position. Positions classified in the Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-303, involve specialized work for which no appropriate occupational series has been established.

The appellant's position involves a mixture of work classifiable in more than one occupational series, Budget Clerical and Assistance series, GS-561, and Secretary Series, GS-318. The Budget Clerical and Assistance series includes duties performing clerical and technical work in support of budget analysis and administration requiring a knowledge of the procedures which facilitate budgeting and a practical understanding and skill in the application of rules, regulations, and procedures associated with agency budget transactions. The Secretary series covers positions that assist one individual, and in some cases, the subordinate staff of that individual, by performing general office work auxiliary to the work of the organization. A position in the GS-318 series is the principal clerical or administrative support position in the office, operating independently of any other such position in the office. The duties require knowledge of clerical and administrative procedures and various office skills and the ability to apply those skills to increase the effectiveness of others. Although the position may acquire knowledge of the work of the organization, technical or professional knowledge of a specialized subject-matter area is not required. The appellant performs office clerical and administrative work requiring knowledge of office practices and procedures. The work frees the supervisor to concentrate on the primary work of the organization.

Mixed positions should be classified in the series appropriate for the paramount qualifications required. The secretarial duties represent the paramount work of the position. Therefore, the position is properly placed in the Secretary Series, GS-318.

Title:

The GS-318 standard states that nonsupervisory positions in the GS-318 series are titled *Secretary*. Since the position also requires office automation skills, that requirement is reflected in the parenthetical title (*Office Automation*) which may be abbreviated (*OA*).

The position is properly titled and coded as Secretary (Office Automation), GS-318.

### **Grade Level Determination**

The secretarial duties are evaluated against the grading criteria in the GS-318 standard, the budget/finance duties are evaluated using the GS-561 standard, and office automation work is evaluated against the Office Automation Grade Evaluation Guide. The personnel duties do not have any impact on the grade and are not evaluated separately. The position is evaluated as follows:

#### **Secretary, GS-318:**

The GS-318 standard is written in the Factor Evaluation System (FES) format, using nine factors for evaluation. A point value is assigned to each factor based on a comparison of the position's duties with the factor-level descriptions in the standard. The factor point values mark the lower end of the ranges for the indicated factor levels. For a position factor to warrant a given point value, it must be fully equivalent to the overall intent of the selected factor-level description. If the position fails in any significant aspect to meet a particular factor-level description in the standard, the point value for the next lower factor level must be assigned, unless the deficiency is balanced by an equally important aspect which meets a higher level. The total points assigned are converted to a grade by use of the grade conversion table in the standard.

Under FES, positions which significantly exceed the highest factor level or fail to meet the lowest factor level described in a classification standard must be evaluated by reference to the Primary Standard, contained in Appendix 3 of the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards. The Primary Standard is the "standard-for-standards" for FES.

#### Factor 1 - Knowledge Required by the Position:

This factor measures the nature and extent of information or facts that a worker must understand to do acceptable work, such as the steps, procedures, practices, rules, policies, principles, and concepts and the nature and extent of the skills needed to apply this knowledge. The agency credited Level 1-3 for this factor.

Knowledge Type:

At Knowledge Type III, positions require knowledge of the duties, priorities, commitments, policies, and program goals of the staff sufficient to perform nonroutine assignments such as independently noting and following up on commitments made at meetings, shifting clerical workload in subordinate offices, or locating and summarizing information from files and records when this requires recognizing which information is relevant. At this level, the secretary is fully responsible for coordinating the work of the office with the work of other offices, and for recognizing the need for such coordination in various circumstances.

The appellant performs a number of different administrative and clerical functions, including some nonroutine assignments similar to those described for Knowledge Type III, such as maintaining the supervisor's calendar, independently handling administrative actions, and coordinating administrative matters with the supervisor and other organizations. The intent of Knowledge Type III is met.

At Knowledge Type IV, in addition to the knowledges and skills required at lower levels, the employee must have a basic foundation of administrative concepts, principles, and practices sufficient to independently perform such duties as eliminating conflict and duplication in extensive office procedures; determining when new procedures are needed; systematically studying and evaluating new office machines; and studying and recommending restructuring of clerical activities of the office and subordinate offices. This level also requires a comprehensive knowledge of the supervisor's policies and views on all significant matters affecting the organization.

