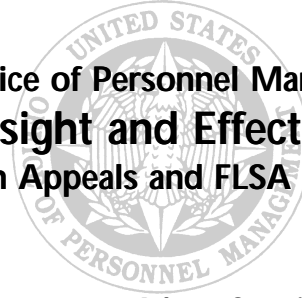


U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness  
Classification Appeals and FLSA Programs



Atlanta Oversight Division  
75 Spring Street, SW., Suite 972  
Atlanta, GA 30303-3109

**Classification Appeal Decision**  
**Under Section 5112 of Title 5, United States Code**

**Appellant:** [Appellant]  
**Agency classification:** Fiscal Management Specialist  
GS-501-12  
**Organization:** Social Security Administration  
**OPM decision:** GS-501-11  
(Title at agency discretion)  
**OPM decision number:** C-0501-11-03

/s/

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathy Day  
Classification Appeals Officer

August 17, 2000

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, this decision constitutes a 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 conditions and time limits specified in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

Since this decision lowers the grade of the appealed position, it is to be effective no later than the beginning of the sixth pay period after the date of this decision, as permitted by 5 CFR 511.702. The servicing personnel office must submit a compliance report containing the corrected position description and a Standard Form 50 showing the personnel action taken. The report must be submitted within 30 days from the effective date of the personnel action.

**Decision sent to:**

[Appellant]

[Human Resources Manager]

Mr. Lew Kaiser  
Director  
Center for Classification and  
Organization Management  
Social Security Administration  
G414 W. High Rise Building  
6401 Security Boulevard  
Baltimore, MD 21235

## **Introduction**

On May 15, 2000, the Atlanta Oversight Division of the U. S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a classification appeal for the position of Fiscal Management Specialist, GS-501-12, [organizational location], Social Security Administration, [geographic location]. The appellant requests that his position be reclassified as a Management Analyst, GS-343-13. We have accepted and decided the appeal under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

To help decide the appeal, Oversight Division representatives conducted telephone and onsite audits of the appellant's position. The audits included interviews with the appellant, his team leader, his immediate supervisor, and several of the appellant's peers (identified by the appellant for contact). In reaching our classification decision, we have reviewed all information of record furnished by the appellant and his agency, including his official position description.

## **General issues**

The appellant makes various statements about the agency's evaluation of his position. In adjudicating this appeal, our only concern is to make our own independent decision on the proper classification of the position. The methods and techniques used by the agency for their evaluation are their own and are not germane to our decision. By law, we must make our decision solely by comparing the current duties and responsibilities of the position to OPM standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, 5112). Therefore, we have considered the appellant's statements only insofar as they are relevant to making that comparison.

The appellant compares his duties to benchmarks used in the classification standards. Benchmarks describe work situations that represent significant numbers of positions in the particular occupation. They state the duties performed and reflect each of the nine factors as they relate to those duties. Benchmarks have been point rated using the factor level descriptions in the standard. A single factor level in a benchmark position cannot be considered in isolation. Selection of a benchmark should only be used if the benchmark position is very similar to the kind and level of the duties assigned to the position being evaluated. The same grade should result from using benchmarks or factor level descriptions, alone or in any combination.

## **Position information**

The appellant is assigned to position description number [#]. The position description was reclassified on July 20, 1999, as a result of the agency's desk audit findings. Despite minor discrepancies with the wording in the position description, the appellant, the supervisor and agency have certified the accuracy of the position description.

The appellant's position description does not meet the standards of adequacy defined in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards. The position description overstates the

nature and extent of the appellant's responsibility. Information obtained from interviews indicates that the appellant does not operate at the level of autonomy described in the position description. The supervisor provides general supervision and the team leader provides day-to-day direction for regional assignments. Special projects are assigned, monitored and reviewed by higher level management. Recommendations and findings are subject to their approval. Therefore, the supervisory controls of the position description must be amended to clearly reflect the appellant's relationship with the supervisor, the team leader, and the nature and extent of his level of authority and responsibility for assignments.

