

Position Classification Standard for Information Receptionist Series, GS-0304

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SERIES DEFINITION

This series includes all classes of positions the duties of that are to supervise or perform work involved in receiving and directing persons who call or visit Government agencies, installations, or offices, and giving them information in person or by telephone concerning the organization, functions, activities and personnel of such agencies, installations or offices.

These standards supersede those issued under the same title and code number in July, 1951.

COVERAGE

These standards cover nonsupervisory information receptionist positions. (Supervisory positions classifiable in the series are evaluated in accordance with the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#), applicable to positions of supervisors of work properly classifiable at one-grade intervals.)

EXCLUSIONS

Excluded from this series are positions that involve as a primary duty the performance of work and the application of knowledges characteristic in kind and degree of subject matter or other specialized series such as the [Mail and File Series, GS-0305](#), or series covered by the [Job Family Position Classification Standard for Assistance Work in the Human Resources Management Group, GS-0200](#), etc.

Specifically excluded are all positions whose work is to provide information, advice and active assistance to applicants in both the preparation and in the presentation and prosecution, of claims for benefits. (See the [Job Family Position Classification Standard for Assistance Work in the Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900](#).)

Also specifically excluded are positions in which the primary work is to provide callers with technical information on claims matters (e. g., involving eligibility criteria, filing requirements, disqualifying circumstances, most beneficial options, etc.), especially where the information and interpretations provided can be expected to influence the individual caller to continue, modify, or abandon his proposed benefit claim. (See the assistance and examiner portions of the appropriate claims examiner series in the [GS-900 Group, Legal Occupations](#).)

SPECIAL NOTES ON COVERAGE

1. In general, when a position has identifiable subject-matter or technical knowledge requirements it will not be classified in this series. Positions in this series require essentially (a) knowledge of the organizations, functions, and key personnel, and of sources of information in the agency, installation or office served, and (b) capacity for effective public contacts. On the basis of these requirements, the highest level nonsupervisory information receptionist described in the standards is GS-4. To be evaluated at grades higher than that, positions must have duties, responsibilities, and qualification requirements that exceed those required for grade GS-4 in this series. In many instances, such higher level duties, responsibilities and qualification requirements are characteristic of other series, and such positions will frequently not be classifiable in the Information Receptionist Series. However, positions that are essentially those of information receptionists and in which the duties, responsibilities, and qualification requirements are characteristic of this series but are of a higher level than those discussed in this standard, are classified in this series in whatever grade level is appropriate.
2. Information receptionist positions may or may not require the services of qualified typists depending upon the nature of the work to be performed and whether this involves some kind of typing. (When there is typing required in information receptionist positions it ordinarily is limited to simple card records, standard report forms, visitor passes, flexoline strips, directory inserts, routine form letters and memoranda, etc., that do not require high level typing skill.) When an information receptionist position does require a qualified typist, it will be classified in accordance with the guides appearing under "Coverage and Exclusions" on Page 1 of the position classification standards for [Clerk-Typist Series, GS-0322](#).

TITLES

The title appropriate for nonsupervisory positions in the series is "Information Receptionist."
The title appropriate for supervisory positions is "Supervisory Information Receptionist."

TYPICAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Information receptionists are usually physically located at primary points of contact in or in access to Government buildings, offices, or installations (e.g., main public entrances, public information offices, etc.), where there is a demonstrated need to provide information, to give directions, to regulate visitor traffic, to facilitate security control procedures, to conserve staff time of technical personnel, or for a combination of these and other purposes.

Information receptionists are primarily responsible for giving information, usually in person but also frequently over the telephone, in response to inquiries concerning the identification, location and general responsibilities of organizations, functions, programs, activities, operations and personnel of agencies, installations and offices, and similar questions. The work sometimes

includes the scheduling of appointments, the composition of routine request, transmittal, and acknowledgment letters and memoranda, and the performance of other clerical duties incidental to the information function.

Although inquiries cannot always be anticipated, the kinds of questions that are most often asked, the kinds of information that the information receptionist is most often called upon to give, and the kinds of service performed are determined in large measure by the nature, variety, and objectives of the programs that the agency, installation, or office administers, the major interests of its principal clientele, and the purpose for which the position was established. Although the information receptionist covered by these standards is required in the course of the work to give reasonable attention to details surrounding personal visits, the receptionist is not required to perform (nor is this series appropriate for), the hostess-type of receptionist duties that may be characteristic of secretarial or certain other kinds of positions (e.g., a "front-office" receptionist).