Knowledge Type IV is not met. The appellant works in a small office and there is little, if any, opportunity for the independent performance of duties similar to those found at this level. There are no subordinate organizations nor other clerical staff necessitating the analysis of extensive office procedures or restructuring of clerical activities as described.

Knowledge Type III is credited.

Work Situation:

Work Situation refers to the complexity of the organization served (i.e., the immediate office in which the secretary works and any subordinate offices) which affects the extent of office rules, procedures, operations, and priorities the secretary must apply.

At Work Situation A, the organization is small and of limited complexity. Although the organization may include several subordinate sections or subgroups, staff direction is primarily through face-to-face meetings. The internal procedures and administrative controls are simple and informal, and few problems are encountered in coordinating work that would require formal procedures and controls.

Comparable to Work Situation A, the Regional Forensic Laboratory is small and without subordinate organizations. This limits the need for formal procedures and administrative controls. Internal procedures are straightforward and mostly informal. Coordinating the work presents few problems.

At Work Situation B, the staff is divided into subordinate segments which may be further subdivided, work direction is through intermediate supervisors, and the subordinate groups differ in function and administrative requirements in such a way that demands are placed on the secretary that are significantly greater than those described at Work Situation A. In this situation, there is a system of formal internal procedures and administrative controls and a formal production or process reporting system.

Work Situation B is not met. The appellant operates under normal internal and administrative procedures. The staff is divided into different groups; however, these groups do not represent many differing functions and administrative requirements. Coordination among subordinate units requires attention, but this does not significantly increase the normal demands placed on the appellant.

Work Situation A is credited for this subfactor.

The combination of Knowledge Type III and Work Situation A equates to Level 1-3 for 350 points.

#### Factor 2 - Supervisory Controls:

This factor covers the nature and extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, the employee's responsibility for carrying out assignments, and how completed work is reviewed. The agency credited Level 2-3 for this factor. The appellant disagrees with this determination.

At Level 2-3, the supervisor defines the overall objectives and priorities of the work of the office and assists with special assignments. The secretary plans and carries out the work of the office and handles problems and deviations in accordance with established instructions. The methods used are almost never reviewed in detail, and completed work is reviewed for adequacy, appropriateness, and conformance to established policy.

Similar to Level 2-3, the appellant functions under very general instructions from the supervisor and performs most assignments without assistance from the supervisor or other employees. The written aspects of the work are reviewed.

At Level 2-4, the supervisor and employee together determine the deadlines and the work to be done, and the employee handles a wide variety of situations and conflicts; such as, informing the staff of commitments made by the supervisor and arranging for the staff to implement them; or the secretary may decide to arrange for a subordinate to represent the organization at a conference. This level is most likely found in organizations of such size and scope that many complex office problems arise which cannot be brought to the supervisor's attention.

Level 2-4 is not met. While the appellant works with considerable freedom and handles most problems, the limited size and structure of her organization preclude her from encountering the scope of complex problems envisioned at this level on a regular or recurring basis. Any unusual or complex assignments or difficulties are referred to the supervisor.

Level 2-3 is credited for 275 points.

#### Factor 3 - Guidelines:

This factor covers the nature of guidelines used, and the judgment needed to apply them. The agency credited Level 3-2 for this factor. The appellant disagrees with this determination.

At Level 3-2, the guidelines include dictionaries, style manuals, agency instructions, and operating policies. The secretary locates and selects the appropriate guideline for application, referring situations where the guidelines cannot be applied or significant deviations are required to the supervisor. The secretary may also determine which established alternative to use.

Similar to Level 3-2, the appellant uses a variety of established guidelines which are generally applicable to the work. She selects the appropriate guidelines, determines if alternatives can be used, and refers situations where guidelines cannot be applied to the supervisor.

