

Number 6.0 - CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

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Applicable To: All classified employees with the Executive Branch of the State of Vermont.

Issued By: Department of Personnel

Approved By: William H. Sorrell, Secretary of Administration

PURPOSE AND POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the State of Vermont to adopt and maintain a uniform and equitable plan of classification for each position within the State's classified service. The State Classification Plan provides a uniform and systematic method of evaluating these positions, for the purposes of internal position alignment and assignment to pay grades with salary ranges.

The Classification Plan covers all Executive Branch positions except those exempted by 3 VSA 311, or exempted by any other provision of law.

The Commissioner of Personnel allocates each position to a class and assigns a pay grade to each job class. Standards are established to maintain current position descriptions by defining the nature, scope, and accountability for each position or class.

The Commissioner of Personnel administers the State Classification Plan. Agency/department heads will provide the Commissioner with current and up-to-date information regarding the job duties and responsibilities for all positions within their organizations.

DEFINITIONS

APPOINTING AUTHORITY - person authorized by statute, or by lawfully-delegated authority, to appoint and dismiss employees.

ALLOCATION - the placement of a new position into an existing class or a new class.

REALLOCATION - changing a position from one class to another.

ASSIGNMENT - the placement of a class into a pay grade.

REASSIGNMENT - changing a class from one pay grade to another pay grade.

CLASS - a grouping of one or more positions that are sufficiently similar in the duties performed; degree of supervision exercised or received; minimum requirements of

training, experience, or skill; and other characteristics. These similarities allow the same title, test of fitness, and pay grade to be applied to each position.

ASSOCIATED CLASS - a grouping of one or more positions which, although included in one broad class, differs from other positions in that class in the duties and the minimum qualifications.

POSITION - a group of current duties and responsibilities (constituting a job) which normally requires the full-time or part-time employment of only one person.

CLASSIFIED POSITION - a position in the State classified service that is assigned to a class. An appointment to a classified position is made in accordance with the merit system.

CLASS SPECIFICATION - a written description of the nature of the work, level of responsibilities, significant environmental factors, required skills, and minimum qualifications for a class. This official document provides a general description of one or more positions which have similar duties, qualifications, and levels of responsibility and have been grouped together into a single class and assigned to the same pay grade. The class specification includes an appropriate title, description of the nature of the work performed, the level of responsibilities, and the minimum qualifications needed to apply for a position in the class.

POSITION DESCRIPTION - the job content questionnaire, *Request for Classification Action PER-10* form which is the primary document used for job evaluation and allocation to a class. It contains information describing a specific position: i.e. the specific duties of a position, nature and scope of supervision, job difficulty, financial impact, specific skill requirements, interaction with colleagues and clients, placement within the organization, working conditions, and other information relevant to the evaluation of the job.

CLASSIFICATION PLAN - the arrangement of positions into separate classes and the ranking of the classes in relative order.

CLASSIFICATION REVIEW - the process to determine whether an individual position, or any group of positions, is correctly allocated to a class, and/or the class is correctly assigned to pay grade.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS - criteria established for the initial screening of job applicants. Minimum qualifications are usually expressed in terms of the nature and amount of formal education, training, work experience, as well as any special requirements such as licenses, certifications or physical standards. Minimum qualifications are set at a level that provides a reasonable likelihood that a candidate for the job possesses the most important minimum required knowledge, skills, and abilities for adequately performing entrance level work in the job.

MERIT SYSTEM - 3 VSA 312 - *"the system developed to maintain an efficient career service in State government under public rules, which, among other provisions, includes appointment through competitive examination; nondiscrimination because of race, sex, politics, national origin, or religion; an equitable and adequate compensation plan; tenure, contingent on successful performance; and promotion, contingent on evaluated capacity and service."*

PAY GRADE - one of the established salary ranges within the total compensation plan for which a minimum and maximum rate is established. Each class is assigned to a pay grade.

RECLASSIFICATION - a term which is frequently used interchangeably with "reallocation".

CONCEPT OF CLASSIFICATION

Job classification is a system of identifying and describing the different kinds of work in an organization and then grouping similar positions under common classification titles. It establishes the orderly grouping of an organization's positions into a framework based on logical relationships among the positions. The system identifies differences and similarities in kinds of work, degree of difficulty and the responsibility of duties among positions.