The appellant furnished a list of the estimated percentages of time he spent on work over the past year. The team leader concurred with the appellant's estimates. The appellant spent 37 percent of his time performing special projects and 41 percent of his time on regional advisory duties. Special projects involve the analysis and evaluation of automated systems to gather, assess and present financial information. Several of the project examples furnished by the appellant extend over a 3-4 year period. Others are short-term projects. Information obtained from interviews with project leaders and higher level management indicate that the work is expected to continue.

Special projects are temporary duties, and generally do not affect the series or grade level. However, temporary duties cannot be ignored when they become a regular part of the job, are extended over a long period of time, and there is sufficient evidence to assume that the duties will continue to recur. Therefore, the duties and responsibilities associated with special project work must be evaluated to ensure the position is properly classified.

A brief description of the appellant's major duties and responsibilities follows:

The appellant is responsible for controlling, monitoring, and tracking the region's payroll allocation to ensure adequate monies are set aside to cover payroll budget costs. This involves tracking actual employee salary and benefit costs (e.g., estimating the effect of career-ladder and non-competitive promotions, within-grade increases, cost-of-living increases, locality pay, health and life insurance rate changes, leave without pay, overtime costs, projected losses and planned hiring), and analyzing management goals and objectives.

The appellant is a technical advisor to top regional management staff, area directors, field managers, and peers in other regions and some central office components. He advises management on projected annual payroll needs, how to maximize the use of payroll/staffing resources, what necessary actions are needed when deficits or surpluses exist, and critical payroll issues and problems. He also serves as the regional advisor for fiscal human resources management systems. The appellant updates regional payroll data on an ongoing basis and provides status reports and detailed regional payroll plans to the central office. He identifies discrepancies and problems in reports received from national databases, and recommends

system changes or improvements to ensure the validity of payroll data and information for reporting purposes.

The appellant shares responsibility with a Social Insurance Consultant in another region for maintaining and improving the national payroll projection system. He develops new processes and data to help analysts who manage payroll budgets, improves analysis techniques that can be used to assess projection and data accuracy, and designs procedures and reports to validate the integrity of centrally developed information. He works directly with or through the regional Human Resources Center with components that maintain and/or design personnel/payroll databases and/or reports by providing input to improve existing data accuracy and validity of financial data and fiscal management reporting requirements for new systems.

The appellant works under the general supervision of the Assistant Regional Commissioner. The supervisor provides direction on financial management goals and objectives and determines priorities to be achieved. The appellant independently plans and carries out work. Recommendations and findings affecting the utilization of regional staffing resources are discussed with the supervisor. Special projects assigned from the central office or the appellant's regional counterpart, or those projects that are self-initiated as a result of problems identified in payroll data and reporting systems are not reviewed by the supervisor or the team leader. However, findings and/or recommendations for changes or modifications to agency-wide payroll/accounting and related systems are subject to the approval of higher authority. Completed work is reviewed in terms of meeting management needs and established goals and objectives.

### **Series determination**

The agency placed the appellant's position in the Financial Administration and Program Series, GS-501. The appellant believes his position should be placed in the Management and Program Analysis Series, GS-343.

The GS-343 series includes positions which primarily serve as analysts and advisors to management on the evaluation of the effectiveness of government programs and operations or the productivity and efficiency of the management of Federal agencies or both. Positions in this series require knowledge of the substantive nature of agency programs and activities, agency missions, policies and objectives, management principles and processes, and the analytical and evaluative methods and techniques for assessing program development or execution and improving organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Some positions also require an understanding of basic budgetary and financial management principles and techniques as they relate to long-range planning of programs and objectives. The work requires skill in application of fact finding and investigative techniques; oral and written communications; and development of presentations and reports. Unlike positions classified in

the GS-343 series, the appellant's position requires specialized knowledge of financial management and accounting principles and concepts to provide meaningful advice to management on the utilization of resources.