At Level 3-3, the guidelines include a large body of unwritten policies, precedents, and practices which are not completely applicable to the work or are not specific and deal with matters relating to judgment, efficiency, and relative priorities rather than procedural concerns. The employee may apply and adapt guidelines, such as regulations or the supervisor's policies, to specific problems for which the guidelines are not clearly applicable.

Level 3-3 is not met. Although the appellant is expected to make judgments and interpret guidelines from headquarters, the guidelines are usually relatively specific and can be applied without much deviation. Typical guidelines used by the appellant consist of style manuals, DOD directives, and regulations that are readily available. She does not routinely apply a large body of unwritten policies, precedents, and practices as described at this level.

Level 3-2 is credited for 125 points.

#### Factor 4 - Complexity:

This factor covers the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of tasks, steps, processes, or methods in the work performed; the difficulty in identifying what needs to be done; and the difficulty and originality involved in performing the work. The agency credited Level 4-2 for this factor.

At Level 4-2, the work consists of duties that involve various related steps, processes, or methods. Secretaries at this level perform the full range of procedural duties in support of the office, and

decisions regarding what needs to be done involve various choices requiring the secretary to recognize the existence of and differences among clearly recognizable situations. The actions to be taken or responses to be made differ in such things as the sources of information, the kinds of transactions or entries, or other readily verifiable differences. Decisions at this level are based on a knowledge of the procedural requirements of the work coupled with an awareness of the specific functions and staff assignments of the office.

Similar to Level 4-2, the appellant performs a full range of procedural duties related to clerical, budget, personnel, and various other areas of responsibility. She determines the proper course of action for each assignment based on priorities, commitments, and knowledge of NCIS policies and programs.

At Level 4-3, the work includes various duties involving different and unrelated processes and methods, such as preparing one-of-a-kind reports or setting up conferences. Decisions at this level regarding what needs to be done and how to accomplish them are based on the secretary's knowledge of the duties, priorities, commitments, policies, and program goals of the supervisor and staff and involve analysis of the subject, phase, or issues involved in each assignment to select a course of action from many alternatives.

Level 4-3 is not met. While this position performs a variety of duties using different processes appropriate to each assignment, there is little need for the analysis of issues and subjects as described at this level, since the assignments typically involve standard or routine procedures which are clear. The full intent of Level 4-3 is not met, and this level cannot be credited.

Level 4-2 is credited for 75 points.

#### Factor 5 - Scope and Effect:

This factor covers the relationship between the nature of the work, as measured by the purpose, breadth, and depth of the assignment, and the effect of work products or services both within and outside the organization. The agency credited Level 5-2 for this factor.

At Level 5-2, the purpose of the work is to carry out specific procedures which affect the accuracy and reliability of further processes. Duties include serving as liaison between the supervisor and subordinate units; consolidating reports submitted; and arranging meetings involving staff.

Level 5-2 is met. The purpose of the appellant's position is to perform administrative and clerical work which facilitates the overall work of the organization and supports the staff. For example, she compiles, assembles, and prepares recurring reports; types drafts in final form ensuring accuracy of grammar, spelling, and punctuation; distributes mail; answers and directs telephone calls, etc.

At Level 5-3, the position serves offices that affect a wide range of agency activities, the work of other agencies, or a large segment of the public or business community, and the secretary modifies



and devises methods and procedures that significantly and consistently affect the accomplishment of the mission of the office.

Level 5-3 is not met. The laboratory does not have the impact described at this level nor does the appellant modify or devise procedures and methods significantly affecting mission accomplishment.

Level 5-2 is credited for 75 points.

#### Factor 6 - Personal Contacts:

This factor measures face-to-face contacts and telephone dialogue with persons not in the supervisory chain. The agency credited Level 6-2 for this factor.

At Level 6-2, the highest level described in the standard, personal contacts are with employees in the same agency, but outside the immediate organization. At this level, the persons contacted are typically engaged in different functions, missions, and kinds of work.

Similar to Level 6-2, the appellant's personal contacts are with other employees of the NCIS, headquarters personnel support, and the laboratory staff. There is no information in the record to support that the appellant exceeds this level.

Level 6-2 is credited for 25 points.

