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CHAPTER 512. JOB GRADING UNDER THE FEDERAL WAGE SYSTEM**1. SCOPE**

This section covers the job grading of Federal Wage System positions. The section provides VA policies and procedures that will facilitate sound and consistent job grading practices. Agency policy relating to position management for jobs under the Federal Wage System is included in Chapter 511, sect. B, this part.

2. REFERENCES

- a. 5 U.S.C. 5102(c) (7) and (14), 5103, 5342, and 5346.
- b. CFR 532.601, General
- c. CFR 532.703, Agency review
- d. OPM "Job Grading Standards for Supervisors and Leaders."
- e. OPM "General Introduction-Job Grading System for Trades and Labor Occupations."
- f. OPM Operating Manual, "Federal Wage System."
- g. OPM Operating Manual, "Federal Wage System-Non-appropriate Fund Employees."
- h. MP-5, Part I, Chapter 250, "Personnel Management in the VA."
- i. MP-5, Part I, Chapter 293, "Personnel Records and Files."
- j. MP-5, Part I, Chapter 352, "Reemployment Rights."
- k. MP-5, Part I, Chapter 353, "Absence for and Restoration After Service With the Armed Forces."
- l. MP-5, Part I, Chapter 511, "Position Classification and Position Management."
- m. MP-5, Part I, Chapter 536, "Grade and Pay Retention"
- n. MP-6, Part V, Supplement 1.5, "PAID-Personnel Operating Instructions."

3. COVERAGE

a. All employees in recognized trades or crafts, or other skilled mechanical crafts, or in unskilled, semiskilled or skilled manual labor occupations, and other employees including leaders and supervisors in positions having trade, craft, or laboring experience and knowledge as the paramount requirement, including those in the Veterans Canteen Service covered by 5 U.S.C. 5342(a)(2).

b. Using guidelines and standards issued by the Office of Personnel Management the VA is authorized to determine whether a position is subject to or excluded from coverage under the Federal Wage System. Questions of coverage or exemption of an individual position will be initially determined by the servicing Human Resources Management office. If, in connection with a specific position, there is reasonable doubt as to coverage, the case will be referred to the Office of Human Resources Management (051), VA Central Office for decision. In unusual circumstances the position may be submitted to the Office of Personnel Management by the Office of Human Resources Management for determination.

4. POLICY

a. The principles of the job grading system as set forth in 5 U.S.C. 5342 will be observed at all organizational levels.

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

c. The job grading system will be integrated with other elements of personnel to further personnel and overall management objectives.

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

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Secretary is responsible for assuring that all jobs subject to coverage under the Federal Wage System are properly graded. This responsibility is exercised by the delegation of job grading authority specified in chapter 250, this part. Generally, officials authorized to grade jobs are at local management levels. In addition the following officials have specific responsibilities in the job grading process:

a. The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Management is responsible for (1) developing Department job grading policy; (2) administering the Department's standards development process including the development of VA guidelines; (3) administering VA's job grading appeal system; and (4) providing technical advice and guidance to the administrations, staff offices and field stations.

b. Administration heads, Assistant Secretaries, staff office and field station Directors are responsible for (1) utilizing the job grading process in the interest of improved management planning, employee utilization and efficiency of operations; (2) ensuring that there are sufficient trained personnel resources available to administer the job grading process; and (3) personally authenticating the job grading action by signing the appropriate line on the OF 8, Position Description, if they elect to exercise their delegated job grading authority.

c. Human Resources Management Officers are responsible for (1) ensuring that all jobs are graded consistently with published OPM standards and guides or VA guidelines, supplements or directives, as appropriate; (2) providing technical guidance, advice and information to managers, supervisors, and employees and/or their representatives; and (3) participating when requested in the standards development process.

d. Operating officials and supervisors are responsible for (1) using the job grading process in the interest of improved management planning, employee utilization and efficiency of operations; (2) developing and maintaining accurate descriptions for each job under their direction; (3) ensuring that their employees understand the purpose and operation of the job grading system; (4) cooperating with agency and Office of Personnel Management officials in the job grading process including occupational studies; and (5) determining, before changing the duties of a job, what effect the change will have on its grading.

