

# Position Classification Standard for Sales Store Clerical Series, GS-2091

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## SERIES DEFINITION

This series includes all classes of positions the duties of which are to supervise or perform check-out, sales clerk, customer assistance, or other clerical duties that are involved in the retail sale of merchandise or stock items and that require the application of clerical knowledge, procedures, and/or practices that are peculiar to sales store operations.

This standard describes only the principal levels of nonsupervisory positions in this series. Supervisory positions are evaluated by reference to the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#).

## INCLUSIONS

This series includes all positions for which the paramount qualification requirements are the knowledge and skills required for the performance of the clerical duties peculiar to such retail sales store operations as commissary stores, self-service supply centers, and clothing sales stores.

## EXCLUSIONS

Some duties characteristic of sales store operations require ability to perform manual-labor types of work. Positions that consist wholly of sales store duties requiring manual-labor ability are excluded from this series. Such positions are exempt from the provisions of the Classification Act of 1949, as amended, under Section 202(7) of the Act. Positions in which sales store duties requiring manual-labor ability are combined with clerical sales store duties are excluded from this series when the requirement for manual-labor ability is the paramount qualification requirement for the position.

Also excluded from this series are the following kinds of positions:

1. Positions that involve sales store duties of a managerial, advisory, or planning nature. Positions of this kind require knowledge of retail procurement and distribution methods, commercial retail store management techniques and practices, and other sales store knowledge and abilities of a non-clerical nature. These positions are classified in the [Sales Store Management Series, GS-1144](#).
2. Positions of tellers, cash clerks, and others which involve the clerical processing of cash items when such work requires knowledge of the financial regulations governing the processing of cash items and of the acceptability requirements of the documents upon which cash transactions are based. Positions of this kind are classified in the [Cash Processing Series, GS-0530](#).
3. Positions concerned with accounting clerical work performed in connection with sales store operations. In positions of this kind the required clerical knowledge and abilities are those generally applied in the maintenance of accounting records and are not peculiar

to sales store operations. Such positions are classified in an appropriate accounting clerical series, e.g., the [Accounts Maintenance Clerical Series, GS-0520](#); the [Accounting Technician Series, GS-0525](#); or the [Voucher Examining Series, GS-0540](#).

At the present time sales store clerical work is typically concerned with items that are in such common usage that no specialized knowledge or training is required for their identification. This does not mean that there may not be sales store clerical positions that require specialized item knowledge which differ significantly in extent or degree from the knowledge requirements described in this standard. However, many positions requiring specialized item knowledge are classifiable in another series in the Supply Group (such as the [Supply Cataloging Series, GS-2050](#)) and standards for such series may be used to evaluate the grade-level worth of such knowledge. In addition, careful consideration should be given to the question of series determination in classifying positions of this kind.

## TITLES

Titles for positions in this series are based upon differences in required knowledge and abilities which affect recruitment, transfer, or other personnel processes.

The title, *Sales Store Checker*, is established for nonsupervisory positions in which check-out duties constitute the sole or principal function of the position.

The title, *Sales Store Clerk*, is established for nonsupervisory positions which include clerical sales store duties other than check-out duties or in which the check-out duties involved are not significant in terms of qualification requirements and, hence, do not affect recruitment or other personnel processes. Sales Store Clerk positions may include any sales store clerical duty or any combination of such duties provided that (a) the requirements stated in the series definition are met and (b) any check-out duties involved are of an incidental nature and, hence, not the most important duty in the position in terms of qualification requirements. Among the duties which may be included in Sales Store Clerk positions are waiting on customers, preparing sales slips, providing customer assistance service, pricing individual items, maintaining inventory records, preparing stock replenishment orders, maintaining price lists, etc.

The word, *Supervisory*, is prefixed to either of the above titles, as appropriate, for positions in which supervisory duties and responsibilities are significant.

## NATURE OF THE WORK

Clerical sales store work consists of the clerical duties that are involved in the sale of items in single-unit or small-lot quantities directly to consumers. Typically, commissary, self-service supply centers distributing supplies to and within agencies, and other retail sales stores are operated on a self-service basis but a substantial number of sales store operations provide some customer services. Such duties as checking-out purchases, waiting on customers, preparing sales slips, and maintaining retail price lists are characteristic of work classifiable in this series.

One of the most important clerical functions involved in sales store operations is the checking or check-out function. The basic check-out function consists of operating a cash register to list and total the prices of individual items purchased, collecting cash and making change, and reconciling cash receipts with the cash register tape. Variations from these basic check-out duties have developed as the result of changes in sales store operations and the availability of different kinds of mechanical equipment. Among such variations are check-out duties that are concerned with both charge and cash purchases, those which are concerned only with charge purchases (and, hence, do not involve the handling of cash items), and those which involve the operation of bookkeeping, billing, or similar machines instead of cash registers.