#### Factor 7 - Purpose of Contacts:

The purpose of personal contacts ranges from factual exchanges of information to situations involving significant or controversial issues and differing viewpoints, goals, and objectives. The personal contacts which serve as the basis for the level selected for this factor must be the contacts which are the basis for the level selected for Factor 6. The agency credited this factor at Level 7-2.

At Level 7-2, the highest level described in the standard, the purpose of the contacts is to plan, coordinate, or advise on work efforts or to resolve problems.

Comparable to Level 7-2, the appellant's personal contacts are typically made to receive or provide information, make travel arrangements or schedule meetings, coordinate work, and resolve administrative problems. There is no information in the record to support that the appellant's contacts exceed those described at Level 7-2.

Level 7-2 is credited for 50 points.

Factor 8 - Physical Demands:

This factor measures the requirements and physical demands placed on the employee in performing the work assignment, including the agility and dexterity required and the extent of physical exertion. The agency credited this factor at Level 8-1.

Level 8-1 is appropriate, where the work is sedentary and may involve some walking, standing, bending, and carrying light items. The appellant's work is generally performed while seated and involves some walking, standing, and light lifting.

Level 8-1 is credited for 5 points.

Factor 9 - Work Environment:

This factor considers the risks and discomforts in the employee's physical surroundings and the safety precautions required. The agency credited this factor at Level 9-1.

Level 9-1 is met, where the work involves the everyday risks and discomforts found in offices, meeting and training rooms, libraries, and residences. Such work areas are adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated. The appellant functions in an office environment.

Level 9-1 is credited for 5 points.

<b>SUMMARY</b>		
<b>FACTOR</b>	<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
1. Knowledge Required by the Position	1-3	350
2. Supervisory Controls	2-3	275
3. Guidelines	3-2	125
4. Complexity	4-2	75
5. Scope and Effect	5-2	75
6. Personal Contacts	6-2	25
7. Purpose of Contacts	7-2	50
8. Physical Demands	8-1	5
9. Work Environment	9-1	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>985</b>

A total of 985 points equates to GS-5 (855 to 1100 points).

### **Budget Clerical and Assistance Series, GS-561:**

The budget/finance work is evaluated against the Budget Clerical and Assistance series, which is also written in the FES format. These duties are evaluated as follows:

#### Factor 1 - Knowledge Required by the Position:

The agency credited Level 1-3 for this factor.

At Level 1-3, the work requires detailed knowledge of procedures and regulations for the allotment and distribution of funds, and code structures of accounts of assigned activities (e.g., supply, personnel, travel, transportation, utilities, and procurement). Knowledge is used to compare requests for funds with allowable funding limits in selected budgetary documents and to verify that funds are available for the stated purpose. Knowledge of different object classes and line items is applied in determining where to locate funding information and in adjusting entries to reflect current status of funds in different accounts involving many different object classes and line items within the same appropriation or revolving fund.

Level 1-3 is met. The appellant maintains the budget accounts for the laboratory and the MWD programs. She uses knowledge of the budget procedures and processes to ensure that funds are available for all obligations. She ensures that payments for travel orders, purchase orders, and contracts do not exceed authorized funds.

At Level 1-4, the employee has a practical knowledge of agency budgetary processes and procedures for transactions involving two or more appropriations with different guidelines and procedures or a comparable mix of appropriated fund and/or revolving fund accounts. Knowledge typically includes: regulations which apply to the processing of requests for allotments to cover substantive, mission-oriented programs; procedures for transferring funds between accounts and object classes among different appropriations; requirements for reporting on budget execution; and/or methods for calculating budgetary information from many different source documents. Knowledge at this level is also used to compile, consolidate, organize, and summarize information about the budget of the employing organization in annual budget estimates and a variety of one-time and recurring reports.

Level 1-4 is not met. Although the appellant provides assistance in planning and budget preparation for the laboratory, the knowledge required is more limited than described at Level 1-4 because of the limited nature of the program. She uses established processes and procedures to maintain appropriated fund accounts only. She is not required to know procedures for other types of appropriations.