6. JOB GRADING STANDARDS AND GUIDES

a. Office of Personnel Management Standards

(1) OPM standards and guides take precedence over any other media in the grading of jobs.

(2) OPM has final authority over job grading standards and is required to keep them up to date and to ensure, to the extent practicable, that existing jobs are covered by current published standards. The VA will cooperate with the Office of Personnel Management in the development of new job grading standards and the modification of existing standards. The VA will encourage the initiation of standard studies by OPM in the interest of attaining maximum coverage, uniform treatment and proper grading of VA jobs.

(3) Prior to issuing a new or revised job grading standard or guide, OPM conducts an occupational study. Field facilities may be asked to participate in any or all aspects of an OPM study, e.g., occupational review, data development, or on site fact finding. Occupational studies are concerned only with information about the occupation; the studies are not a review of the grading of existing jobs. Affected employees and their exclusively recognized labor organizations should be made aware of the purpose and limitation of the studies, and all personnel officials, supervisors, program officials and employees should cooperate fully with the OPM representatives.

(4) The final phase of an occupational study involves VA's review of and comment on OPM's tentative or draft standard. As time permits, field facilities will be selected to participate in the review. These facilities will be provide a copy of the standard with a letter which will identify the date for submission of the facilities' comments. Selection of facilities will be based on the degree or extent to which covered activities are present at the location. Employees in occupations directly affected by the tentative standards, their supervisors, program officials and exclusively recognized labor organizations should be given the opportunity to review such standards and prepare written comments for consideration in facility submission. In order that the VA may respond in a timely manner to OPM it is important that the facilities' comments be submitted to the Office of Human Resources Management (051), by the date specified in the Administration or staff office letter.

b. Agency guidelines and supplements may be periodically developed to facilitate the proper and consistent grading of VA jobs. VA guidelines and supplements will be consistent with

published Office of Personnel Management standards and guides. Such internal guides are not reviewed and approved by the Office of Personnel Management. They are properly used to supplement existing OPM standards, not to replace them. Accordingly, should any conflict arise, the OPM standards govern in accordance with the provision of law.

c. New or revised job grading standards published by the Office of Personnel Management automatically supersede agency guidelines and supplements which conflict with such standards. Upon a finding of the Office of Personnel Management or the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration that application of any agency guide or supplement results in the erroneous grading of jobs, such guides or supplements will be amended or withdrawn, as appropriate.

d. New or revised Office of Personnel Management standards and guides or agency guidelines and supplements must be applied to covered jobs as soon as possible, but within 6 months at maximum. Requests for extensions to this limit must be forwarded to the Office of Human Resources Management. Normally, VA will request the necessary approval for such extensions from the Office of Personnel Management only when agency-wide considerations arise or are anticipated. Any corrective action resulting from this application must be taken in accordance with paragraph 14 of this chapter.

e. Office of Personnel Management job grading standards and guides and VA guidelines and supplements will be available for review to interested officials and employees, their representatives and their exclusively recognized labor organizations who will be informed of their location and conditions of availability.

7. JOB DESCRIPTIONS

a. An accurate written description must be developed and maintained for each job covered by this chapter. Accurate job descriptions are essential elements in the VA integrated job analysis system, which is used for the following personnel functions: selection procedures, performance appraisal, job grading, and training and development. Accurate descriptions are also necessary for a sound position management program. Although employees may assist in their preparation, supervisors and/or managers are responsible for assigning work to positions and ensuring that the descriptions are accurate.

b. Job descriptions will be prepared on OF 8. Appendix A-2 to chapter 511, this part, contains instructions for completing the OF 8. The major duties, responsibilities, supervisory relationships, and other pertinent information related to the job must be described specifically, clearly and definitively so that descriptions will provide the information necessary for the proper grading of jobs. It is essential that job descriptions meet the standard of adequacy requirements described in FWS Operating Manual 532-1, subchapter S6-5. Every effort should be made to avoid excessive length of descriptions in the interest of reducing the paperwork and time involved in their preparation and review.

c. In order to maintain uniformity throughout the Department, duties and responsibilities will be described in terms of five factors: primary duties, skill and knowledge, responsibility and supervisory controls, physical effort, and working conditions. Appendix A contains instructions for the preparation of job descriptions and specific guidance concerning the content of each factor.

