



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Regarding Classification

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Reallocation versus Reclassification

Q: What is the difference between a reclassification and a reallocation?

A: A reclassification occurs when a position is assigned to a job classification different from the one to which it was previously assigned. Example: A Secretary II, labor grade 9 position is reclassified to Senior Clerk Interviewer, labor grade 10. A reallocation occurs when the salary grade assigned to a job classification title is changed or reallocated according to classification standards. A reallocation involves “re-factoring” the job classification according to the nine Distinguishing Factors, such as Skill, Knowledge, and Supervision. In a reallocation, the title does not change, but the labor grade goes up or down. A reallocation impacts all positions of that title. Example: the Senior Clerk Interviewer job classification, and therefore all positions of that title, is reallocated from labor grade 10 to labor grade 12.

Rewarding an Employee through Reclassification

Q: I believe that my employee deserves an increase in pay, because they work so hard and have great skills. Would asking for a reclassification be the best way to increase the labor grade of their position?

A: It is not appropriate to use the reclassification process for the purpose of rewarding an employee through increasing their compensation. The classification system is meant to ensure equity so that each position in the state classification system is assigned a labor grade commensurate with its tasks and its qualifications in comparison with other similar positions across the system. For this reason, classification decisions are based solely on the job duties of a position and the surrounding organizational structure, and not on an employee’s qualifications, abilities, or job performance. While an employee could potentially receive a higher salary if a determination is made that the current classification of his/her job is too low, there is also the potential that a position reviewed for reclassification could decrease in grade, or stay at the same level.

Determining Step after Reclassification

Q: If a position is reclassified or reallocated to a higher level, to what step in the new salary grade would the employee progress?

A: The employee’s salary would be increased to the lowest level in the new classification which provides an increase equaling at least one annual increment in the former class. See Per 303.06 Adjustments Due to Reallocation or Reclassification in the Personnel Rules here, http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rules/state_agencies/per100-1500.html#PartPer303.

Agency does not Support Reclassification

Q: What happens if an employee would like to have their position reclassified but their agency doesn't agree they should seek reclassification?

A: Under the current Administrative Rules of the Division of Personnel, a reclassification or reallocation request can be submitted to the Division by either a full-time employee or by the appointing authority. (See Per 303.02 Completed Request in the Personnel Rules here. http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rules/state_agencies/per100-1500.html#PartPer303.) The employee may submit the request to their human resources department, or directly to the Division of Personnel, whether or not their agency agrees. There are several possible reasons why an agency may not be in support of submitting a reclassification package. For example: the agency may disagree that the job should be reclassified; the agency may be in the process of having a whole unit reviewed and they want to include the employee's position with the rest of the group; or perhaps the agency is facing budget constraints. The agency should explain to the employee why they are not backing the request. Once the employee understands why the agency has made this decision, they can then determine whether they want to submit the request on their own or if they want to wait for a more favorable time to submit it. If the request is submitted by the employee, it must include a statement identifying the date, if any, that the request was made to the appointing authority and the appointing authority's response, if any.

Work Volume and Reclassification

Q. Due to recent budget cuts, an employee at my agency is now doing the work of three people. Can this be addressed by the reclassification process?

A. Simply having the volume of work increase is not a reason for seeking an upgrade through reclassification. An upgrade may be justifiable if the employee starts to do new and higher level tasks, but not necessarily because of an increase in their workload. It is possible, however, that the additional tasks they are now required to perform are different and higher-level than the tasks they have been performing. Should that be the case, then the human resource administrator, supervisor, and employee should discuss having the position reviewed.

Submitting a Second Request, Reconsideration, or Appeal

Q. If a decision is made not to reclassify a position, or it was reclassified but not to the level we requested, can another request be submitted? If yes, how long do we have to wait before resubmitting the request? Can we ask to have the original request revisited?

A. Under the current Administrative Rules of the Division of Personnel, there is no set period of time to wait if you believe that the position has changed significantly since the last review. A

new request should only be submitted if there have been substantial changes since the last review, however. If you believe there were elements of the original request that were not fully understood by the Division of Personnel, a request for reconsideration may be submitted, but this must be done within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date of the Director's decision. (See Per 304.01 Director's Decision Pursuant to Per 303.01 in the Personnel Rules here http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rules/state_agencies/per100-1500.html#PartPer303.) The request for reconsideration may not contain any new information, and should only elaborate on the information that was originally submitted to the Division of Personnel for review. As an alternative, an appeal may also be filed with the Personnel Appeals Board, Per 304.02.

