



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240



DIRECTOR'S ORDER NO. 197

Subject: Use of Standard Position Descriptions

Sec. 1 What is the purpose of this Order? This Order:

- a. Establishes policy for the use and applicability of Service Standard Position Descriptions (SPDs);
- b. Amends 225 FW 1, Position Classification; and
- c. Amends 223 FW 3, Position Management.

Sec. 2 What is an SPD? An SPD:

- a. Describes the work for a number of positions whose duties are basically the same and are suitable for establishment at various locations within the Service, and
- b. Ensures that we consistently classify title, series, and grade level of a position based on the work described.

Sec. 3 Who is responsible for this Order?

- a. **The Director** is responsible for the integrity of the classification program, including the accuracy of position descriptions and SPDs.
- b. **The Assistant Director – Budget Planning and Human Capital (AD-BPHC)** is responsible for developing the procedures and instructions governing the use of Service SPDs.

c. Regional Directors, Assistant Directors, and the Chief, Office of Law Enforcement:

(1) Ensure that subordinate managers and supervisors understand their classification and position management responsibilities related to the use of SPDs, and

(2) Approve organizational charts at the beginning of each fiscal year. These charts identify all occupied positions and all vacant positions we plan to fill within the next 12 months.

d. The Chief, Division of Human Capital:

(1) Ensures that Human Resources (HR) staff:

- (a) Properly classify SPDs according to Office of Personnel Management (OPM) standards and guides;

(b) Make SPDs available to managers, supervisors, and other Service HR personnel; and

(c) Maintain the SPD Library so that:

(i) It is relevant and useful to managers, and

(ii) Information is available for Service managers that describes the value of SPDs in streamlining the classification process.

(2) Coordinates with program managers and Regional HR Officers when developing and classifying newly proposed SPDs for Servicewide use. Ensures SPDs are properly evaluated using applicable OPM standards and guides and provides implementation guidance.

e. Managers/supervisors are responsible for:

(1) Understanding the classification system and exercising discretion to effectively use position management practices for SPDs.

(2) Selecting SPDs that describe at least 80% of the major duties and responsibilities of a subordinate position.

(3) Signing blocks 20a and 20b of the SPD's Optional Form (OF)-8. By signing the form, the first and second level managers/supervisors certify that the SPD is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of the work and its organizational relationships, and that it is necessary to carry out Government functions.

(4) Ensuring that positions selected are on an approved organization chart that the Regional Director, Assistant Director, or Chief, Office of Law Enforcement signs.

f. Servicing HR Officers:

(1) Advise managers and supervisors on the selection and applicability of SPDs relative to the organizational level, program affiliation, and type of work assigned.

(2) Complete a position management review of the selected SPD to ensure organizational suitability.

(a) Use the SPD Checklist (see Exhibit 1) to complete the review.

(b) File the checklist with the SPD in your office's Position Description (PD) Books.

(3) Initial block 23c on the OF-8 to show completion of the position management review and SPD Checklist. Initialing block 23c indicates completion of a position management review and does not require reclassification of the SPD.

(4) Perform and document a desk audit when using an SPD could result in a noncompetitive promotion of an employee through an accretion of duties request.

Sec. 4 How does the Service use SPDs?

a. The Division of Human Capital evaluates and classifies all Service SPDs, and certifies the SPDs by signing blocks 15c and 21 of the OF-8. SPDs require no further classification review.

b. Managers and supervisors may use an SPD when the major duties described represent at least 80% of the assigned work.

c. Managers/supervisors may use SPDs when requesting an upgrade to an encumbered position if the described major duties represent at least 80% of the assigned work.

(1) The SPD eliminates the need to classify the position description; however, you must follow merit promotion principles to determine whether you can non-competitively promote the incumbent (i.e., accretion of duties promotion).

(2) When a manager/supervisor selects an SPD for a noncompetitive promotion of an incumbent, the servicing HR Officer must, in accordance with the Service Merit Promotion Plan, conduct an audit to verify that the incumbent is performing the duties described.

Sec. 5 May managers/supervisors amend SPDs?

a. Yes, a manager/supervisor may amend an SPD so that the person in the position may successfully perform work not originally described in the SPD (e.g., motor boat operator, collateral duty safety officer, supervision of one or two employees). You may not amend SPDs to change title, series, or grade level of a position.

b. To amend an SPD the supervisor/manager must:

(1) Complete and sign a DI-625, Position Classification Amendment,

(2) Sign block 5, and

(3) Attach the DI-625 to the SPD.

c. You can find some standard SPD amendments in the SPD Library.

d. The servicing HR Officer reviews non-standard SPD amendments and certifies the amended duties have no impact on title, series, and grade of the position by signing block 6 of the DI-625.

Sec. 6 Who establishes a Service SPD? The Division of Human Capital, in collaboration with program managers and Regional HR Officers, develops and issues all Service SPDs. To establish a new Service SPD, program managers should work with their servicing HR Officer.

Sec. 7 Where can I find Service SPDs? The SPD Library is available on the [Service intranet](#).

Sec. 8 When is this Order effective? This Order is effective immediately. It remains in effect until we incorporate it into 225 FW 1 and 223 FW 3 of the Service Manual, or until we amend, supersede, or revoke it, whichever comes first. If we do not incorporate it into the Service Manual, amend, supersede, or revoke it, the Order will expire 18 months from the date of signature.

/sgd/ Kenneth Stansell
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Date: December 16, 2008