The work usually requires the maintenance of up-to-date locator records and directories, building layouts, and other similar guides; and frequently includes the maintenance of records of visitors, inquiry tallies, directories for other agencies (particularly those having similar or related functions), and such references as local commercial transportation schedules, housing registers, and miscellaneous bulletin board items.

In some work situations, information receptionists may also perform certain duties in connection with security control programs, for example: issuing identification badges and/or passes to visitors; providing simple instructions on security regulations, especially those relating to the necessity for wearing badges, showing passes and having them signed at time of departure; checking to see that all badges are turned in at the end of visits, with all appropriate information and all time accounted for; maintaining records and preparing recurring reports on numbers of visitors, badges issued, security clearances held, etc.; maintaining files of security clearance records for frequent visitors or visitors for whom notification of clearance has been received prior to arrival; and related types of duties. In "tighter" security control situations, the information receptionist may also be required to obtain certification of a "need-to-know" as well as evidence of appropriate security clearance; explain security regulations on restrictions on packages, briefcases, taking notes, etc.; applying specific instructions in the processing of other categories of visitors and issuing special types of badges to special categories of individuals; arranging for escort service, where required; based on standard procedures, refers unannounced visitors to officials in the organization; receives advance notices of meetings, conferences, etc., and follows up on requests for letters of clearance; periodically cancels, renews or obtains reauthorizations of "term clearances", as required; and other related types of duties.

In general, the criteria at the several grade levels can be used to evaluate the grade level weight of this work and of the problems that arise from its performance. (The grade level weight of certain types of security control work is also discussed in the classification standards for the [Mail and File Series, GS-0305](#) and [the Guard Series, GS-0085](#).)

Public contact responsibility is especially important in information receptionist positions. The information receptionist frequently is the first, and sometimes the only, point of contact in an

agency, office, or installation, and is required to receive calls and visitors courteously, ask pertinent questions (if necessary) tactfully, and give information and directions clearly.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The principal criteria for evaluating information receptionist positions are (1) the relative complexity of the organization, programs, and functions of the agency, installation or offices served, and (2) the relative difficulty of the inquiries received and information required to be given. In general, these criteria measure the degree to which the information receptionist must (a) know and use a variety of reference sources, (b) exercise resourcefulness in tracking down information that is out of date or not immediately available, and (c) use judgment in determining how best to provide or obtain the desired information.

Because of the work environment it is not usually feasible for an information receptionist to work under close supervision (except for training purposes). The grade levels described in these standards are based on the assumption that the information receptionist is working under general supervision, that is, she is independently responsible for efficiently disposing of all inquiries received by providing the information requested or by determining to whom the inquiry should be referred, without the direction, intervention or assistance of a supervisor. Problems arising from the manner of conduct or behavior of visitors, however, are usually brought to the attention of the supervisor, or building guards or enforcement officers located at the site. Emergencies involving accidents or sudden illness are immediately referred to the supervisor or to medical personnel in the building or area.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

The knowledges and abilities required vary in degree and intensity in relation to variations in the complexity of the work situations described in these standards. Certain skills and personal qualities are basic to all of the positions. Separate statements of qualification requirements are included at the several grade levels.

INFORMATION RECEPTIONIST, GS-0304-02

Some positions that are classifiable at this level have the following characteristics:

- (1) The inquiries received and information given are consistently routine and repetitive, simple and specific, and usually relate to room numbers, telephone extensions, and names and locations of key personnel, and other similarly readily available and uncomplicated factual information;
- (2) Ordinarily the agency, office, or installation served has few organizational segments, elements or program units, and the number of key personnel and officials served is comparatively small;

- (3) The unit or units served are of relatively stable organization, having so few or such minor reorganizations or changes as to have little or no effect on individual information receptionist activities (i.e., only occasionally are there relocations of offices or changing of telephone and room numbers and key personnel);
- (4) The offices and buildings served are so laid out or physically located in relation to each other as to create no problems or few minor ones in directing visitors and providing information on the location and dispersion of activities or personnel.

The knowledges, abilities, skills, and other qualities required at this level are a working knowledge of the organization of the agency, office or installation served and some understanding of its activities and functions; ability to understand, use and maintain directories, personnel lists and other guides and references; good speaking voice; a normal degree of tact and courtesy in public contacts; retentive memory.

Other positions at this level are those of information receptionists who are being trained for the performance of work described and evaluated at the GS-3 level. In these situations, the Information Receptionist GS-2 must have the aptitude for acquiring the knowledges, abilities, skills and must possess a normal degree of the personal qualities described at the GS-3 level.