Comparing with Coworkers

- Q. I was approached by an employee who questioned why their co-worker's position was higher in labor grade than theirs, but far less difficult to perform. What should I do in this situation?
- A. It is possible that the employee's perception of their co-worker's job is not completely accurate. With more knowledge of the position's functions, they might come to understand the reason that position is at a higher salary grade than theirs. It is also possible, however, that their perception is correct and a Classification Analyst should take a look at the position. It is recommended that the human resources administrator discuss the employee's observations with them and with the position supervisor, and look at the position's duties in comparison with the class specification for that job, and for the co-worker's job. Classification staff can assist in taking a preliminary look at the employee's duties to see if a change in classification should be considered.

On Site Job Reviews

- Q. Do the Classification Analysts still go out into the field to view the job firsthand, or do they mainly make recommendations based on the information submitted in the reclassification package? Can an employee or agency request a site review for a position?
- A. There are times when an Analyst still goes out into the field to review a position on site at an agency location. Usually these are situations where it is difficult to make a determination based on the written materials and it is believed that face to face meetings with the incumbent, supervisor, and human resources administrator, and possibly a tour of the work site, would provide valuable input so that the Analyst can better understand the position and the request. However, the information requested in the reclassification packet, when completed thoroughly, is designed to allow an Analyst to understand the complexities of the position. Also, during the desk review process, the Analysts frequently touch base with the incumbent, the position's supervisor, or the agency's Human Resources bureau by telephone or by e-mail to request

additional information relative to the reclassification request if there is a need for further clarification. It is possible to request a site review, with the understanding that such requests need to be considered carefully by the Section in light of staffing levels and workload.

Physical Demands and Working Conditions

Q. What is the difference between the two class evaluation factor terms, Working Conditions and Physical Demands?

A. Working Conditions means the specific working environment to which an employee is exposed while performing assigned duties and tasks. For example, Corrections Officers would be assigned a high level for this factor, due to the environmental working conditions inside the prison, which have an element of danger and unpredictability, such as potential for assault. On the other hand, someone working in a safe, controlled environment, such as an office setting would have a low factor level for Working Conditions. Physical Demands refers to the level of physical activity required in performing regular job functions. Jobs whose incumbents lift and drag heavy objects would be assigned more points for Physical Demands than would jobs that require walking from a desk to the file cabinet across the room several times a day.

SJD – Current and Proposed

Q. When submitting a supplemental job description (SJD) as part of the reclassification package, are the tasks shown supposed to be the current tasks or the new ones?

A. When submitting a reclassification request, you would submit both a current and a proposed SJD. In making a classification recommendation, the Classification Analyst compares the current and proposed SJDs. The proposed SJD would include ongoing duties as well as any new duties that the employee is performing and which led your agency or the employee to seek reclassification. It would not, however, include future duties that the employee may be assigned as those cannot be considered until they become a reality. The rare exception to this would be if there is a group reclassification which is a management request, and which is based on duties to be assigned on a specific future date.

SJD – When to Update

Q. How often should supplemental job descriptions (SJDs) be updated?

A. The supervisor should go over the employee's supplemental job description yearly, at his/her annual performance evaluation, to make sure that the duties listed still reflect the actual content of the job. However, if the duties of a position have changed significantly, or there has been a reorganization involving the transfer or movement of positions so that the supervisor or the position's subordinates have changed, a revised SJD should be provided to the Division of Personnel for review as soon as possible via submitting an SJD revision request in the NH FIRST system. If the duties have not changed, and the minimum qualifications of the job classification

have not been revised, the Division of Personnel generally considers an SJD to be valid for two years, and possibly longer.

Agency Reorganization – Where to Start

- Q. I am a human resources administrator and the manager of one of our large divisions has proposed a reorganization. This will involve moving/transferring positions from one unit to another, consolidating some units, and bringing positions in from other divisions. It might also involve a shifting of duties and some position reclassifications. What advice can you give me on where to start and how to go about this?
- A. If you are anticipating or have a reorganization in the planning stages, it is helpful to involve Classifications staff at the outset to discuss the proposed plan and review the anticipated changes in duties. If you are a manager proposing an organizational change, it will be important to work with your human resource office first, and then they can connect with Classifications to set up a meeting. At the meeting, staff will review the proposed organizational chart and related changes and make suggestions, identify potential challenges, and provide direction on the best way to proceed. This process will also benefit the Section, as understanding the proposed changes ahead of time will help staff to review and process the changes more quickly once the finalized request is received by the Division of Personnel. For further information, see PART Per 302 ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS in the Personnel Rules http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rules/state_agencies/per100-1500.html#PartPer303 and RSA 21-G, ORGANIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, at the following link: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/i/21-g/21-g-mrg.htm>.

Have questions not addressed in this list? Please contact Jennifer Elberfeld, Classification Administrator, at jennifer.elberfeld@nh.gov or at (603) 271-1430.