

**POSITION CLASSIFICATION, JOB GRADING,
AND POSITION MANAGEMENT**

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To issue Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy regarding position classification, job grading, and position management.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENT/MAJOR CHANGES:** This directive sets forth policies previously contained in numerous other issuances. No substantive changes have been made.
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Human Resources Management Programs and Policies Service (051), Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources.
- 4. RELATED HANDBOOK:** VA Handbook 5003, "Position Classification, Job Grading, and Position Management."
- 5. RESCISSIONS:** Refer to the Transmittal Sheet for VA Directive 5001, "General Introduction and Administration."

CERTIFIED BY:

/s/
John A. Gauss
Assistant Secretary for
Information and Technology

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

/s/
Jacob Lozada, Ph.D.
Assistant Secretary for Human
Resources and Administration

**POSITION CLASSIFICATION, JOB GRADING,
AND POSITION MANAGEMENT**

1. PURPOSE. This directive provides Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policies on position classification, job grading, and position management.

2. POLICY

a. Job Classification and Job Grading

(1) The principles of the position classification system as set forth in 5 U.S.C., chapters 51 and 53, sections 5342 and 5346, 5 CFR 511 and 532 and in this directive and accompanying handbook will be observed at all organizational levels.

(2) Positions will be classified and graded in conformance with standards and guides issued by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and not in comparison with other positions or an employee's qualifications. Where VA classification and job grading guides or supplements have been developed, they will be used in conjunction with OPM standards to facilitate the proper classification of positions.

NOTE: *For those positions covered by a departmental automated classification system, including a position description (PD) library, the system contains or can generate position descriptions that meet the appropriate OPM standard criteria to effect the proper classification of described duties.*

(3) The position classification and job grading programs will be integrated with other elements of human resources administration to further human resources and overall management objectives.

(4) The position classification and job grading programs will serve management in the areas of employee utilization, position management, planning and related activities. Appropriate classification and job grading assistance will be available to management and supervisors for establishing or changing organizations and functions.

b. Position Management

(1) Position management is an overall management responsibility which assures that work is organized and assigned among positions in a manner which will serve the organization's needs effectively and economically, providing the greatest total value to VA.

(2) Management determines the numbers, types and grades of employees or positions assigned to any organizational subdivision, work project or tour of duty; assigns work to individual positions consistent with the principles of sound and effective position management; and, assures that all labor relations obligations are fulfilled regarding changes affecting bargaining unit employees.

(3) Essential elements of an effective position management program include, but are not limited to, consideration of the following:

(a) Reviewing the organizational structure to eliminate duplication of work and unnecessary fragmentation.

(b) Establishing the minimum number of positions essential to the accomplishment of the mission; assuring proper job design to prevent unwarranted job dilution; utilizing the most effective work processes, equipment, procedures, methods and techniques; and evaluating the need for each position and the skills and knowledge required.

(c) Determining the appropriate ratio of managerial and supervisory positions to those of non-supervisory workers; and preventing the excessive layering of supervision and unwarranted use of assistant, assistant to, and special assistant positions.

(d) Determining the appropriate ratio of professional, technical, clerical and wage positions consistent with the proportion of such work occurring in the organization.

(e) Providing for maximum utilization of employees' skills and effective distribution of human resources.

(f) Providing for the optimum delegation of authority.

(g) Providing for career development and promotional opportunities by establishing lower grade entry level positions with identified career ladders.

(h) Conducting systematic examination of internal position management and classification and job grading systems to ensure the proper classification of jobs.

(i) Developing action plans to eliminate identified position management deficiencies.

(4) Position management shall be used to facilitate equal employment opportunity. The Civil Service Reform Act requires the development of Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Programs (FEORPs) to eliminate the under representation of minorities and women in occupational categories and grade levels where under representation exists. Job redesign, a position management tool, can be an effective means of recruiting minorities and women and should be used as part of the FEORP in the following ways:

(a) Designing positions at "trainee" levels, especially at facilities where minorities and women are concentrated in lower grade positions;

(b) Identifying public contact and patient care positions where bilingual and bicultural capabilities should be primary selection factors; and

(c) Establishing positions requiring minimal formal credentialing requirements, such as degrees, licenses, or certifications.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **Delegations of Authority to Classify Positions and Grade Jobs.** Authority to classify positions under the General Schedule (5 U.S.C. 51) and to grade jobs covered by the Federal Wage System (5 U.S.C. 5342 and 5346) is delegated as indicated in part I of VA Handbook 5003. Any authority not delegated is reserved to the Secretary.

b. **Position Classification and Job Grading**

(1) The Secretary is responsible for assuring that all positions subject to coverage under 5 U.S.C. 51, 5342 and 5346 are properly classified and graded. This responsibility is exercised by the delegation of position classification authority specified in part I of VA Handbook 5003. Generally, officials authorized to classify positions and grade jobs are situated at local management levels.

