



As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, this decision constitutes a classification certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the Government. The agency is responsible for reviewing its classification decisions for identical, similar, or related positions to ensure consistency with this decision. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under the conditions and time limits specified in title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, sections 511.605, 511.613, and 511.614, as cited in the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*, appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

**Decision sent to:**

[appellant]

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## **Introduction**

On January 10, 2002, the Washington Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a position classification appeal from [name], who is employed as Health Promotion Manager, GS-601-11, in the [squadron], [base], [city and State]. The appellant requested that her position be classified at the GS-12 level. This appeal was accepted and decided under the provisions of section 5112 of title 5, United States Code.

A desk audit was conducted by a Washington Oversight Division representative on May 2, 2002, and a subsequent telephone interview with the appellant's supervisor, [name], on May 10, 2002. This appeal was decided by considering the audit findings and all information of record furnished by the appellant and her agency, including her official position description, number 1-56193-0, and other material submitted in the agency administrative report on March 18, 2002.

## **Position Information**

The appellant is the head of the Health and Wellness Center at [base], providing services to [base] and about eight geographically separated units in the area. As such, the position has program management responsibility in planning, implementing, administering, and promoting a variety of health, physical fitness, and wellness programs for active and retired service personnel, dependents, and civilians. The appellant is assigned supervisory responsibility over a small staff who assist in carrying out the specific programs. Programs include fitness assessment, weight management, tobacco cessation, nutrition education, stress management, cancer and cardiovascular prevention, drug and alcohol prevention, and other programs designed to promote vitality, health, and well-being and to support mission accomplishment. The appellant designs, implements, and evaluates health, physical fitness, and wellness programs for local use. She provides program data and information to higher agency organizational levels and lends program expertise and guidance in participating on several health and wellness oriented committees/boards. She performs other related assignments as discussed in the position description.

## **Series Determination**

The appellant's position is properly assigned to the General Health Science Series, GS-601, which covers professional work that is health-oriented in character when the work is of such generalized or miscellaneous specialized nature that it is not more appropriately classifiable in any other series within the GS-600 Group or elsewhere. Neither the appellant nor the agency disagrees.

## **Title Determination**

Since there are no prescribed titles for the GS-601 series, the position may be titled at agency discretion.

## **Grade Determination**

There are no published grade level criteria for the GS-601 series. In selecting an appropriate standard for classifying a position in an occupation for which no standard has been published, the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards requires that the standard selected as a basis for comparison be for a series as similar as possible to the position to be evaluated with respect to the kind of work performed, qualification requirements of the work, level of difficulty and responsibility, and the combination of classification factors which have the greatest influence on the grade level. The classification standard for the Nurse Series, GS-610, is the most comparable to the appellant's position in terms of the above criteria and was therefore used in determining the proper grade level of the appellant's nonsupervisory work.

The GS-610 standard is written in the Factor Evaluation System (FES) format, under which factor levels and accompanying point values are to be assigned for each of the following nine factors, with the total then being converted to a grade level by use of the grade conversion table provided in the standard. The factor point values mark the lower end of the ranges for the indicated factor levels. For a position 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, the point value for the next lower factor level must be assigned, unless the deficiency is balanced by an equally important aspect that meets a higher level.

### *Factor 1, Knowledge Required by the Position*

This factor measures the nature and extent of information an employee must understand in order to do the work and the skills needed to apply that knowledge.

At Level 1-7, professional knowledge of a wide range of nursing concepts, principles, and practices is required. These knowledges are used to perform considerably difficult professional nursing assignments of an advanced and highly specialized nature that require extended specialized training and experience.

The work of the appellant's position is equivalent to Level 1-7. The appellant's position requires a broad knowledge of health care principles, practices, and procedures and specialized training in order to plan, organize, direct, and evaluate a comprehensive health promotion program for health, physical fitness, and wellness. This knowledge must be sufficient to interpret and adapt higher headquarters, agency, Department of Defense (DOD), and general health, safety, and medical requirements in administering the health promotion program. The appellant uses this knowledge to plan, administer, and evaluate a variety of health, fitness, and wellness education classes. The appellant provides advice, counsel, and recommendations to management officials concerning medical, health, and administrative aspects of the health promotion program. The appellant is the program manager responsible for planning, administering, and evaluating a comprehensive health promotion program for the base population as well as other installations in the area. The appellant's work compares to the community health nurse, illustrated in the standard at Level 1-7, who provides primary health care and generalized public health nursing

services in clinics, homes, and schools and who assists the community in planning and evaluating a local health delivery system.