The GS-343 standard excludes analytical positions which have as their paramount qualification requirement specialized subject-matter knowledge and skills equivalent to those required of a fully-trained employee in the particular subject-matter occupations. Such positions are to be evaluated through reference to the appropriate subject-matter standard. The appellant's position, therefore, cannot be placed in the GS-343 series.

The GS-501 series includes positions which perform, supervise, or manage nonprofessional, two-grade interval work properly classified to the Accounting and Budget Group, GS-500, when no other series is appropriate. Some positions involve managerial or administrative work in connection with accounting systems. Others include analytical, forecasting, and interpretive functions associated with the management and control of resources or funds; the tracking and control of funds for special programs; analytical or program work pertaining to payroll, cash control, or benefit systems; or involve mixtures of work that cannot be identified within an established series. The appellant's position interrelates financial management data to obtain a perspective of financial costs that will assist managers in budgeting, program planning and decision making to facilitate achievement of regional goals and objectives. His position is properly placed in the GS-501 series.

### **Title determination**

The agency constructed the title, Fiscal Management Specialist. The appellant disagrees with the agency's title determination.

No titles are specified for positions classified to the GS-501 series. Therefore, the agency may construct a title following the guidance in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards.

### **Standard determination**

The agency used the Budget Analysis Series, GS-560, and the Administrative Analysis Grade Evaluation Guide (AAGEG) to evaluate the position. The appellant believes that the GS-560 is not appropriate because he does not perform traditional budget analysis work as described in GS-560 standard. He believes his position has changed over a period or time, involves mixtures of different levels of work and that the grade-controlling duties should determine the series.

The duties and responsibilities assigned to most positions are covered by one occupational series, and the series determination is clear. For these positions, the series represents the primary work of the position, the highest level of work performed, and the paramount

qualifications required. Some positions, however, are a mix of duties and responsibilities covered by two or more occupational series and classified by more than one standard or guide. Often the appropriate series for these positions is a general series for the occupational group covering the type of work performed.

Nonsupervisory positions classified in the GS-501 series are evaluated by reference to a standard for a specific occupational series that involves analogous knowledge and skills, or an appropriate multi-series guide. The guidance contained in the *Classifier's Handbook* provides instructions for selecting the appropriate standard for use in grading positions in series for which grading criteria have not been published. The handbook states that:

You should select standards that cover work as similar as possible to the work you are evaluating with respect to –

- the kind of work process, functions, or subject matter involved;
- the qualifications (knowledge, skills, and abilities) required;
- the level of difficulty and responsibility; and
- the combination of classification factors that have the greatest influence on the grade level.

The appellant spent the greatest portion of his time on special projects (37 percent) and payroll advisory services (41 percent), both of which involve financial management concerns and requirements. The work requires knowledge of financial management principles and concepts, an understanding of the rules and regulations affecting civilian pay, the ability to understand financial data in reports, and analytical skills to make conclusions that will provide an assessment of resources for planning, budgeting and automation purposes.

A number of different standards, including the Budget Analysis, GS-560, standard and the AAGEG, measure the application of analytical skills in different situations. The AAGEG measures analytical work concerned with assessing the overall effectiveness of management systems and program operations. It does not provide specific criteria with which to evaluate positions concerned with the financial aspects of program operations, and does not require specialized subject-matter knowledges and skills as discussed under "Series determination." Consequently, the AAGEG does not provide an appropriate means to evaluate the work performed by the appellant.

The GS-560 standard measures the application of analytical skills in formulating, presenting, and executing financial plans (in the form of a budget) for a program or organization. Budget analysis in the Federal government is a staff advisory function. Work includes analyzing and offering recommendations concerning the costs and benefits of alternative methods of financing

agency program and administrative operations; implementing legal and regulatory controls over the apportionment, allotment, allocation, obligation, and/or expenditure of funds in approved budgets; and providing advice on effective and efficient means for the acquisition and use of funds to support agency programs and activities.