INFORMATION RECEPTIONIST, GS-0304-03

Some positions that are classifiable at this level have the following characteristics:

Situation I:

- (a) The inquiries received and information given vary, are frequently routine and recurrent, but many cases consistently require development, through questioning on the part of the information receptionist, of the exact nature of the inquiry and the following through on inquiries that are indefinite, uncertain, or inaccurately stated, on the basis of the nature of inquiries and the judgment of the information receptionist in individual cases;
- (b) Ordinarily, the agency, office, or installation served has several organizational elements, segments, or program units, and the number of key personnel and officials served is relatively large;
- (c) There are occasional reorganizations and changes of a type requiring but few or minor adjustments in individual information clerical activities and services, or creating few or only minor recurrent problems in the direction of visitors and provision of information; or, where frequent major changes and reorganizations occur, they are of types that do not have a significant effect on individual information receptionist activities, do not require continuing adjustments in records or services, nor do they present significant problems in the direction of visitors and provision of information; for example, there are only occasional large-scale movements of personnel or offices with attendant changes in phone numbers, room numbers, and key personnel;

- (d) The offices and buildings served are so laid out or physically located in relation to each other as to create recurring problems of relatively substantial difficulty in the direction of visitors and the location of functions and personnel.

Situation II:

- (a) The inquiries received and information given are consistently routine and repetitive, largely related to room numbers, telephone extensions, and names and locations of key personnel;
- (b) Ordinarily, the agency, office or installation served has numerous and extensive organizational segments, elements, or program units, and the number of key officials and personnel served is very large;
- (c) Frequent and extensive changes and reorganizations occur, involving relatively large-scale movements of functions and personnel, and presenting major or continuing problems in directing visitors, providing information, and adjusting individual information receptionist services;
- (d) The offices and buildings served are so laid out or physically located in relation to each other as to create relatively major problems in directing visitors and providing information.

The knowledges, abilities, skills, and other qualities required at this level are a general knowledge of the organization of the agency, office, or installation served, and good knowledge of the location of organizational units, functions, and key personnel; as required by the work situation, familiarity with the nature and availability of publications, forms and other general informational material distributed by the agency; some familiarity with the organization and functions of other Government agencies, particularly those having similar or related programs; ability to understand, use, and maintain directories, personnel lists, and other guides and references; speaking voice of pleasing quality and clear enunciation; the degree of tact, courtesy, poise, alertness, and good judgment that are needed in carrying on public contacts of a relatively routine, factually-centered nature; retentive memory.

Other positions at this level are those of information receptionists who are being trained for the performance of work described and evaluated at the GS-4 level. In these situations, the Information Receptionist GS-3 must have the aptitude for acquiring the knowledges, abilities, skills and must possess the personal qualities described at the GS-4 level.

INFORMATION RECEPTIONIST, GS-0304-04

Positions are classifiable at this level when:

- (1) The inquiries received and information given vary widely, include the range and variety of inquiries and information characteristic of lower levels, but in a majority of cases consistently require (a) the explanation in general terms of functions of the agency served, to distinguish for visitors and callers among and between functions related to the subject of the inquiry, or to resolve confusion surrounding the inquiry; (b) the evaluation of inquiries in order to provide the most useful and appropriate information or to suggest other productive sources of specific information applicable to the nature and subject of the inquiry; and (c) resolution, by personal inquiry, of inconsistencies in available information;
- (2) Ordinarily, the agency, office, or installation served has numerous and extensive organizational elements, segments, or programs units and the number of key personnel and officials served is very large;
- (3) Frequent and extensive changes and reorganizations occur, involving large-scale changes in functions, relocations of personnel and movement of offices, creating major and continuing problems in directing visitors and providing information, adjusting information receptionist services, and maintaining records;
- (4) The offices or buildings served are so laid out or physically located in relation to each other as to create relatively major problems in directing visitors and locating functions and personnel.

The knowledges, abilities, skills and other qualities required at this level are a good general knowledge of the organization of the agency, office, or installation served; good general knowledge of the location of organizational units, functions, and key personnel; good understanding of the nature and availability of publications, forms, and other general informational materials distributed by the agency; good general knowledge of the organization and functions of other Government agencies, particularly those having similar or related programs; ability to understand, use, and maintain directories, personnel lists, and other guides and references; speaking voice of pleasing quality and clear enunciation; tact, courtesy, poise, alertness, and good judgment in public contacts; retentive memory.