

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Division for Human Capital Leadership & Merit System Accountability
Classification Appeals Program

Atlanta Field Services Group
75 Spring Street, SW., Suite 1018
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Classification Appeal Decision
Under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [appellant's name]

Agency classification: Management Analyst
GS-343-9

Organization: [organization]
[organization]
Naval Hospital
Department of the Navy
[location]

OPM decision: Management Analyst
GS-343-9

OPM decision number: C-0343-09-03

Marta Brito Pérez
Associate Director
Human Capital Leadership
and Merit System Accountability

June 15, 2004

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).

Decision sent to:

[appellant]
[address]
[location]

[name]
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Department of the Navy
Naval Hospital
[address]
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Introduction

On February 18, 2004, the Atlanta Field Services Group of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a classification appeal from [appellant] who is employed as a Management Analyst, GS-343-09. She works in the [organization], Naval Hospital, U.S. Department of the Navy, [location]. The appellant requests that her position be reclassified as Management Analyst, GS-343-11. She believes that her agency did not properly use the Administrative Analysis Grade Evaluation Guide (AAGEG) in evaluating her position. We received the complete appeal administrative report from the agency on February 6, 2004. The appeal has been accepted and processed under section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

To help decide the appeal, we conducted a phone audit of the appellant's position and interviewed her immediate supervisor. In reaching our classification decision, we have carefully reviewed the audit findings and all information of record furnished by the appellant and her agency, including her official position description, number [#], which we find contains the major duties and responsibilities assigned to and performed by the appellant. Both the appellant and the supervisor certified the accuracy of the position description.

General issues

The appellant appealed to her agency in September 2003, and the agency issued a decision on December 4, 2003, sustaining the position's existing classification. She subsequently appealed to OPM.

The appellant makes various statements about her agency's review and evaluation of her position. In adjudicating this appeal, our only concern is to make our own independent decision on the proper classification of her position. By law, we must make that decision solely by comparing her current duties and responsibilities to OPM standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). Therefore, we have considered the appellant's statements only insofar as they are relevant to making that comparison. The appellant also cites the increased knowledge required by her duties as the Alternate Contracting Officer Technical Representative for the TRICARE Managed Care Support Contract. Duties performed only in the absence of another employee are not considered in determining the grade level of a position (*The Classifier's Handbook*, chapter 5).

Position information

The Naval Hospital is a Military Treatment Facility (MTF) located at the Marine Corps Air Station [location]. The hospital's [organization] is responsible for cost effective health care delivery, both internally and externally, to the MTF. This includes development, coordination, and management of programs such as TRICARE services, managed care support contracts, internal patient treatment contracts, and health systems analysis. TRICARE is a regionally managed health care program for active duty and retired members of the uniformed services, their families, and survivors. The TRICARE program has a customer base consisting of 32,000 active duty and retired military personnel and their dependents. The [organization] plans and

administers the managed care program at the MTF and serves as an integral part of the TRICARE Program. The department also functions as the primary liaison between the MTF and organizations involved in Department of Defense managed care programs such as the Mid Atlantic Lead Agent and the TRICARE managed care support contractors. .

The appellant primarily works with the TRICARE program. Her primary responsibilities involve providing analytical, organizational, and training support in meeting all levels of care, TRICARE requirements, and readiness standards related to health care services provided by TRICARE's regional office and Naval Hospital. Her major duties involve research and analysis of automated data to ensure the adequacy of staffing levels, access to patient care, and improvement of processes in the MTF. The appellant researches and recommends solutions to service access problems, provides training to physicians and non-physicians on the effective use of major automated health care systems, and serves as an advocate for management officials and organizations to ensure that data quality and TRICARE standards are met. She serves as the MTF liaison with the TRICARE regional office on appointment standardization, access improvements, and management of provider templates and schedules. As such, she is the primary contact for the dissemination of educational and training materials to MTF staff during the improvement cycles of automated systems, leads teams and manages appointment standardization practices and methodologies, and supervises the input, monitoring, and adjusting of templates and schedules for the various MTF clinics and units. She performs these duties for approximately 40 percent of her time.