The first step in the budget process is budget formulation. Budget formulation involves preparing detailed analyses and estimates of annual funding needs; gathering, comparing, and correlating information about current and future programs and activities with projected costs of operations; determining costs and benefits of different levels of program operations; and putting the recommended budget for the desired level of program operations in a format consistent with existing legislative and regulatory guidance, and in a format acceptable to reviewing and approving authorities.

Similar to the first step in the formulation of budget estimates, the appellant's work requires knowledge of the financial structure and financial management practices of an organization and analytical techniques to assess and project payroll budget needs for mission accomplishment. Likewise, special projects involve an analysis of electronic data for the purpose of gathering and analyzing payroll and financial data, and do not impose substantially different qualification requirements. Consequently, the GS-560 standard covers similar work, requires similar qualifications, and provides a reasonable basis for evaluating the appellant's work.

### **Grade determination**

The GS-560 standard is written in the Factor Evaluation System (FES) format. Under the FES, positions are placed in grades on the basis of their duties and responsibilities, and the qualifications required as evaluated in terms of nine factors common to nonsupervisory General Schedule positions.

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 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.

The appellant disagrees with the agency determinations for Factors 1, 4, 5, and 6. The agency's classification advisory disagrees with the classifier's determination for Factor 2. We agree with the agency's assessment of Factors 3, 7, 8, and 9. Therefore, our decision will discuss only Factors 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6.



## 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, theories, principles, and concepts; and the nature and extent of the skills needed to apply this knowledge. The agency credited Level 1-7 for this factor. The appellant believes Level 1-8 is correct.

Level 1-7, in addition to those knowledges and skills described at lower levels of this factor, requires detailed, intensive knowledge of the budgetary policies, precedents, goals, objectives, regulations, and guidelines of the employing component which apply to assigned organizations and programs; the sources, types and methods of funding for assigned organizations and programs; and budgetary and financial relationships between the assigned budget(s) and programs of other agency components and organizations. This level requires knowledge and skill in the application of methods and techniques for analyzing and evaluating the effectiveness of continuing changes in program plans and funding on the accomplishment of the organization's budget and program milestones. Skill is also required in analyzing budgetary relationships and developing recommendations for budgetary actions under conditions of time pressure and uncertainty due to short and rapidly changing program and budgetary deadlines and objectives; gaps and conflicts in program and budgetary information; lack of predictive data; conflicting program and budgetary objectives; and changing guidelines for the work.

Level 1-7 is met. Similar to this level, the appellant's work requires knowledge of analytical techniques and methods to develop new processes and data to improve techniques that can be used to assess payroll projection accuracy, and to design procedures and reports to validate the integrity of centrally developed information. Work also requires knowledge of the regional and agency program goals and objectives; knowledge of the rules and regulations affecting civilian pay; knowledge of accounting, auditing, and budgeting principles, practices and concepts to recommend maximum use of resources; and skill in analyzing and interpreting financial data to recognize discrepancies, missing information and errors.

At Level 1-8, the work requires a mastery of the concepts, principles, practices, laws, and regulations which apply to budgeting for substantive national programs and services. Employees with this level of knowledge typically serve as advisors and consultants to top management of the employing agency or organization on the Federal budget process. It requires comprehensive and detailed knowledge of the process through which budgets are developed, transmitted, presented, and examined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and reviewed by Congress, and how budgetary and program legislation is enacted by Congress. It also involves expert knowledge of the financial and budgetary relationships between the organization's budget and the budgets and programs of other Federal agencies, state and local governments, private industry, and large public organizations. It includes detailed knowledge of the financial management and program objectives of the organization's