Classification is based on job content rather than on individual qualifications or how well an employee can perform the duties of a job. Job content is the kind and level of work assigned to a position.

Classification can be used for management purposes, such as to:

- identify or create career ladders within an organization;
- form an equitable basis for compensation;
- identify specific recruitment and selection criteria;
- design new jobs or to modify existing jobs;
- provide information to managers about an occupational mix or configuration of the organization;
- identify variations in an organization's design;
- indicate methods of decision making, organizational chain of command, and lines of authority;
- aid in planning and budgeting for personnel services;
- form a basis for establishing standards of employee performance.

CLASSIFICATION GROUPINGS

The State maintains a single classification plan which includes thousands of positions and several hundred occupations and job categories. A classification grouping reflects the relative similarities and differences of each job in an organization and provides a

measure for identifying job-related conditions within that organization. Positions are classified and grouped primarily based on their similarities. This grouping is necessary to organize jobs, establish career distinctions, develop organizational change and identity. It may also provide for internal comparative review, including the identification of occupational categories required by federal or State authority.

This process begins as a broad grouping of occupational characteristics or occupational fields followed by sorting into an occupational series, and completed with distinct jobs in a class series. An example of the completed grouping would be:

Occupational Field
 Administrative, Fiscal, Management, and Property
Occupational Series
 Accountants
Class Series (Job Family)
 Accountant C
 Accountant B
 Accountant A

1. **Occupational Field:** Positions are first placed in one of sixteen (16) Occupational Fields based on the professional, technical, or administrative expertise required of the position. Positions assigned to a particular Occupational Field have degrees of similarity in education, training, responsibilities, or duties.

The sixteen (16) Occupational Fields are:

- Administrative, Fiscal, Management and Property
- Buildings, Trades, and Maintenance
- Casework and Support Services
- Clerical and Secretarial
- Conservation and Agriculture
- Data Processing
- Health Services and Laboratory
- Development, Promotion, Information, and Publicity
- Education, Libraries, and Archival
- Engineering and Technical Support
- Employment and Training Related
- Law Enforcement, Legal, Inspection, Regulation and Protection
- Patient Care and Mental Health
- Personnel and Training
- Planning, Research, Statistics, and Evaluation
- Stocks, Stores, and Communications

2.. **Occupational Series:** Occupational Series identify sub-groups of occupations within the broader occupational field. Occupational Series are found within specific job disciplines. An example from the administrative-fiscal occupational field is:

Administrative, Fiscal, Management and Property:

- administrative support
- tax examination
- accountants

3. Class Series (Job Family): Specific job families are organized in a "job series". Specific duties and class specifications are similar, but with different and progressive levels of complexity, qualifications, or responsibilities. Job families generally include an entry level, a journey level, and a senior level, such as Accountant A, B, and C.

CLASS SPECIFICATION

The class specification describes the job in general terms. It can describe similar positions in the same class even if the specific duties vary from one position to another.

A class specification is drafted from information contained in the *Request for Classification Action PER-10* form, which is used to evaluate a particular position or allocate it to a class. The class specification contains the following types of information:

- Definition of the general role of the job including the location and the nature of supervision.
- Nature and level of duties typically performed, including the types of tasks and degree of supervision required.
- Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA's) generally needed to perform those duties at a fully satisfactory level.
- Environmental factors typically encountered by positions in the class, e.g.. use of equipment, location of work, risks, or hazards.
- Minimum qualifications of education and experience required to apply for a job in the class.

The class specification need not include every task required in each position and may also include some tasks not found in some positions.

The Department of Personnel is responsible for maintaining a current class specification for each position and revising it as changes are noted. Proposed revisions may be submitted at any time. When a department requests a new class, the proposed class specification will be reviewed by the Department of Personnel. Any proposed revisions are discussed with the agency/department before they are finalized.

The class specification is an important component for establishing individual performance evaluation standards. It identifies the skills and abilities required for the job, and the primary duties and tasks performed by class incumbents.

APPLICABILITY TO EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

Certain positions exempted by statute from the classified service may be assigned to the classified pay plan only for salary administration. In such cases, the Department of Personnel will conduct its review and assignment to pay grade in a manner similar to that used for classified positions.