The appellant also serves as the MTF Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR) for the Outpatient Coding Contract (approximately 17 percent of her time), and consultant on all workflow processes and resources needed to increase access to care (approximately 10 percent of her time). She spends her remaining time participating as a member of the MTF's [name] Team and [name] Team, conducting analyses of Ambulatory Data Management System data, and miscellaneous other duties. The appellant supervises one Template and Scheduling Coordinator, GS-303-5, position.

The appellant works under the supervision of the [organization] Head. The supervisor provides assignments in terms of specific work issues and processes to be subjected to analysis or study, and deadlines for the completion of the work. The appellant is responsible for independently planning and carrying out work assignments and receives assistance only on rare occasions. The appellant keeps the supervisor informed of work progress, and any unexpected issues and controversial findings that are encountered. Completed work is randomly reviewed in terms of overall approach and conformance with policy.

The appellant's position description and other material of record furnish more information about her duties and responsibilities and how they are performed and we incorporate it by reference into this decision.

Series, title, and standard determination

The agency classified the appellant's position in the Management and Program Analysis Series, GS-343, and titled it Management Analyst. The appellant does not contest the series or title determination. We concur.

There are no grade-level criteria provided in the GS-343 standard. Instructions in the standard state that nonsupervisory positions at grade GS-9 and above are to be evaluated by reference to the AAGEG.

Grade determination

The AAGEG is written in the Factor Evaluation System (FES) format, under which factor levels and accompanying point values are assigned for each of nine factors. The total is converted to a grade level by use of the grade conversion table provided in the standard. Under the FES, each factor level description in a standard describes the minimum characteristics needed to receive credit for the described level. Therefore, if a position fails to meet the criteria in a factor level description in any significant aspect, it must be credited at a lower level.

The appellant believes that her position should be credited at Levels 1-7, 2-4, and 4-4 and concurs with the agency's crediting of Levels 3-3, 5-3, 6-2, 7-b, 8-1, and 9-1. After careful review of the record, we concur with the uncontested agency determinations and have so credited the position. Our analysis of the contested factors follows.

Factor 1, Knowledge required by the position

This factor measures the kind and nature of knowledge and skills needed and how they are utilized in doing the work.

At Level 1-6, employees apply analytical and evaluative techniques to the identification, consideration, and resolution of issues or problems of a procedural or factual nature. The issues or problems deal with readily observable conditions, written guidelines covering work methods and procedures, and information of a factual nature. Included at this level is knowledge of the theory and principles of management and organization, including administrative practices and procedures common to organizations (e.g., channels of communication, delegation of authority, routing of correspondence, filing systems, and storage of files and records).

Level 1-6 is met. As at Level 1-6, the appellant performs a variety of analytical duties to increase or improve the efficiency of internal administrative procedures. She conducts research and analysis of data generated by automated healthcare systems, such as Composite Health Care and Ambulatory Data Management Systems, to determine if the availability of and patient access to care by military and contractor providers meets the levels and standards specified in the contracts. The appellant analyzes and monitors the workflow of the 25 primary and specialty care clinics and the specialized ambulatory procedure unit at the MTF. The appellant conducts studies and projects which require the gathering of statistical data, preparation of reports, and recommendations for solutions to MTF management officials (department heads, clinic directors,

MTF commander, etc.). For example, she analyzes and studies problems with procedures and processes to adjust appointment schedules for seasonal increases in appointment requests (allergy and flu seasons, student physical examinations for school openings and athletic activities, etc.). She conducts analyses of clinic workloads to balance the number of patients seen by individual providers, monitors patient data entered into the automated tracking systems to eliminate or minimize coding errors, monitors training requirements for military medical professionals, arranges flexible schedules for physicians, determines procedures to retain in-house versus outsourcing to civilian facilities, and arranges increases or decreases in the availability of medial specialists. As at Level 1-6, these studies involve resolution of issues or problems of a procedural or factual nature. The appellant also provides training on the use of automated healthcare systems to medical professional and non-professional staff, makes recommendations on the modification of internal guidelines and regulations, and supervises the input, monitoring, and adjusting of clinic templates and schedules related to patient appointments. She also participates on teams to perform similar functions.