Level 1-3 is credited for 350 points.

#### Factor 2 - Supervisory Controls:

The agency credited Level 2-3 for this factor.

At Level 2-3, the highest level described in the standard, the supervisor or an employee of higher grade provides general guidance on the techniques and procedures for processing unusual or one-of-a-kind transactions which are without precedent, and which are not clearly covered by existing guidelines and instructions for the work. The employee independently plans and carries out the most difficult procedural and technical processing of budgetary transactions covered in available guidelines. The employee makes adjustments to the most complicated appropriated and/or revolving fund (industrially funded) accounts covered by guidelines without reference to the supervisor. At this level employees may suggest alternative processes and procedures for accomplishing budgetary transactions. Completed work is spot checked by the supervisor or an employee of a higher grade for net availability of funds and for overall conformance to budgetary policies, requirements, and procedures. Methods used by the employee in arriving at final balances are rarely reviewed.

Level 2-3 is met. The supervisor is available for guidance on unusual transactions. The appellant functions independently on all budgetary assignments. According to the supervisor, the laboratory does not have direct access to the Financial Management System (FMS) which gives up-to-the-minute information concerning expenditures. This makes the accounting procedures more difficult and forces the appellant to make decisions based on limited information to accomplish budgetary transactions. The work is reviewed for conformance with accepted budgetary requirements. There is no information in the appeal record to support that the appellant exceeds Level 2-3.

This factor is credited with Level 2-3 for 275 points.

### Factor 3 - Guidelines:

The agency credited Level 3-2 for this factor.

At Level 3-2, guidelines include established operating procedures, budgetary forms and formats, manuals for the preparation of budgetary correspondence and reports, and related procedural guidelines, with specific guides available for use by the employee which cover methods of entering, recording, checking, verifying, and consolidating budgetary data in forms, reports, records, and schedules used by the employing office. The employee is required to use judgment in locating and selecting for use those methods and procedures to apply to various transactions, such as transfers of funds between budgetary accounts, object classes, and line items; and/or suballotments within the same overall allotment. At this level, the employee may also determine which of several alternative methods to use in computing obligations and/or expenditures (e.g., for salaries, expenses, and employee travel). The employee refers to the supervisor or higher graded co-worker those situations to which existing guidelines cannot be applied, or which involve deviations in the amount of funds available for use within an account (e.g., a questionable purpose).

Level 3-2 is met. Comparable to this level, the appellant uses a variety of locally established procedural guides and NCIS finance and accounting manual guidelines to accomplish budget transactions. She uses judgment in locating and selecting appropriate methods and procedures to complete the assignments. She frequently interprets and updates local directives from NCIS headquarters for application to the laboratory's budget responsibilities.

At Level 3-3, a wide variety of general procedural guidelines for the work are available, but guidelines may not specifically cover all aspects (e.g., documents, forms, adjustments) of the assignment. Guides characteristically include definitions of account codes; procedures for obtaining, transferring, and distributing funds; program and financial records; job order logs; OMB and Treasury Department circulars; and agency and organizational reporting forms and procedures. The employee applies a thorough understanding of procedures for the formulation and/or execution of a budget when interpreting and applying guides. In addition, work at this level requires that the employee independently adapt guidelines as necessary to cover new and unusual work situations. This may involve adapting or deviating from procedural instructions to complete assignments with short deadlines; to react to major shifts in program funding; and/or to process transactions for which no clear procedures have been established; or to process actions involving conflicting guidelines.

Level 3-3 is not met. The appellant's budget work typically involves the procedural processing of budgetary transactions which are governed by established guidelines. Any technical problems or situations not covered by guidelines are directed to the supervisor or headquarters for assistance. Although the preparation of budget reports requires some judgment and initiative, there is no evidence in the appeal record that shows that the appellant deals with new or unusual situations requiring adaptation or deviation from procedural guidelines on a regular basis to the extent described. The appellant is basically tasked with determining which accounts will be used according to previous situations and which do not require reference to a wide variety of regulations. In this respect, the appellant's situation falls short of meeting the full intent of Level 3-3.