The knowledge required to perform the duties and responsibilities of the appellant's position exceeds Level 1-6, which requires a professional knowledge of established concepts, principles, and practices to perform assignments of moderate difficulty. Unlike the appellant's position, the work at Level 1-6 does not require knowledge sufficient to plan or evaluate components of a health care system.

The knowledge required in the appellant's position does not meet Level 1-8. Level 1-8 requires work applying experimental theories and new developments to the solution of complex health care problems not susceptible to treatment by accepted methods, or making decisions or recommendations significantly changing or developing important public policies or programs. The appellant's position does not involve the degree of uncertainty and complexity of work intended at Level 1-8, nor is her work of a broad program development nature as required at that level.

Level 1-7 is credited.

1250 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, and the review of completed work.

At Level 2-4, the supervisor sets overall objectives and resources available. The employee and supervisor consult on work and develop decisions together. The employee plans and performs work independently, resolves most conflicts, and coordinates with others on teams and in communities. Work is reviewed for effectiveness in meeting requirements.

The work of the appellant's position is equivalent to Level 2-4. The appellant is given considerable independence to plan and administer activities in implementing the health promotion program. She keeps the supervisor informed of program activities, with only the most controversial problems referred to the supervisor for decision. The appellant is fully responsible for making decisions on the use of resources to accomplish program objectives and to direct the day-to-day functions of the program. The supervisor reviews the work in terms of meeting overall program objectives based on reports, meetings with the appellant, and feedback.

The appellant's position exceeds Level 2-3, which describes work of a less complex nature than the appellant's position and under generally closer supervisory controls. The appellant resolves all but the most complex or controversial problems and is fully responsible for the management of the health promotion program. This exceeds Level 2-3, where the supervisor assists the nurse with unusual problems when making assignments.

The supervisory controls in the appellant's position do not meet the requirements of Level 2-5, which involves primarily administrative direction in terms of broadly defined functions or missions. While the appellant has full program management responsibility for the health

promotion program, the individual programs are comparatively discrete, generally well defined requirements by the agency and are covered by both general and specific directives, rather than broadly defined functions or missions that are subject to only administrative direction.

Level 2-4 is credited.

450 points

### *Factor 3, Guidelines*

This factor covers the nature of the guidelines used and the judgment needed to apply them.

At Level 3-3, guidelines are available but are not completely applicable to every situation encountered. At this level, judgment is applied in interpreting the guidelines and, in some situations, adaptation of the guidelines is required.

The appellant's position is comparable to the requirements at Level 3-3. Guidelines covering the appellant's work include a number of agency issuances relating to specific topics within the appellant's program area such as fitness, nutrition, and weight and body fat management, as well as more general issuances such as those governing initial program establishment and maintenance. Within these guidelines, the appellant plans, develops, and administers the program to fulfill the needs of the local population served. Similar to Level 3-3, the appellant must apply seasoned judgment in interpreting and adapting the guidelines to new situations or unique circumstances where no specific guidance is available. The appellant has a significant role in contributing to modification and development of new guidelines as a result of the organization's status as a direct reporting unit to higher headquarters, the development of unique local programs, and the piloting of programs at the appellant's organization. This is fully comparable to Level 3-3.

The appellant's position exceeds Level 3-2, where the guidelines are much more limited and may be more readily applied, e.g., manuals and nursing and medical orders. However, it does not reach Level 3-4, where the only guidelines available are much more general, e.g., general administrative policies and precedents, and require substantial deviation or the development of new methods, criteria, or policies. The appellant's position is not limited to general administrative policies and precedents that frequently provide little or no guidance.

Level 3-3 is credited.

275 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.

At Level 4-4, the nurse performs fully independent assignments. The nature of work at this level involves such tasks as interpreting physical examinations and laboratory reports, developing nursing plans, and evaluating the need for improved health care. The work requires making decisions concerning the implementation of data, planning, and refining methods.