Operation of a cash register differs according to the kind of equipment used and the kind of entering operation performed. Cash registers vary in number and types of keys, number of accumulating banks, kinds of printing mechanism, and other mechanical features. Differences in the mechanical features affect the kind of entries that can be made on a cash register tape. Some cash registers can be used only to record a simple listing of item prices without classification or other additional information. Multiple cash registers are normally used to departmentalize prices in various categories, enter surcharges, indicate whether purchases are cash or charge, identify customers or account numbers to be charged, or provide other information used for accounting, stock control, or similar purposes. Bookkeeping or billing machines may be used to accomplish any or all of these purposes. When these machines are used, the purchase totals and other related information involved are normally entered directly on ledger or stock control cards.

Certain clerical knowledge and abilities must be applied simultaneously with the operation of mechanical equipment in order to perform check-out duties with acceptable speed and accuracy. Check-out work characteristically includes responsibility for insuring that the prices charged are accurate. This requires knowledge of the current prices of stock items in order to determine whether (a) prices marked on items are correct or (b) reference to price lists is necessary. The work also requires knowledge of the nature, quality differences, size and pack variations, and/or other characteristics of stock items. This knowledge is essential in order to identify stock items rapidly and to distinguish quickly between closely similar items. In addition, competent performance of check-out work requires knowledge of established procedures describing the kind of entries to be made, the order in which entries are to be recorded, the action to be taken in cases of operator error or of machine malfunctioning, the practices involved in respect to returns and exchanges, and other matters of a similar nature. To the extent such procedures describe these procedures in only general terms, or do not describe all of the matters involved in the work, the use of judgment may be required in carrying out the work. The time pressures under which check-out duties are usually performed are such that the checker is seldom able to consult written guides or the supervisor on these matters. The extent to which these knowledge and abilities are required in check-out work is reflected in the number and variety of stock items involved, in the number and kind of entries recorded, and in the number and specificity of applicable procedures.

The complexity of reconciling the cash register (or other machine) tape or total with cash receipts or with charge entries varies. In its simpler form this reconciliation normally involves comparison of the total of the cash items or charges with the total shown on the cash register or other tape as adjusted for over- or under-rings. Errors causing failure to balance are located by

recount and review of any adjustments that have been made. More complex reconciliations typically involve various types of segregation and subtotalling to balance to intermediate totals and ultimately to the grand totals involved; for example, cash items may be segregated and totaled by denomination and/or kind; separate totals may be obtained for each category of items used in departmentalizing; cash and charge purchase entries may be grouped under separate headings and each of these may be subdivided into classes with subtotals and intermediate balances for the various groupings. Reconciliation duties require the application of a knowledge of the fundamental arithmetic operations and of the forms and procedures prescribed for use in the balancing process. The more complex reconciliation duties require, in addition, the use of limited judgment in selecting for recount or review the particular group of cash items, documents, or entries that is most likely to yield results in locating errors.

Positions concerned with check-out work typically include personal work contacts with purchasers. These contacts are made for such purposes as (1) advising on the nature, use, current and anticipated availability, quality and size differences, and other characteristics of stock items, (2) receiving requests for returns, exchanges, or refunds, (3) giving the bin or shelf location of items, (4) explaining price changes, and (5) checking identification cards or other authorization to purchase etc. Ability to deal effectively and courteously with people is required in all check-out work. The difficulty and responsibility involved in such contacts vary with the extent of various required knowledge described above and the extent to which the use of limited judgment in resolving problems is required.

Check-out duties in positions concerned with cash purchases typically include responsibility for safeguarding the change fund and the cash received for purchases and, in some cases, for making restitution from personal funds for shortages and counterfeits accepted during the check-out process. These duties require knowledge of the characteristics of genuineness in such cash items as are in common usage and the application of established safeguarding procedures. Differences in the extent of these required knowledge are usually not sufficiently great to be significant in distinguishing between the grade levels of positions concerned with check-out work.

Differences in the degree of manual skill required to operate the mechanical equipment involved in performing check-out duties are normally not significant from the standpoint of grade-level classification. For this reason, these differences are not discussed in detail in this standard.

Check-out work is the only kind of sales store clerical work described in this standard. The total number of positions concerned with other kinds of sales store clerical work (e.g., sales persons in clothing stores) is so small and the pattern of individual duties and responsibilities which comprise these positions is so varied at this time that standards for these positions have not been prepared.

## CLASSIFICATION FACTORS

Distinctions between the grade levels of positions concerned with clerical sales store work are based on differences in the clerical knowledge required and the difficulty and responsibility involved in the work. Variations in these factors are reflected in such elements as the extent of the required knowledge of stock items, the complexity of the reconciliation functions involved, the nature of the personal work contacts involved, the variety and specificity of applicable procedures, the extent to which the use of judgment is required or permitted, and the kind of supervisory control exercised over the work.