director, OMB, and Congress; comprehensive knowledge of precedents and controls; and detailed knowledge of OMB and Department of Treasury guidelines and regulations governing the acquisition and use of Federal funds. Knowledge of this level is applied in developing, recommending, and implementing budgetary policies affecting the financing and accomplishment of national programs and objectives. Such knowledge is used in interpreting and assessing the impact of new and revised congressional legislation on the formulation and execution of budgets for substantive programs. Knowledge is also used to develop and render authoritative interpretations of executive orders, OMB guidelines and directives, and policies and precedents within and across agency lines. Some employees with this level of knowledge apply new methods and techniques of budgeting to the forecasting of long-range funding needs and the development of timetables for obtaining needed funding for new or modified substantive government programs. Employees must exercise skill in projecting and analyzing the potential effects of budgetary actions on national economic, social, and political objectives.

Level 1-8 is not met. While the appellant's work requires considerable financial management knowledge, there is no evidence that the work requires mastery of financial management concepts sufficient to function as an advisor to management on substantive national programs. The appellant is one of two recognized experts (among the ten regions) on the payroll projection system and related systems. He and the Social Insurance Consultant coordinate all of the regions' user requirements and make recommendations on improvements to the agency's top financial management advisors. The Office of Financial Policy and Operations within the Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Finance, Assessment and Management is the top advisor and has operational responsibility for accounting and payment operations for all financial systems and processes. Likewise, the Division of Resource and Management Information within the Office of Public Service and Operations Support is the top advisor to management on the financial management, budget, and management information activities. The appellant's knowledge is applied to the financial management of regional activities, and he uses his personal experience and knowledge of payroll to advise and recommend payroll system changes. His work does not require the level of knowledge of substantive national programs as described at Level 1-8.

Level 1-7 is credited for 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 for carrying out assignments, and how completed work is reviewed. The agency credited Level 2-5 for this factor. The appellant does not contest that determination. We find that Level 2-4 is more appropriate.

At Level 2-4, employees are usually assigned long-term, continuing responsibility for independently performing budgetary functions in one or more phases of the budget process

which support the substantive programs of the agency or component. This level is distinguished from the preceding level principally by the employees' added responsibility for independently planning and carrying out work on an extended basis and for making a wide range of technical decisions, commitments, and recommendations as the work proceeds. The supervisor establishes the overall budgetary objectives and policies of the employing organization, and indicates the sources and types of funding available to achieve the stated objectives. Within this framework, the employees and supervisor, in consultation, develop the internal organizational deadlines; conduct of long-range analytical projects; and areas of emphasis in the work. The employees are responsible for independently planning, performing, coordinating, and scheduling the budgetary financing of new programs.

Level 2-5 depicts the kind and level of supervisory controls typically exercised over the work of an employee who is responsible for, and expert in, all phases and methods of budgeting for the substantive nationwide programs administered by the employing agency or one of its components. The supervisor provides broad administrative and policy direction through discussion of financial and program goals and related Presidential, Congressional, or political considerations which affect the budget administered. The employee is usually delegated responsibility and authority for independently planning, scheduling, coordinating, carrying out, and evaluating the effectiveness of budgetary operations performed in the employing agency or assigned component. The employee exercises delegated authority for funds management and control, which includes the authority to approve funding transactions in approved budgets without reference to the supervisor. In performing the work the employee makes extensive, unreviewed technical judgments concerning the treatment of budgetary data in forms, schedules, requests, and reports, and in deciding which analytical methods will be applied, and when and where to apply them. Many of these technical decisions lead to or form the basis for major program policy and operational decisions by the director for the employing organization. The employee is regarded as the sole technical authority for the employing organization on budgetary matters, and recommendations made by the employee are usually accepted by the supervisor without change. The employee's actions, decisions, and recommendations are reviewed primarily for results obtained in achieving financial goals and objectives. Due to the extended nature of the budget cycle, the results of recommendations and completed work are frequently not subject to review and evaluation for periods in excess of 1 year. Recommendations made by the employee for new or revised budgetary policies, procedures, and controls are evaluated by the supervisor in terms of anticipated impact on accomplishment of substantive program goals and objectives and national priorities.