At Level 1-7, in addition to knowledge required at Level 1-6, assignments require knowledge and skill in applying analytical and evaluative methods and techniques to study the efficiency and effectiveness of program operations carried out by administrative or professional personnel or substantive administrative support functions. This level includes knowledge of pertinent laws, regulations, policies and precedents which affect the use of program and related support resources in the area being studied. This knowledge is used to plan, schedule, and conduct studies to evaluate and recommend ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of work operations, program effectiveness, and/or organizational productivity. Knowledge at this level is applied in developing new or modified work methods, organizational structures, records and files, management processes, staffing patterns, procedures for administering program services, guidelines and procedures, and automating work processes for the conduct of administrative support functions or program operations. Knowledge may also be applied in analyzing and making recommendations concerning the centralization or decentralization of operations.

Level 1-7 is not met. The appellant's work typically involves the analysis and study of administrative procedures and processes and the issues or problems dealt with are of a procedural or factual nature and deal with easily or readily observable conditions, established written guidelines covering work methods, procedures, and factual information. The appellant's position is not responsible for performing substantive functional studies that require regulatory and other program knowledge to develop or modify work methods, organizational structures, staffing patterns, management processes, etc., as intended at Level 1-7. As discussed previously, the analytical functions she performs generally relate to procedural issues and work data and are based on the application of well-established techniques and methods common to the organization and factual and readily available information. The appellant's studies and projects do not have the broader scope and complexity of issues typical of Level 1-7.

Level 1-6 is credited for 950 points.

Factor 2, Supervisory Controls

This factor measures how the work is assigned, the employee's responsibility for carrying out the work, and how the work is reviewed.

At Level 2-3, the supervisor assigns specific projects in terms of issues, organizations, functions, or work processes to be studied and sets deadlines for completing the work. The supervisor or higher grade analyst provides assistance on controversial issues or on the application of qualitative or quantitative analytical methods to the study of subjects for which precedent studies are not available. The employee independently plans, coordinates, and carries out the successive steps in fact-finding and analysis of issues necessary to complete each phase of assigned projects. Work problems are normally resolved without reference to the supervisor, in accordance with the body of accepted policies and precedents. Work is reviewed for conformance with overall requirements as well as contribution to the objectives. Findings and recommendations developed by the employee are reviewed prior to release, publication, or discussion with management officials.

Level 2-3 is met. As at that level, the appellant receives specific assignments from her supervisor who identifies specific issues and processes to be studied and deadlines for completion. She independently plans and carries out all phases of her assignments including analysis of processes and procedures. The appellant normally resolves any problems that arise during the course of her work without supervisory assistance. She coordinates work with staff in her own and other departments. The appellant keeps the supervisor informed of progress in completing assignments and any unexpected issues and controversial findings that are encountered. Completed work is reviewed for effectiveness of overall approach and conformance with policy. Work products consist of reports of finding and recommendations and are submitted through the supervisor to MTF management officials who determine actions to be taken.

At Level 2-4, the employee and supervisor develop a mutually acceptable project plan which includes identification of the work to be done, the scope of the project, and deadlines for its completion. Within the parameters of the approved plan, the employee has responsibility for planning and organizing the study, estimating costs, coordinating with staff and line management personnel, and conducting all phases of the project. This frequently involves the definitive interpretation of regulations and study procedures, and the initial application of new methods. The employee informs the supervisor of potentially controversial findings, issues, or problems with widespread impact. Completed work is also reviewed critically outside the employee's immediate office by staff and line management officials whose programs and employees would be affected by implementation of the recommendations.

Level 2-4 is not met. The appellant does not have responsibility for estimating the costs involved in conducting the various studies undertaken or coordinating with line management personnel. She does not provide definitive interpretations of regulations and study procedures or apply new methods to carry out analyses and studies. Her analytical assignments are specific in scope and are not of the degree of complexity envisioned at this level. The appeal record indicates that studies are normally conducted when there are TRICARE initiatives involving

funding issues. Studies typically involve internal issues and do not impact other program areas. Review of completed analyses and studies is generally limited to the appellant's immediate supervisor and higher level MTF management officials up to the commander.