This factor is credited at Level 3-2 for 125 points.

#### Factor 4 - Complexity:

The agency credited Level 4-2 for this factor.

At Level 4-2, the employee identifies the appropriate budget accounts, object classes, line items, codes, and activity symbols for job orders, vouchers, cost estimates, funding requests, reimbursements, and or similar transactions; enters or extracts cost information according to the type of transactions; and verifies that all necessary procedures have been followed in documenting transactions. Typically, transactions encountered occur within a single appropriation or a single revolving fund subject to the same set of rules, procedures, and guidelines. The employee must recognize the difference between budgetary transactions such as obligations, expenditures, allotments, and transfers of funds. Actions to be taken involve adjustments to account balances.

Level 4-2 is met. The appellant performs clerical and technical work that consists of compiling, verifying, and processing budgetary information. The appellant reviews payment for travel orders, contracts, and purchasing to ensure that the funds are available. The work requires computation of totals, extracting and comparing data, and balancing accounts. Required reports, receipts, and requisitions are forwarded to headquarters accounting office.

At Level 4-3, assignments involve working with different and unrelated appropriated and/or revolving fund accounts, each of which is subject to different rules, regulations, and procedures. Generally, the assignments include responsibility for a number of accounts, object classes, and line items of a

diverse and different nature (e.g., supplies, services, revenue, equipment, contracts, grants, utilities, etc.). Where the work involves preparation of reports, it is often necessary to gather and consolidate information from a wide variety of management and budget documents (e.g., accounting records, payroll records, vouchers, bills, job order files and workload reports) to prepare a completed report. The decision concerning the type of information needed or the best source for the information depends upon such variables as the accounts, types of transactions, amounts of funds involved, purposes for which funds are used, and the rules for processing transactions, or the kind of report being prepared. A considerable volume of data may have to be interpreted and reorganized to arrive at the desired end product.

Level 4-3 is not met. The appellant's work involves two appropriated fund budgets subject to the same rules, regulations, and procedures. She is not responsible for applying the variety of different and unrelated rules described at this level.

This factor is credited with Level 4-2 for 75 points.

Factor 5 - Scope and Effect:

The agency credited Level 5-2 for this factor.

At Level 5-2, employees maintain detailed records of budgetary transactions (e.g., allotments, suballotments, obligations, expenditures, reimbursements, and transfers of funds) in the accounts of assigned activities. These records may take the form of ledgers, worksheets, or files which display the current status (i.e., availability and amount) of funds in each account by object class and line item. Work typically involves adjusting account balances to reflect the effects of budgetary transactions. Some positions at this level are responsible for the collection and organization of budgetary data for use in preparing recurring budget reports or in consolidating budget estimates. Maintenance of records and worksheets affects the accuracy and reliability of budget estimates, allotments of funds for designated purposes, reports on budget execution, and/or evaluation of budgetary accomplishments and practices of others.

Level 5-2 is met. The purpose of the work is to maintain budgetary records and transactions by accounting for funds within the facility. The appellant is responsible for extracting, verifying, compiling, maintaining and computing a variety of data and information accurately for two programs. The work affects the availability of funds and financial resources for the facility.

At Level 5-3, positions with this level of scope and effect are typically found in budget or program offices with responsibility for the overall review, coordination, and consolidation of budgetary activities of subordinate budget or program offices. The purpose of work is to consolidate, organize, and maintain an extensive system of budgetary information relating to accounts, appropriations, revolving funds, and reporting requirements. Work may also involve resolving procedural problems in the processing of budgetary transactions relating to the appropriation, obligation, reimbursement, or transfer of funds which could not be resolved by clerical personnel at lower levels within the organization. In some positions, the purpose of work is to compile, consolidate, organize, and coordinate the preparation and submission of the annual budget request for an organization and its subcomponents. Work affects the quality, quantity, and accuracy of a significant portion of the

budgetary data in the organization's records, and may also affect the timely distribution of allotments of funds to subordinate budget and program offices, or the submission of budget estimates covering annual operating expenses of an organization in field or headquarters locations.