d. When changes occur in primary duties which are not sufficiently extensive to justify writing an entirely new job description, an addendum, prepared on an OF 8, should be used. An addendum shall be processed through the appropriate supervisory channels and signed by the same authorities as would be appropriate for a new complete description. Clarity, conciseness, and ease of understanding of the job description should dictate the number of times an addendum shall be used to reflect changes in a position. The use of addenda should not defeat the primary objective of quality job descriptions. Generally, no more than two addenda should be used before the job description is completely rewritten. Pen and ink notations to the description may be made in lieu of an addendum or re-description when the changes are incidental (e.g., a change in organizational title or duty station). Human Resources Management Officers are responsible for determining whether pen and ink changes, an addendum or a re-description are appropriate.

e. Supervisors are responsible for the continuing accuracy of descriptions for jobs under their supervision. Necessary and proper modifications of job descriptions will be made to reflect significant changes in duties and responsibilities as they occur. Generally, in order to ensure continued job grading accuracy, descriptions shall be re-described at least every 6 years.

f. Supervisors and managers shall review all job descriptions once a year to ensure that they are current and accurate, It is especially important to ensure that new jobs established during the past year are functioning as described in the job description. Upon completion of the review, a written certification will be provided to the Human Resources Management office indicating that all job descriptions under their direction are accurate. The annual certification (while a separate requirement) is part of the systematic job grading review process (see par. 9). During a year that the systematic job grading review of an organization is conducted, the annual certification should become part of the review. The Human Resources Management Officer shall establish local procedures to accomplish the annual certification of Federal Wage System jobs, which should be integrated with the annual certification of position descriptions classified under the General Schedule. (See Ch. 511, this part.)

g. The original copy of the officially graded job description shall be maintained in the Human Resources Management office. Copies of the official description shall be provided to the operating organization and to each employee assigned to the job. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that employees are given a copy of their current job description including appropriate addenda.

8. JOB TITLES AND SERIES CODES

Job titles and series listed in the Office of Personnel Management and VA job grading standards and supplements shall be used in the grading of jobs and in all personnel actions. Titles for jobs for which there are no published job grading standards should be consistent with existing titles and reflect as nearly as possible the nature of the work performed. (See FPM Supplement 512-1, "Introduction to Job Grading Standards.") MP-6, part V, supp. No. 1.5., contains titles authorized for use in the VA. Additional titles and/or use of a specific series may be authorized by the Office of Human Resources Management. Requests for additional titles and/or series use should be submitted in writing to the Office of Human Resources Management (051) through appropriate channels. All requests should include the job description, the proposed title and/or series use, an evaluation report, organizational chart and a thorough justification for the request.

9. SYSTEMATIC JOB GRADING REVIEWS

a. A systematic review of the grading of all jobs at a facility shall be conducted at least once every 3 years. The job grading review shall be conducted in conjunction with the required position management and classification reviews (Ch. 511, this part). At local management's discretion, the job grading review may be conducted at more frequent intervals as appropriate. During the review, the grading of each job shall be evaluated and certified as correct by an official with authority to grade jobs. Jobs graded within a 1-year period prior to the systematic review do not need to be evaluated again. Desk audits of all jobs are not required as part of the review, but approximately 10 percent should be audited as set forth in paragraph 10 below. When systematic job grading reviews are conducted, the annual certification of the accuracy of job descriptions should become part of the review.

b. The Human Resources Management Officer shall develop a local systematic job grading review plan which will include (1) a schedule of the review for each organizational component, and (2) the specific responsibilities of the Human Resources Management office, supervisors, and managers.

c. Adequate local records shall be maintained to reflect the completion of the systematic job grading review. These records will be subject to review during personnel management evaluation or other visits. A report to Central Office of the completion of the systematic review is not required.

d. Part of the systematic review is the requirement that jobs must be reviewed when they become vacant to ensure that they are properly graded. Any such position reviewed during a 1-year period prior to the systematic job grading review does not have to be evaluate again. Similarly, a position that becomes vacant within 1 year after the systematic review does not have to be evaluated again.