Level 2-5 is not met. The appellant is one of ten regional payroll experts. He does not have sole responsibility for the national payroll or its system administration. The authority for policy decisions is retained at headquarters. His regional assignments are also subject to review and approval by his team leader and supervisor. The Department of Interior maintains payroll system administration.

Level 2-4 is credited for 450 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 the appellant's position at Level 4-4. The appellant believes that Level 4-5 is met.

At Level 4-4, work involves the performance of a wide variety of analytical and technical budget administration functions for substantive programs and support activities which are funded through many separate sources. Often programs budgeted for are financed through a combination of appropriated fund and revolving fund accounts. Programs and funding are unstable and subject to change through the budget year, which necessitates making frequent adjustments to budget estimates and conducting partial rebudgeting during the fiscal year. Program funding may extend for several years or more, as in the case of a no-year appropriation. The budget for which the employee is responsible typically includes either a wide range of object classes and line items for one or a few substantive programs and organizations, or fewer object classes and accounts through which a wide range of program areas are funded. Work requires identification and analysis of changes in budgetary policies, regulations, constraints, objectives, and funds available which affect the accomplishment of program objectives, and vice versa. The employee analyzes budget and program input in order to develop annual and multi-year budget estimates for assigned programs and activities. At this level, the employee conducts research, identifies and analyzes trends in the use of funds, and recommends adjustments in program spending which require the rescheduling of program workloads. The employee also assists program managers and staff officials in interpreting the impact of, and planning for, multi-year budgetary and program changes.

Level 4-4 is met. The appellant is the regional expert and advisor on the regional payroll and staffing resources. He monitors and controls the regional payroll allocation and provides input on recommendations and changes to agency financial management reports and automated systems (e.g., National Accounting for Pay system, the Staffing Management System, the Full Time Equivalents Tracking System, the Payroll Management Information System, the Payroll Accounting Recap Report, the non-ceiling projection system, the Interregional Hardship Transfer System). The work involves the use of established analytical tools and techniques to recommend new processes, procedures or techniques to be used by other payroll experts; extensive knowledge of the rules and regulations and the changes in the law affecting employee leave and benefits regarding pay; and extensive knowledge of accounting principles and practices to review and validate financial data and information in accounting reports. Work is complicated by the frequent changes in work force demographics and program planning goals and objectives, new and revised automation initiatives, and changes in civilian employee pay. The appellant analyzes payroll and accounting data to project future payroll budget needs.

At Level 4-5, the work requires the selection and use of many different and unrelated analytical techniques and methods in the formulation, presentation-enactment, and/or execution of multi-year budget forecasts and requests to cover substantive agency timetables. Analytical methods regularly applied typically include planning-programming-budgeting evaluation review techniques; linear programming; and management by objectives. The employee makes recommendations in substantive programs. Recommendations concern the acquisition, use, or consideration of program requirements in relation to budgetary requirements, policies and methods, and sources and types of funding. The work also requires identifying, quantifying, and evaluating the mutual effects and interrelationships between program goals and accomplishments and budgetary analysis for attainment of multi-year budgetary objectives and plans which conflict with long-range goals and objectives of the organization. There is a great deal of uncertainty and difficulty in determining the amount, sequence, and timing of budgetary actions due to the presence of one or more of the following conditions:

- continually changing program objectives, plans, and funding requirements resulting from new legislation, revised policies, and/or shifting demands for goods and services;
- conflicting program and budgetary requirements;
- implementation of new substantive program which is complicated by the lack of productive data upon which to base budget forecasts;
- varying economic and fiscal circumstances;
- technological developments which have significant cost impact upon substantive agency programs; or
- continuing need for reprogramming actions that involve ten percent or more of funds for a substantive program in a single budget year.