(2) The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management is responsible for:

(a) Developing Department classification and job grading policy;

(b) Administering the Department's standards development process including the development of VA guidelines, and overseeing any automated classification system to expedite position classification, as appropriate;

(c) Administering the Department's classification and job grading appeal system;

(d) Providing technical advice and guidance to administrations, staff offices, and field facilities; and

(e) Developing mechanisms to ensure intra-agency classification consistency.

(3) Administration Heads, Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, Other Key Officials and field facility directors are responsible for:

(a) As delegated, using any designated automated classification system to expedite position classification as appropriate.

(b) Utilizing the classification and job grading processes in the interest of improved management planning, employee utilization and efficiency of operations;

(c) Ensuring that there are sufficiently trained human resources staff available to administer the classification process; and

(d) Personally authenticating the classification or grading action by signing the appropriate line on the OF-8, Position Description, if they elect to exercise their delegated classification or grading authority.

(4) Offices providing classification services are responsible for:

(a) Expediting the use of any designated automation classification system;

(b) Ensuring that all non-centralized positions are classified by the appropriate authority;

(c) Submitting centralized positions for classification to the appropriate Central Office classifying authority. A current list of the delegations of classification authority for centralized positions is contained in VA Handbook 5001. Updates to the list of delegations will be made available on the [Office of Human Resources website](#).

(d) Providing technical guidance, advice and information to managers, supervisors, and employees and/or their representatives; and

(e) Participating when requested in the standards development process.

(5) Operating officials and supervisors are responsible for:

(a) If delegated, using any designated automated classification system to classify positions, as appropriate.

(b) Using the classification process in the interest of improved management planning, employee utilization and efficiency of operations;

(c) Developing and maintaining accurate descriptions for each position under their direction;

(d) Ensuring that their employees understand the purpose and operation of the classification system;

(e) Cooperating with Department and OPM officials in the classification process including occupational studies; and

(f) Determining, before changing the duties of a position, what effect the change will have on its classification.

c. Position Management. Responsibility is delegated to the officials listed below to devise and implement an effective position management program:

(1) Administration Heads, Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials shall administer within their organizations a position management program in conformance with Department guidelines. They shall ensure that training in position management is given to all supervisors with position management authority.

(2) Field facility directors shall administer a position management program for their installation, shall be responsible for taking necessary corrective action on a timely basis, and shall ensure that training in position management is given to all supervisors. Directors are also responsible for assuring the adequacy of position classification and job grading expertise and a continuing emphasis on a high

degree of accuracy in position classification and job grading actions in support of position management objectives.

(3) Supervisors and others responsible for assigning duties and responsibilities to positions are directly responsible for position management actions taken within their areas of jurisdiction. The duties and responsibilities assigned to a position control the classification or grading and, ultimately, the personnel cost of the position. Supervisors must ensure that assignments reflect application of sound and economical position management principles and are reviewed periodically for accuracy and cost effectiveness. Supervisors are also responsible for ascertaining the accuracy and adequacy of position descriptions. A position description which states the duties and responsibilities in clear, precise, definitive terms is a key factor in effective position classification/job grading and position management. Also, supervisors must ensure that the duties and responsibilities assigned to a position are necessary and are actually performed. When employees are not performing the tasks identified in their position descriptions, public funds are paid for services not being performed, which is a violation of Federal statutes and regulations. Supervisors must continually monitor performance in relation to official job assignments to effect cost economy and promote improvements in overall productivity.

(4) Offices providing human resources management services are responsible for:

(a) Providing technical advice and assistance to line officials in analyzing human resources aspects of position management and suggesting alternatives to achieve improvements; these matters will be coordinated, as appropriate, with other staff elements;

(b) Ensuring that the requirements of the approved position management program have been met before taking position classification or other personnel action;

(c) Making required reports and analyses of trends and providing staff assistance in accomplishing corrective action, as necessary; and

(d) Advising line officials of required corrective action when positions are found to be inaccurately or inadequately described.

4. REFERENCES

- a. Title 5, U.S.C., chapters 51, §5342, §5346; 5 CFR, parts 511 and 532
- b. OPM "Introduction to the Position Classification Standards."
- c. OPM "Job Grading Standards for Supervisors and Leaders."
- d. OPM "General Introduction-Job Grading System for Trades and Labor Occupations."
- e. OPM Operating Manual, "Federal Wage System."
- f. OPM Operating Manual, "Federal Wage System-Non-appropriate Fund Employees."
- g. VA Directive and Handbook 5001, General Introduction and Administration.

- h. MP-6, Part V, Supplement 1.5, “PAID-Personnel Operating Instructions.”