The appellant's position is comparable to Level 4-4. The appellant interprets agency health promotion program and related requirements and standards and plans and administers program activities in support of these agency requirements and expectations. She estimates and manages resources required for accomplishment of program objectives, reviews program activities for effectiveness, and makes modifications where deemed necessary. She participates on organizational and agency committees and boards related to health promotion and associated medical and health related matters. The appellant works with local community organizations such as community health agencies to coordinate special program events and activities. She is the resident program expert and serves as advisor to management officials on program related issues and decisions. The appellant's position is comparable to the community health nurse illustrated at Level 4-4 in the standard who, in addition to providing comprehensive nursing care to individuals and families, assists the community in planning, developing, and evaluating its local health care system.

The appellant's position exceeds Level 4-3, where assignments are generally limited to one-on-one direct nursing care. This contrasts with the appellant's position, and the community health nurse illustrated at Level 4-4 in the standard, where additional complexities are involved in evaluating and planning the health related needs of a large community of clients.

The appellant's position does not meet the requirements of Level 4-5. At that level, the work involves originating new techniques, establishing criteria, or developing new information. Decisions regarding what needs to be done include major areas of uncertainty in approach, methodology, or interpretation and evaluation processes resulting from such elements as continuing changes in nursing programs, technological developments in the nursing or medical field, unknown phenomena, or conflicting requirements. These elements are not present in the appellant's position. The appellant's position is primarily concerned with planning and operating a local program of health promotion, physical fitness, and wellness. It does not require the development of new medical techniques, information, or criteria as intended in the standard. This is beyond the scope of the appellant's position.

Level 4-4 is credited.

225 points

#### *Factor 5, Scope and Effect*

This factor covers the relationship between the nature of the work, and the effect of the work products or services both within and outside the organization.

At Level 5-3, the purpose of the work is to plan and provide nursing care for patients. The work affects the physical and psycho-social well-being of the patients and of their families. The appellant's work meets the requirements at this level and in some aspects may exceed it. The purpose of the appellant's position is to plan and provide a variety of health, physical fitness, and wellness program activities in support of agency requirements and expectations. The appellant's work affects the well-being of clients being provided the services. The appellant's position clearly exceeds Level 5-2, where the purpose of the work is to provide more routine care for patients according to established and specific procedures.

At Level 5-4, the primary purpose of the work is to establish criteria and assess effectiveness of patient treatment. Work at this level affects a wide range of agency activities or how the agency is perceived or regarded by the community or population served. The scope and effect of the appellant's position do not meet the intent of Level 5-4, which involves establishing new programs or developing new criteria for assessment of patient treatment programs (as opposed to health treatment plans). Although the appellant plans and implements a variety of health, fitness, and wellness program activities at the installation level, these activities do not meet the program development and evaluation nature of work intended at Level 5-4. Work at Level 5-4 is designed to solve difficult problems or establish new methods and is complicated by major areas of uncertainty caused by such elements as technological developments, continuing changes in nursing programs, or similar complicating factors. In contrast, the appellant's work is more closely aligned with the intent of Level 5-3, i.e., providing comprehensive patient care. In addition, the effect of programs or conclusions developed at Level 5-4 has broad application, e.g., throughout an agency or large external population group. While the appellant's work impacts a sizable client population and, to a lesser extent, the surrounding civilian community, her work does not have the impact intended at Level 5-4 where the work requires originating new techniques, establishing criteria, or developing new information. Thus, the scope and effect of the appellant's position are properly evaluated at Level 5-3.

Level 5-3 is credited.

150 points

#### *Factor 6, Personal Contacts*

This factor includes face-to-face and telephone contacts and other dialogue with persons not in the supervisory chain. The relationship between factors 6 and 7 presumes that the same contacts will be evaluated under both factors.

At Level 6-3, personal contacts are with a variety of individuals or groups from outside the employing agency, such as the news media, public action groups, scientists, officials of professional organizations, attorneys, or contractors. Contacts take place in a moderately unstructured setting.