10. EVALUATION REPORTS AND DESK AUDITS

a. An evaluation report is a written record of the rationale used to grade a job. Evaluation reports are designed to provide consistency and continuity in job grading decisions. Although there is not requirement that an evaluation report be prepared for all jobs, a written record, however brief, is helpful in personnel management evaluations and any subsequent review of the job grading rationale. A written report on VA Form 5-3963, Position Report, is required when the grading is not self-evident by reference to the standard(s) or when the final job grading decision differs from that recommended by the program official. The length, in-depth discussion, and formate of an evaluation report should be tailored to the individual job grading judgment. The evaluation report should include a concise but thorough comparison of the grade-controlling duties and responsibilities with the job grading standard(s) used to evaluate the job. It should show how the assignment meets, exceeds or falls short of the various factors in the standard(s).

b. A summary evaluation report shall also be prepared for jobs graded under the Job Grading Standard for Supervisors. More extensive reports are only required when the evaluation of the factor is not self-evident by reference to the standard.

c. A desk audit does not need to be conducted for each job grading action. The number of audits should depend on local needs. As a guideline, however, good job grading practices dictate that approximately 10 percent of the job descriptions at each facility should be desk audited each year. Desk audits may be conducted during the systematic job grading review, for individual actions, or as part of an integrated job analysis which uses a job oriented method. For identical-additional job descriptions, sufficient numbers of the incumbents should be audited to ensure the accuracy of the base position. A record of desk audit findings should be maintained with the evaluation report.

d. Since an evaluation report is part of the job grading records, copies should be provided, if available, to employees, program officials and exclusively recognized labor organization representatives as their request. A classifier's notes, however, are not part of the official job grading record and do not have to be provided. Such notes should not be maintained in the official job grading record.

11. CENTRAL OFFICE ASSISTANCE

a. A Formal job grading determination may be requested from Central Office when genuine doubt arises as to the proper grading of a job. Such determination can involve the grade level, title and/or series involved or basic coverage under the Federal Wage System. All requests should be accompanied by a job description, organizational and functional charts, evaluation report and any other available pertinent information including comments by operating officials and the employee(s) involved. Requests should be submitted through appropriate channels to the Office of Human Resources Management (051). Formal written determinations given by VA Central Office in which a definitive job grading decision is provided represent VA's judgment on the correct grading and must be applied by the requesting facility to existing position(s) or future identical positions. (See par. 13, "Adherence to Job Grading Decisions").

b. Informal advice and assistance on job grading matters are also Human Resources Management Officers and their staffs, normally by telephone, from position classification specialists in the Office of Human Resources Management (051). Use of this type of assistance is encouraged to augment local job grading expertise. Appropriate topics for informal discussion include the grading of particular types of jobs, information on appeals, job grading trends, and selection of standards for cross-series comparison.

12. JOB GRADING APPEALS

a. Employees who are dissatisfied with the grading of their job have the right to appeal the decision. An appeal may involve the grade, series, title or coverage under the Federal Wage System. Administration heads, Assistant Secretaries, staff office and field station Directors are responsible for keeping employees informed of job grading appeal procedures and policies.

b. Employees may appeal the grading of their job at any time. Any third party representing an employee in a job grading appeal must be so designated in writing by the employee(s).

c. Employees must appeal first to the VA, unless the grading of their job has been certified by OPM. In that case they must appeal to OPM. If they are dissatisfied with VA's decision, they may

appeal to OPM. If they so elect, they must file within 15 calendar days after they receive the VA decision.

d. Pending job grading appeals will be canceled by VA if the appellant (1) no longer occupies the appealed job (agency heads, staff office or field facility Directors should notify the Office of Human Resources Management (051) if this occurs); (2) does not furnish information required by VA or otherwise does not proceed with the advancement of the appeal (FWS Operating Manual 532-1, S7-6); or (3) requests in writing that his/her appeal be withdrawn or canceled.

e. A decision by either the VA or OPM can result in the appeals job's grade being raised, lowered or retained. The job's title and/or series may or may not be charged. In addition, the job may remain included or become excluded from coverage under the Federal Wage System.