### *Sales Store Checker GS-2*

Positions at this level normally include the performance of check-out duties which provide training and experience to develop technical competence in (a) the operation of a multiple cash register, bookkeeping machine, or other multi-register, machine and (b) sales store clerical knowledge and abilities of the kind, variety, and level described for positions of sales store checker at the GS-3 level. The work is performed in accordance with specific instructions and is reviewed for the purpose of evaluating the trainee's aptitude, competence, and capacity to perform higher level work.

### *Sales Store Checker GS-3*

Positions in this class normally include the performance of check-out duties which require the application of a knowledge of a wide variety of stock items; the ability to operate a multiple cash register, bookkeeping machine, or other multi-register machine with acceptable speed and accuracy; and the exercise of judgment in the application of established sales store clerical procedures.

Positions in this class normally involve the full range of check-out duties and have the following characteristics:

- A. Machine operation duties typically require the clerical knowledge and manual skill necessary for (1) competent operation of a multiple cash register, bookkeeping machine, and/or other multi-register machine to (a) list unit prices for a wide variety (approximately 1000 or more) of items in a number (usually 3 or more) of categories and/or (b) enter into the machine item prices and, in addition, surcharges, customer identification, charge plate numbers, or other similar types of information, and/or (c) enter item prices into the machine and post directly to ledger or similar records in card or other form to show previous balance, current purchase amount, and new balance; and (2) concurrent application of established procedures governing the kind of entries made, the order in which the entries are recorded, the methods used in correcting operator errors, and other matters of a similar nature.

- B. Reconciliation duties normally require (1) the application of established procedures in the subtotaling and intermediate balancing of such elements as cash receipts by denomination, purchases by type of item, sales by cash or charge purchase, etc., and (2) in cases of failure to balance, the use of judgment in selecting for review those entries, cash items, or forms most likely to contain error in order to make the corrections necessary and obtain the grand totals and final balance. These duties may involve the use of a cash register tape or other machine total in balancing to either cash receipts, sales slips, other recorded evidence of charges or any combination of these.
- C. The items involved normally include a relatively wide variety (e.g., approximately 1000 or more) of such items as food and household items, clothing, office supplies and standard forms, hardware, and other items which (1) are in common usage so that no specialized knowledge or training is required for their identification, (2) are readily identifiable through common knowledge or by reference to immediately available catalogs, and (3) are normally stocked in bins or on shelves involving no special wrapping, bagging, or handling problems.
- D. The work typically requires such knowledge of the characteristics and the current prices of the stock items involved as is necessary to check the accuracy of prices marked on items, record the correct current price of unmarked items, suggest possible substitute items to purchasers, recognize differences in closely similar items quickly, and perform related duties.
- E. Characteristically, personal work contacts with purchasers are made for the purpose of providing assistance with regard to any question or problem which may arise. These contacts typically (1) include responsibility for resolving routine matters on the basis of knowledge of current prices and well-established sales store operations and procedures and (2) require the exercise of judgment in determining whether established procedures clearly cover and may properly be applied to resolve specific problems or the problem involved should be referred to the supervisor. These personal contacts typically involve such matters as (a) giving information on current and anticipated availability of stock items, (b) suggesting possible substitute items, (c) explaining price changes, (d) making refunds or exchanges or referring these matters to the supervisor in accordance with whichever action is prescribed in established procedures or specific instructions, and (e) receiving complaints and, if unable to provide customer satisfaction, referring such cases to the supervisor.
- F. The established procedures and instructions characteristically applied in performing the work include both (1) those that describe the duties to be performed in general terms and require the use of judgment in their application (e.g., procedures pertaining to the kind of advice or assistance to be provided to purchasers) and (2) procedures which prescribe in detail the specific actions to be taken (e.g., procedures governing the kind of entries to be recorded by machine).

- G. Supervisory control over the work is usually exercised by a supervisory sales store checker, a cashier, or other employee in a higher-grade position. Supervisory control normally includes (1) the assignment of work, (2) instructions regarding such matters as price changes, new stock items, revised delivery schedules, and any matters not included in established procedures or practices, (3) assistance in any matter of a nonroutine nature when requested by the Sales Store Checker GS-3, and (4) check for agreement of the machine total or tape and the total amount of cash received and/or charges made. The supervisor takes appropriate action in such matters as the authorization of refunds or exchanges, the acceptance of check payments in lieu of cash, the correction of operator errors by the adjustment of or to the machine tape, and any unusual problem that is referred by the Sales Store Checker GS-3.

Positions in this class may include, in addition to the performance of check-out duties, the performance of such other duties as waiting on customers, maintaining inventory records, taking inventory, replacing depleted bin or shelf stock, pricing individual items, maintaining price lists, preparing stock replenishment orders, etc., provided that such additional duties do not constitute the most important duty or duties in the position.