Level 2-3 is credited for 275 points.

Factor 4, Complexity

This factor covers the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of the tasks, 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 4-3, the work principally involves dealing with problems and relationships of a procedural nature rather than the substance of work operations, issues, or other subjects studied. At this level, the employee analyzes the issues in the assignment, then selects and applies accepted analytical techniques such as task analysis, workload measurement, and trend analysis to resolve procedural problems affecting the efficiency, effectiveness, or productivity of the organization and/or workers studied. Projects usually take place within organizations with related functions and objectives, although organization and work procedures differ from one assignment to the next. Organizational efficiency assignments typically involve observing work in progress to identify and resolve problems in work-flow, work methods and procedures, task distribution, overall workload, forms and record keeping, span of control, and organizational structure. When performed, evaluative studies involve measurement of current work output, group productivity and accomplishments, or identification of current resource needs (staff, supplies, equipment, and space). Findings and recommendations are based upon analysis of work observations, review of production records or similar documentation, research of precedent studies, and application of standard administrative guidelines.

Level 4-3 is met. As at that level, the appellant's work involves analyzing administrative practices related to the managed medical care provided to patients of the various clinics and departments of the MTF. Her work is concerned with assessing the effectiveness of the patient appointment system in meeting patient needs and TRICARE guidelines and requirements. She is also responsible for monitoring all aspects of the Outpatient Coding Contract to ensure proper coding and delivery of services to patients, and conformance with contract specifications. Typical of Level 4-3, the appellant's assignments primarily involve analysis and study of procedures, processes, and automated data related to workload, workflow, and staffing to identify problems and recommend solutions.

At Level 4-4, the work involves gathering information, identifying and analyzing issues, and developing recommendations to resolve substantive problems of effectiveness and efficiency of work operations in a program setting. Subjects and projects assigned at this level usually consist of issues, problems, or concepts that are not always susceptible to direct observation and analysis. Difficulty is encountered in measuring effectiveness and productivity due to variations in the nature of administrative processes studied and information that is conflicting or incomplete or cannot readily be obtained by direct means. At this level, assignments may involve compiling, reconciling, and correlating voluminous workload data from a variety of sources with

different reporting requirements and formats, or the data must be carefully cross-checked, analyzed, and interpreted to obtain accurate and relevant information. Characteristic of work at this level is originality in refining existing work methods and techniques for application to the analysis of specific issues or resolution of problems. For example, the employee may revise methods for collecting data on workload, adopt new measures of productivity, or develop new approaches to relate productivity measurements to a performance appraisal system.

Level 4-4 is not met. The appellant's assignments do not routinely involve issues or problems that are difficult to identify through direct observation and analysis, or situations where information is conflicting, incomplete, or difficult to obtain. Studies and analyses performed by the appellant are typically in response to the desire of management officials to identify and resolve problems involving access to services. Unlike Level 4-4, identifying problems and recommending solutions involves monitoring appointment demand, reviewing staffing schedules and availability, analyzing workload, case mix, and no-show rates, or other observable or factual information or processes. The appellant's assignments involve the study of specific administrative processes having highly defined methodologies for case management. The work performed does not require the refinement of work methods and techniques, the revision of methods of collecting workload data, or the adoption of new measures of productivity envisioned at this level.

Level 4-3 is credited for 150 points.

Grade determination

Summary

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Points</i>
1. Knowledge required by the position	1-6	950
2. Supervisory controls	2-3	275
3. Guidelines	3-3	275
4. Complexity	4-3	150
5. Scope and effect	5-3	150
6. Personal contacts and	2	
7. Purpose of contacts	b	75
8. Physical demands	8-1	5
9. Work environment	9-1	<u>5</u>
<i>Total</i>		1885

A total of 1885 points falls within the GS-9 grade level point range of 1855 -2100 points on the Grade Conversion Table.

Decision

This position is properly classified as Management Analyst, GS-343-9.