f. Central Office shall be notified immediately when an employee appeals to OPM. A duplicate copy of any material provided OPM shall be sent through appropriate channels to the Office of Human Resources Management (051). Upon receipt, a copy of the OPM decision shall be forwarded to VA Central Office to complete the case. A file on each case involving a job grading appeal decision by either OPM or VA shall be maintained by the Human Resources Management office.

g. An employee who suffers a loss of grade based on a grading decision and who is not covered by the provisions of grade and pay retention is entitled to a prompt written notice from the VA. The notice shall also inform the employee of (1) his/her right to submit an appeal, and (2) the time limits within which the employee must appeal in order to preserve retroactivity of a favorable appeal decision. (See CFR 752, MP-5, Part I ch. 752, and applicable negotiated agreement with an exclusively recognized labor organization.)

h. Specific details concerning the VA job grading appeal system are contained in appendix B.

13. ADHERENCE TO JOB GRADING DECISIONS

A job grading action required by certificate of the Office of Personnel Management, or an agency appeal decision, or formal determination is binding on all facility heads. A change in title, series, or grade for a job for which OPM has issued a certificate or which an agency decision has been rendered is inappropriate unless there is a significant change in the duties and responsibilities or a change in the applicable job grading standards. A job grading action directed by certificate of the Office of Personnel Management or VA does not restrict local management's right to assign duties and responsibilities to any job consistent with the principles of sound position management. This includes the right to add or delete grade controlling duties. If grade controlling duties are deleted from the job, adverse action or reduction-in-force procedures may be required. Any change which will affect the implementation of an Office of Personnel Management or agency decision shall be reported to OPM or the VA, as appropriate, as soon as possible.

14. IMPLEMENTING JOB GRADING ACTIONS OR DECISIONS

a. Except as noted in subparagraphs b and c below, a personnel action implementing a change in the grading of a job will be made effective no earlier than the date of the job grading action nor later than the beginning of the fourth pay period after the date of the job grading action. In unusual cases an extension to the 4 pay period limit may be authorized by the field facility director, agency head or staff office director or Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management, as appropriate, for a specific and reasonable period of time. Such authorizations with justification will be a matter of written record.

b. In cases of agency job grading appeal decisions, the effective date to implement the change in the grading of the job shall be specified in the appeal decision. This date will be no later than the beginning of the first pay period starting after the 60th day after receipt of a complete application.

c. Job grading actions directed by OPM for any reason will be made effective in accordance with 5 CFR 532.701-532.703.

15. JOB GRADING DECISIONS AFFECTING LARGE NUMBERS OF JOBS/EMPLOYEES

a. Human Resources Management Officers are required to consult with the Office of Human Resources Management in Central Office (051) on proposed grading actions affecting 20 or more substantially similar jobs. For purposes of this paragraph the term "jobs" refers to the number of employees assigned to the job description at the facility. Consultation is also required if fewer than 20 substantially similar jobs are directly affected, when it is anticipated that the decision will have a "ripple" effect on a significant number of other jobs at the facility, e.g., leader or immediate supervisor jobs.

b. Consultation as specified in paragraph a above is required on job grading actions resulting from (1) the application of new or revised standards or guides, (2) new interpretations or applications of existing standards and guides, (3) unplanned accretion or erosion of duties to/from existing jobs, (4) the establishment of new, higher grade jobs in lieu of existing lower grade jobs, and (5) job grading appeal decisions. Job grading actions changing the grade, series or coverage under the Federal Wage System are included.

c. The request for consultation will be in writing and include a job description(s), evaluation report, organizational and functional charts and other pertinent information.

16. INTERIM JOBS

a. Interim jobs, identical to a base continuing job, may be established when it is determined that such a job is necessary. Interim jobs differ from identical-additional jobs in that they are temporary in nature.

b. Administration heads, Assistant Secretaries, staff office and field facility Directors are responsible for approving the establishment of interim jobs. The concurrence of the servicing Human Resources Management office is necessary to ensure that a properly graded base job exists.

c. Interim jobs may be established under the following circumstances. The list, however, is not intended to be all inclusive.

(1) For Extended Leave or Detail Replacement. An interim job may be established for the duration of the extended leave or detail of the regular incumbent of the continuing job when replacement is essential and a temporary detail is not suitable and administratively feasible.