The appellant's contacts are comparable to Level 6-3. In administering the program, the appellant contacts numerous outside groups and individuals for a variety of matters. The appellant's contacts include representatives from private companies such as vendors and manufacturers, school officials, community organizations and agencies, medical and professional organizations, among others. This exceeds Level 6-2, where contacts are limited to patients and their families or employees in the agency outside the immediate organization. The appellant's regularly recurring contacts do not reach Level 6-4, where contacts are with high ranking officials outside the agency at national or international levels in highly unstructured settings, such as members of Congress or leaders of foreign governments.

Level 6-3 is credited.

60 points



### *Factor 7, Purpose of Contacts*

This factor describes the purpose of the contacts identified under Factor 6.

At Level 7-3, the purpose of contacts is to influence or motivate persons or groups who may be fearful or hesitant, thus requiring great skill in approaching the person or group to obtain the desired result.

The appellant's position is comparable to Level 7-3. The standard's illustration at Level 7-3 states:

Most nurse positions are at this level because the purpose of the contacts is to influence and motivate patients to care for themselves, improve their health habits, follow medical orders and so on. Also, patients whether ill or undergoing examinations to determine if they are ill or well, are to some degree fearful, hesitant or skeptical and require a very skillful approach.

This is comparable to the appellant's position in dealing with and attempting to influence either clients within the program or reluctant military officials in charge of affected military personnel. Some of the appellant's external contacts contain this element, as well. For example, the appellant negotiates a local service contract and participates in health related discussions with other representatives involved in an interagency organization.

The appellant's position exceeds Level 7-2, typical of trainee level nurses, where the purpose of the work is to plan, coordinate, or advise on work efforts or to influence or motivate basically cooperative individuals or groups. The appellant's position does not reach Level 7-4, where the primary purpose of the contacts is to justify, defend, negotiate, or settle matters involving significant or controversial issues. The work of the appellant's position does not involve the type of matters intended at this level.

Level 7-3 is credited.

120 points

### *Factor 8, Physical Demands*

This factor covers the requirements and physical demands placed on the employee by the work assignment.

At Level 8-1, the work is essentially sedentary with some walking, standing, bending, and carrying of light items. This basically describes the physical demands of the appellant's position. Unlike Level 8-2, no special physical demands apply.

Level 8-1 is credited.

5 points

*Factor 9, Work Environment*

This factor considers the risks and discomforts in the employee's physical surroundings or in the nature of the work assigned and the safety regulations required.

At Level 9-1, the work involves normal, everyday risks or discomforts typical of office settings. This is descriptive of the work environment of the appellant's position. Unlike Level 9-2, there are no unusual risks or discomforts.

Level 9-1 is credited.

5 points

*Summary*

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Points</u>
Knowledge Required	1-7	1250
Supervisory Controls	2-4	450
Guidelines	3-3	275
Complexity	4-4	225
Scope and Effect	5-3	150
Personal Contacts	6-3	60
Purpose of Contacts	7-3	120
Physical Demands	8-1	5
Work Environment	9-1	<u>5</u>
Total		2540

The total of 2540 points falls within the GS-11 point range (2355-2750 points) on the grade conversion table provided in the standard.

The appellant does not dispute her agency's evaluation of her supervisory work at the GS-11 level. However, information in the appeal record does not support a conclusion that the appellant spends the minimum amount of time on supervisory duties for coverage of the General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG). The GSSG requires that supervisory work occupy at least 25 percent of the position's time. The appellant supervises a small staff: one GS-601-9 Exercise Physiologist, one Dietician position occupied by a military officer (0-3), and a few supporting clerical positions. Both of the program-related positions are specialized professional positions, which typically require little technical supervision. For military reasons, the appellant does not perform the essential supervisory responsibilities for the professional dietician position. Since the individual assigned to the dietician position is a military officer, the appellant's supervisor, a military officer, evaluates the performance of the position, approves leave and training, and provides other essential supervisory functions. Considering the freedom from supervision of the GS-9 position and the workload being supervised, the appellant's position does not meet the minimum criteria for coverage of the GSSG. Even if the GSSG were applied to the appellant's position, the grade level of the supervisory work would be lower than the grade level of the work personally performed.

**Decision**

The appealed position is properly classified as GS-601-11, with the title at the discretion of the agency.