Difficulty characteristic of this level is also encountered in formulating, presenting, and/or defending budget requests. Such work involves developing the strategy for presenting the budget for important substantive programs, developing narrative and statistical justification for requested funds, briefing management officials on the nature of the testimony to be given, evaluating the reactions of funds-granting and approving officials to the presentation, responding to questions or comments, and making necessary adjustments to the budget as the result of decisions concerning funding.

The work requires developing proposals concerning alternative methods, sources, and timing for financing for substantive programs and/or devising and applying criteria for evaluating the progress and cost effectiveness of accomplishing the program plans, goals and objectives. This factor includes budget execution work involving the most difficult funds control activities

associated with multi-year procurement of major weapons systems, construction projects, law enforcement activities, and delivery of payments and benefits to the public. Employees adapt budgetary policies, analytical methods, and regulatory procedures for use by subordinate echelons, installations, and field offices in formulating or executing budgets. Employees who develop and interpret budgetary policies and regulations must consider the broad range of policies, procedures, laws, regulations, and program goals and objectives which are to be fulfilled.

Level 4-5 is not met. The appellant's work does not cover substantive agency programs, but involves oversight of the financial aspects of the regional payroll program where the primary concern is the generation of sufficient funds to cover payroll expenses. While this may create some uncertainty in funding to meet changes in management plans, the appellant's work does not typically involve complications comparable to those described at this level. For example, changes in regional payroll most often involve incremental growth or minor modifications in programs to meet changing staffing needs rather than a response to new legislation or policies. There are few conflicts between program and financial requirements since lack of revenues to support staffing needs will typically result in modification of the plan. The appellant participates in the implementation of new programs in which technology plays a major role and there is a continuing need for reprogramming. However, the appellant's role is one of a user making suggestions to headquarters components rather than that of the systems manager who has oversight responsibility for financial systems, or the program manager who has financial management responsibility for the agency budget. In addition, other positions are responsible for the financial management of agency programs. Payroll covers a large portion of the agency budget but does not require the intricacy of tasks, steps, processes, or methods used to monitor and control the funds associated with substantive programs for the entire agency budget. The intent of Level 4-5 is not met.

Level 4-4 is credited for 225 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 5-4 for this factor. The appellant believes Level 5-5 is met. We believe Level 5-3 is appropriate.

At Level 5-3, work involves the application of a wide range of standardized, widely-accepted budgetary regulations, practices, and procedures typical of one or more complete phases of the annual budget for assigned organizations, object classes, locally-based substantive programs, or support activities. Usually, the organizations, programs, or activities budgeted for are further subdivided into (or administered through) branches, sections, or units in field or headquarters locations. Work products, advice, services rendered, and clearances issued affect

the amount and timely availability of money to pay for personnel salaries and expenses, equipment, routine maintenance services, and similar administrative and support activities in appropriated or industrially funded organizations. The advice given affects the accuracy of budget forecasts and/or compliance with legal and regulatory guides. Work involves the application of specific budgetary rules, regulations, principles, and procedures associated with the phases of budget formulation and budget execution which constitute segments of the budget for assigned support and related object classes and line items. Budgeting is also performed in support of the substantive missions, functions and operations of locally based activities characteristic of the next higher level, which are engaged in widespread substantive program operations. Typically, organizations budgeted for are engaged in substantive program or support operations at the lowest operating level in the agency, and such operations are funded on a short-term basis.

Level 5-3 is met. The purpose of the appellant's work is to monitor and control the regional payroll allocation to ensure adequate monies are set aside to cover payroll budget costs. The advice given by the appellant and the recommendations he makes for changes in procedures or processes significantly affect the stability of regional operations. His suggestions for changes or modifications or new financial management systems or policy are reviewed, approved and implemented by higher authority and affect the accuracy of payroll projections made by regional offices.