(2) For Orientation Purposes. When an overlapping period is essential to prevent disruption of functions, and detail of a replacement for the incumbent of a one-of-a-kind job is not feasible, an interim job may be established locally for a reasonable period of time to permit orientation of the new incumbent.

(3) For Certain Restoration or Reemployment Actions. An interim job may be established for a reasonable period of time when (a) displacement of an employee is necessary to effect a restoration or reemployment action as defined in chapters 352 and 353, this part; and (b) other types of restorations or placements as necessary because of appeals of involuntary separations, adverse actions, and complaints of discrimination.

17. IDENTICAL-ADDITIONAL JOBS

Additional jobs may be established against base jobs that are determined to be susceptible to duplication. The procedure for establishing such jobs may be used only in cases where the job(a) is identical in duties and responsibilities to a base job, (b) is in the same organizational element, and (c) is under the same kind and degree of supervision. The identical-additional status of a job should be indicated on the OF 8. Any limit on the number of incumbents that may be assigned to an identical-additional job should also be indicated on the OF 8.

18. FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT COVERAGE DETERMINATIONS

a. An exempt or nonexempt determination shall be made for each employee assigned to a job based on a comparison of the employee's duties and responsibilities as assigned in the official job description with the exemption criteria in OPM's guidelines. FLSA exemptions must be narrowly construed and applied only to employees who are clearly within the terms and spirit of the exemption criteria. The burden of proof as to the exempt or nonexempt status of an employee rests with VA rather than the employee. If the determination is not self-evident, the basis for the decision should be retained with the job description either as part of the evaluation report or as a separate document. Specific exemption criteria are set forth in FPM chapter 511.

b. The Human Resources Management office exercising job grading authority is responsible for determining whether or not an employee is covered by the FLSA. The exempt or nonexempt status of the position will be identified on the employee's job description. The exempt or nonexempt determination of an employee must be consistent with the duties and responsibilities assigned in the official job description.

c. The exempt or nonexempt status of a job should be determined when the job is established and reviewed, when it is redescribed and graded, and during the systematic job grading review process. (See par. 9)

19. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT AUDITS AND VA PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT EVALUATIONS

a. The Office of Personnel Management and the VA Office of Human Resources Management will conduct periodic job grading audits and evaluations. Normally, these reviews will be part of a comprehensive evaluation of the personnel management program. All officials shall cooperate fully with OPM or agency representatives in the conduct of these audits and evaluations.

b. Administration heads, Assistant Secretaries and staff office directors shall be kept fully informed of job grading OPM audit activities at VA field facilities. Normally, an advance notice of OPM's plans to visit facilities is provided to the Office of Human Resources Management in VA Central Office, which in turn advises the Assistant Secretaries and administrations and staff offices. In those instances when OPM schedules an audit activity without a formal notice, the field facility shall inform the appropriate Central Office line elements concerned. It is not necessary to inform VA Central Office of individual desk audits conducted by OPM as part of the job grading appeal process.

c. Job grading reviews and evaluations conducted by the VA Central Office, Office of Human Resources Management will be coordinated through the appropriate Central Office elements.

d. To the extent practicable, disagreements with OPM audit report findings pertaining to a specific job will be negotiated directly with the OPM Regional Office conducting the audit. Resolution of disagreements on VA Central Office, Office of Human Resources Management findings will be handled through normal channels. As necessary, VA Central Office will provide assistance to field facilities to resolve job grading problems deriving from OPM audit report findings.

e. Except as specifically advised by VA Central Office, a field facility will take necessary final corrective action within its delegated job grading authority on any job which is certified by OPM.

APPENDIX A. FORMAT FOR PREPARING JOB DESCRIPTIONS

1. NONSUPERVISORY AND LEADER JOBS

I. PRIMARY DUTIES

Describe all regular and recurring duties assigned to the job.

II. SKILL AND KNOWLEDGE

Describe the nature and level of skills, knowledge and mental application required in performing assigned work.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

Describe the nature and degree of responsibility involved in performing the work and the supervisory control exercised over the job.

