

# MS 603 Position Classification

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## 1.0 Purpose

This Manual Section establishes the policies for the classification of Peace Corps positions. All procedures related to Position Classification are maintained by the Office of Human Resource Management (M/HRM). See Peace Corps Intranet/Human Resource Central/Staffing Analyst Toolkit/Human Resources/Position Management/Position Classification.

## 2.0 Authority

29 U.S.C. §206(d)

22 U.S.C. §3981

Foreign Service Act of 1980

Peace Corps Act, §§7 and 13

5 U.S.C. §3109

References: 5 USC §5101 *et seq.*, 5 CFR §531.401 *et seq.*

Article 14 Classification (negotiated agreement between the Peace Corps and the Peace Corps Employees Union, AFSCME Local 3548, AFL-CIO)

## 3.0 Position Classification

The objectives of the position classification system are:

- a) Implements the principle of equal pay for substantially equal work;
- b) Recognizes that variations in ranges of basic pay for different employees should be proportionate to substantial differences in the difficulty, responsibility, and qualification requirements of the work they perform; and

- c) Facilitates human resource management in areas such as compensation, recruitment, selection, promotion, and training of employees.

### **3.1 Foreign Service Members**

Except as provided below, all Peace Corps employees other than the Director and Deputy Director are appointed members of the Foreign Service using authority contained in section 7(a)(2) of the Peace Corps Act and section 303 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 USC §3943).

Peace Corps positions are classified to the Foreign Personnel (FP) pay plan (grade level system). As FP grades go higher, the corresponding numbers go lower. For example, the highest grade level is FP-1 (equivalent to GS-15) and the lowest grade level is FP-9 (equivalent to GS-5).

### **3.2 General Schedule**

While the Peace Corps does not classify General Schedule positions which are covered under the provisions of Title 5 of the US Code, it normally follows the classification criteria contained in the Office of Personnel Management Position Classification Standards. See <http://www.opm.gov/fedclass/html/gsseries.asp>.

### **3.3 Foreign Service National Positions**

See Manual Section 602 Foreign Service National (FSN) Personnel Administration.

### **4.0 Applicability**

This Manual Section covers all Peace Corps employees except for the following:

- a) Executive Schedule positions and Senior Foreign Service positions;
- b) Expert Consultant positions authorized by Section 13 of the Peace Corps Act; and
- c) Foreign national employees who occupy positions outside the United States.

### **5.0 Definitions**

The following terms are defined for purposes of clarity:

**Automated System:** The HR system that provides assistance in classifying position descriptions, making FLSA determinations, and preparing supporting documentation.

**Career Ladder Positions:** Positions that are established below the full performance level to provide additional recruitment options. For these positions, employees are selected at a lower grade and through additional training and experience may be non-competitively promoted to the full performance level.

**Classification Standard:** Criteria issued by OPM to relate the grade level definitions in title 5 to specific work situations and thereby provide the basis for assigning each position the appropriate title, series, and grade. The Automated System classifies position descriptions based on the criteria prescribed in the OPM classification standards.

**Official Title:** An official title is normally assigned a position in accordance with federal classification standards and is reflected in all official personnel documents. Official position titles are required for human resources management, budget, and fiscal purposes.

**Organizational Title:** An organizational title may be assigned to better reflect the position's responsibility within the organizational unit. Organizational and functional titles do not replace, but complement, official position titles. Organizational and functional titles may be established for internal administration, public convenience, program management, or similar purposes. Examples of organizational titles are Branch Chief and Division Chief. Examples of functional titles are Chief of Network Management and Director of Policy Development.

**Standard Position Description:** A standard position description is a single description used to cover a number of like positions. Standard position descriptions (SPDs) are the official record of duties and responsibilities assigned by Peace Corps to a position or group of positions by management in order to accomplish a specific job.

## **6.0 Policy**

Positions are classified, or evaluated, based on the duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required to perform the work. In those cases where a supervisor and HRM find that a position description needs to be changed or a new one created, the supervisor will, with the assistance of HRM, prepare a new position description through the Automated System. After the position description has been created, HRM will review and validate the classification determination for accuracy.

## **7.0 Guidance Regarding Position Descriptions, Classification and Appeals**

### **7.1. Writing the Position Description (PD)**

See Peace Corps Intranet/Human Resource Central/Staffing Analyst Toolkit/Human Resources/Position Management/Position Classification.

### **7.2 Supervisory Position Descriptions**

Supervisory PDs are written in the same format as non supervisory PDs and also should describe assigned administrative or management duties and responsibilities in addition to any technical or program management functions. The descriptions must contain a statement of responsibility to ensure the effective administration of the principles and practices of the Peace Corps' Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program, as well as of any collective bargaining agreements.

### **7.3 Classifying the Position**

HRM provides guidance to the supervisor/manager based on an analysis of the position. Generally, HRM will reference the published U.S. Office of Personnel Management Position Classification Standards during the analysis process. A PD is established and classified based on a position's duties, responsibilities, and qualification requirements. HRM certifies the position classification as to job series, FP grade level(s), and official title.

### **7.4 Reconsideration of a Position Classification**

Employees, their supervisors, or a representative of the collective bargaining unit that represents employees generally found in that position may request a reconsideration of a position classification decision by submitting a letter stating the reasons they disagree with the classification, including any factors they believe were omitted in the analysis. The letter should be directed to the Director, Office of Human Resource Management (M/HRM) and should be accompanied by the supervisor's statement concerning the accuracy of the PD and the accuracy of any additional duties and responsibilities. The decision by the Director (M/HRM) is final.

### **7.5 Appealing a Classification**

Under the Peace Corps Act, there is no classification appeal process for agency employees.

## **8.0 Effective Date**

The effective date of this Manual Section is the date of issuance.