At Level 5-4, the purpose of the work is to formulate and/or monitor the execution of long-range, detailed budget forecasts and plans to fund the implementation of substantive programs and projects of the employing component or agency. Work involves establishing financial and budgetary goals, timetables, milestones, and other criteria against which the relative costs and benefits of program achievements can be measured, and assessing the cost-effectiveness in meeting those goals. Assignments in budget formulation typically involve developing detailed estimates of the funding needed to support important programs and projects, and written narrative justification for the funds requested. Budget execution involves planning for the timely acquisition and use of funds through time-phased allotments and transfers of funds. The work also requires adjusting long-range budget forecasts and monitoring the execution of budgets for assigned substantive programs by analyzing costs, benefits, and trends in ratio of obligation and expenditure of funds to assure that funds are being effectively used to accomplish stated program objectives. Employees responsible for programs of this scope also make recommendations on ways to improve the utilization of funds which will result in cost saving and effective accomplishment of mission and program objectives. Recommendations and technical interpretation affect the amount and availability of funds for the conduct of major substantive or administrative programs and services. Programs and projects budgeted for typically cut across component lines within the employing agency, and may also affect the budgets, programs, and interests of other Federal agencies, public organizations, and/or private industrial firms.

Level 5-4 is not fully met. The appellant is concerned with monitoring the stability of the regional payroll allocations to ensure funds are available to support regional operations rather than the substantive programs described at this level. He does not establish financial goals, timetables, and milestones, but monitors and reports on progress toward meeting established management goals and objectives. While the appellant also recommends ways to maximize the utilization of funds, and makes suggestions on financial management systems, his work does not involve substantive programs or cut across component lines or other Federal agencies. His suggestions are one of ten regional suggestions submitted for consideration by higher authority. Other headquarters components also provide suggestions based on their program needs. The intent of Level 5-4 is not met, and this level cannot be credited.

Level 5-3 is credited for 150 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. The appellant believes Level 6-3 is met.

At Level 6-2, contacts are with persons from outside the immediate employing office or organization but within the same Federal agency or a major component thereof. Typical of this level are contacts with project managers responsible for substantive technical programs or their designated representatives; engineers, chemists, and other technical subject-matter specialists; management analysts; personnel management specialists; program analysts; and other budget and financial analysts at various levels within the agency, or in field or headquarters locations. Roles and relative authorities of participants are explicit, or involve a formal presentation of budget recommendations in a conference with the director of an agency component. This level includes informal telephone and face-to-face contacts with employees of other Federal agencies engaged in budgetary functions which affect the budget of the employing agency, and contacts with representatives of private industry firms.

Level 6-2 is met. The appellant's recurring contacts are with management officials within the region, other regional payroll experts and occasional personal contacts with individuals at the headquarters level and the Department of Interior. The appellant's personal contacts occur in both formal and informal settings similar to those described at this level.

At Level 6-3, contacts are with individuals from outside the agency who represent the budget and program interests of other Federal agencies, contractors, private business and financial interests, state and local governments, foreign governments, public and private institutions, Congressional staff members, or other Federal agencies. Also characteristic of this level are contacts with the director or deputy director of the employing agency, key officials of comparable rank and authority in other agencies, and OMB budget examiners.



Level 6-3 is not met. The appeal record contains no evidence that the appellant has regular and recurring personal contacts with individuals from outside the Social Security Administration, in other Federal agencies, or in the private sector.

Level 6-2 is credited for 25 points.

<b>SUMMARY</b>		
<b>FACTOR</b>	<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
1. Knowledge Required By The Position	1-7	1250
2. Supervisory Controls	2-4	450
3. Guidelines	3-4	450
4. Complexity	4-4	225
5. Scope and Effect	5-3	150
6. Personal Contacts	6-2	25
7. Purpose of Contacts	7-3	120
8. Physical Demands	8-1	5
9. Work Environment	9-1	5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	2680

A total of 2680 points falls within the range for a GS-11, 2355 to 2750 points, according to the Grade Conversion Table in the GS-560 standard.

### **Decision**

This position is properly classified as GS-501-11 (title at the discretion of the agency).