IV. PHYSICAL EFFORT

Describe the physical effort exerted in performing assigned work.

V. WORKING CONDITIONS

Describe the hazards, physical hardships, and working conditions to which workers are exposed in performing assigned work.

A more in-depth explanation of what information should be included under the five factors is contained in FWS Operating Manual Supplement 532-1, subchapter S6-5.

2. SUPERVISORY JOBS

I. RANGE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND SUPERVISORY CONTROLS

Indicate the supervisory control, instruction and guidance under which the employee operates, the kinds of problems or other matters referred to the supervisor, and the purpose and extent of the review of the work. Describe the degree of decision-making authority and limitations.

II. PLANNING

Describe the type and nature of planning responsibilities.

III. WORK DIRECTION

Explain how the supervisory job makes and reviews work assignments, develops work standards methods and procedures, determines equipment and material needs, and coordinates work with other units.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

Describe the general administrative and supervisory personnel functions performed.

A more in-depth explanation of what information should be included under the four factors is contained in the Job Grading Standard for Supervisors, WS.

APPENDIX B. VA JOB GRADING APPEAL PROCEDURES

1. An employee dissatisfied with the grade of his/her job should first discuss the problem informally with his/her supervisor. If the supervisor is unable to resolve the issue to the employee's satisfaction, the employee should discuss his/her dissatisfaction with the Human Resources Management Officer or appropriate human resource management staff member. If the employee still believes there is an inequity, he/she may file a job grading appeal. When a job grading action actually results in an employee's change to lower grade, the employee will be notified of the right to appeal to either the Merit Systems Protection Board or under FWS Operating Manual 532-1, depending on the employee's status. Timely notification must be made to preserve the employee's right to retroactive corrective action for pay purposes. FWS Operating Manual 532-1, subchapter S-7, paragraph S7-3 sets forth agency responsibilities in these cases and must be followed in VA.

2. A job grading appeal to the VA should be in writing and submitted to the appropriate line official through established channels in VA Central Office, through the local human resource management office. The human resource management office will forward the appeal within 15 days of receipt. Failure to submit an appeal through channels will usually result in a delay in the decision since it is necessary to secure the information listed in paragraph 4 below before adjudicating the appeal.

3. The following information shall be submitted by the employee:

- a. A signed statement that the employee wishes to appeal the grading of his/her job.
- b. Name of local facility.
- c. Organization to which assigned.
- d. Current job title, series, and grade.
- e. The requested title, series, and/or grade, or other job grading action.
- f. A statement that the official job description is accurate, or a statement of how the duties performed differ from the official job description.
- g. A statement with the reasons why the job should be graded other than it is including a comparison with the appropriate job grading standard. Although not required, such a statement is very helpful in adjudicating an appeal.
- h. A written designation of third party representation, including the union, if the appellant elects such representation.

4. The following information shall be submitted by the human resource management office along with the material supplied by the appellant:

- a. An accurate job description.

b. A job evaluation report which includes an in-depth comparison of the duties and responsibilities with published job grading standards. If the report was prepared prior to the appeal, it should be updated to cover salient points raised by the appellant which may not have been previously evaluated.

c. Organizational and Functional Charts.

d. Comments from the immediate supervisor and/or the service or division chief relative to the accuracy of the job description and the merits of the appeal.

e. Copies of the descriptions of the jobs used for the base level of work supervised when the appellant is a leader or supervisor and any other job graded higher than the base level of work.

5. Before adjudicating any appeal, it is necessary to have a job description that all levels of management consider accurate. It is important that the job description be consistent with the evaluation report and/or the supervisory comments. Any discrepancies must be resolved before submitting the appeal to Central Office.

6. Job Grading appeal decisions will be signed by the appropriate line official or his/her designee. For jobs for which Headquarters and Executive Resources Team has job grading authority, the decision letter will be signed by the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management

7. There is only one level of appeal in the VA. The letter of decision signed by the authorized official or his/her designee constitutes a final decision within the VA. A job grading appeal decision may be reopened and reconsidered by that official when the employee presents material facts not previously considered.

8. Agency appeal decision may be appealed to OPM. Instructions for such an appeal are contained in FWS Operating Manual Supplement 532-1.