Level 5-3 is not met. The appellant's work does not involve an extensive system of budgetary information as described. The budget system she maintains is limited to the laboratory. She does not have responsibility for subordinate activities nor is she performing work in the overall agency budget program office.

Level 5-2, for 75 points, is credited for this factor.

Factor 6 - Personal Contacts:

The agency credited Level 6-2 for this factor.

At Level 6-2, the highest level described in the standard, contacts are with persons in the same Federal agency, but outside the immediate employing organization or office. People contacted are generally engaged in different functions, missions, and kinds of work (e.g., accounting, data processing, budget, program, and/or administrative personnel). Those contacted may be at different echelons within the agency (i.e., field, district, or regional offices; or headquarters levels). This level also includes routine contacts with persons engaged in budgetary work in other Federal agencies.

Level 6-2 is met. The appellant's personal contacts are with persons in personnel, headquarters procurement, and other employees in the laboratory. There is no information in the record that the appellant's contacts exceed those described in Level 6-2.

Level 6-2, for 25 points, is credited for this factor.

Factor 7 - Purpose of Contacts:

The agency credited Level 7-2 for this factor. We disagree.

At Level 7-1, the purpose of contacts is to obtain, clarify, or provide information concerning the status of funds in budgetary accounts (e.g., allotments, suballotments, obligations, and expenditures), and the procedures for obtaining, using, or replacing funds.

Level 7-1 is met. The appellant's contacts are to exchange information about the amount, status, and availability of funds to support purchase and work orders.

At Level 7-2, the highest level described in the standard, the purpose of contacts is to coordinate and provide advice or instructions on procedures for the preparation, maintenance, and submission of budgetary forms, schedules, and reports (e.g., budget estimates, quarterly reports on budget execution, or budget requests). Contacts require persuading others to follow recommended methods, practices, and procedures, and to meet established deadlines.

Level 7-2 is not met. There is no evidence in the appeal record that the appellant must persuade others to follow procedures or practices. She obtains and provides information as necessary to prepare and maintain the budget.

Level 7-1, for 20 points, is credited for this factor.

Factor 8 - Physical Demands:

The agency credited Level 8-1 for this factor.

The appellant's work is sedentary, performed for the most part while seated comfortably at a desk or table. A moderate amount of standing and walking is required when attending meetings and conferences. This is similar to Level 8-1, where the work is primarily of a sedentary nature typically performed while seated at a desk or table, although the employee may occasionally carry light items such as books, files, and reports from one office to another.

Level 8-1, for 5 points, is credited for this factor.

Factor 9 - Work Environment:

The agency credited Level 9-1 for this factor.

The appellant's work is in an office setting. Her work environment is essentially as described at Level 9-1, where the work is normally performed in an office setting with no unusual risks or discomforts. The work area is properly heated, lighted, and ventilated

Level 9-1, for 5 points, is credited for this factor.



<b>SUMMARY</b>		
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6. Personal Contacts	6-2	25
7. Purpose of Contacts	7-1	20
8. Physical Demands	8-1	5
9. Work Environment	9-1	5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>955</b>

A total of 955 points equates to GS-5 (855 to 1100 points).

#### **Office Automation Work:**

The office automation work is evaluated against the Office Automation Grade Evaluation Guide, which is also written in the FES format. These duties do not impact the grade of the position, therefore, an abbreviated evaluation follows:

<b>FACTOR</b>	<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
1. Knowledge Required by the Position	1-3	350
2. Supervisory Controls	2-2	125
3. Guidelines	3-2	125
4. Complexity	4-2	75
5. Scope and Effect	5-1	25
6. Personal Contacts and 7. Purpose of Contacts	1a	30
8. Physical Demands	8-1	5
9. Work Environment	9-1	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>740</b>

A total of 740 points equates to a GS-4 (655 to 850).

### **Summary**

The secretarial duties and budget duties both equate to GS-5, therefore GS-5 is the correct grade level for the position.

### **Decision**

The appellant's position is properly classified as Secretary (Office Automation), GS-318-05. This decision constitutes a classification certificate issued under the authority of section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code. This certificate is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the Government.