



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PERSONNEL AND LABOR RELATIONS  
WASHINGTON DC 20420**

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**HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT LETTER 05-94-03**

**Position Classification & Position Management Guidance  
For Title 5 Positions Previously Centralized  
To Under Secretary for Health**

1. **Purpose:** This letter provides references and resources to guide position classification specialists and human resources management specialists with responsibility for implementing the delegations of position classification authority contained in VHA (Veterans Health Administration) Directive 10-94-008, "Delegation of Position Classification and Staffing Authorities".
2. **Background:** On October 23, 1993, the Acting Under Secretary for Health approved a proposal to decentralize the position classification and staffing for Title 5 service chiefs and certain other positions to regional and facility directors. To guide this process, procedures have been developed which provide an opportunity for regional directors and Central Office program directors to participate in these determinations. Specific delegations and procedures are outlined in VHA Directive 10-94-008.
3. **VA Operational Guidance:**
  - a. Supervisors and managers in both facilities and regions will follow standard procedures in the development of position descriptions for these positions. Formats should be comparable to the appropriate OPM (Office of Personnel Management) standard or guide being used in their assessment and should comply with local policy.
  - b. Position classification specialists or other responsible human resources staff will follow established law, as well as current OPM and VA procedures in the evaluation and classification of these positions. Attachment A contains a listing of appropriate OPM and VA standards, guides, and guidance which should be used in the assessment of these positions. Attachment C lists assignments of Position Management & Classification Service (057) staff members. These individuals are available for consultation on application of these classification tools and to answer technical questions relating to the classification process.
  - c. All human resources management staff are responsible for providing substantive and comprehensive consultation to managers and staff in the establishment

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and classification of these positions, as well as others for which they retain classification authority. This should include advice and assistance on the construction of individual positions; the interrelationships between management and supervisory positions; the design of organizations, including cost analysis of proposals; the development of organizational alternatives; and the establishment of a sound position management program for the facility. Some specific issues have been identified in Attachment B to assist in the assessment of these positions.

d. At the facility level, consideration should be given to retaining signatory authority for classification of these positions by the Chief, Human Resources Management Service. One exception for delegation is the authority to classify the position of Chief HRMS; this authority must be retained by the facility director (see Attachment C of VHA Directive 10-94-008).

4. For general advice and assistance concerning the delegations of authority, you may contact Carol Poor of the Position Management and Classification Service (057) at FTS (700 or 202) 535-8838. Specific questions relating to the assessment of work and the classification of positions in particular program areas can be referred to the appropriate 057 specialists (see Attachment C).



Ronald E. Cowles  
Deputy Assistant Secretary for  
Human Resources Management

Attachments

Distribution: Per VAF 3-7225  
SS (057)

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Attachment A

**References for Classification of Field Positions**

Key to abbreviations:       OPM (Office of Personnel Management)  
                                  GSSG (General Schedule Supervisory Guide)  
                                  HRML (Human Resources Management Letter)  
                                  SPD (standardized position descriptions)  
                                  GEG (Grade Evaluation Guide)  
                                  PCL (Personnel Circular Letter)

| <u>Title/Series/Grade*</u>             | <u>Standard/Guidance</u>  |
|--|---|
| Chief, Chaplain, GS-060-13             | OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24;<br>OPM GS-060   |
| Chief, Police & Security, GS-083-11    | OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24  |
| Chief, Police & Security, GS-080-12    | SPDs to be issued 4/94**<br>OPM GS-080  |
| Chief, Psychology, GS-180-14           | OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24;<br>OPM GS-180   |
| Chief, Social Work, GS-185-14          | OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24;<br>OPM GS-185   |
| Chief, Human Resources Mgmt, GS-201-14 | OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24;<br>HRML 05-94-**  |
| Chief, Voluntary, GS-301-12            | DM&S Guide for Classification of Chiefs of Voluntary Service<br>(distributed by DM&S Cir 10-84-129, dtd 8-9-84) |

\*Up to and including the indicated grade level.

\*\*\* Guidance to be issued in near future.

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| <u>Title/Series/Grade*</u>                        | <u>Principle Standard/Guidance</u>                         |
|---|--|
| Chief, Information Resources Mgmt, GS-334-14      | OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24;<br>OPM GS-334                  |
| Chief, Medical Administration, GS-340-14          | HRML 05-94-**  |
| Chief, Fiscal, GS-505-14                          | HRML 05-94-2;<br>OPM GS-505;<br>OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24 |
| Chief, Blind Rehabilitation, GS-601-14            | OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24                                 |
| VIST Coordinator, GS-601-12                       | OPM GEG for<br>Instructional Work                          |
| Chief, Dietetics, GS-630-14                       | OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24;<br>OPM GS-630                  |
| Chief, Recreation Therapy, GS-638-12              | OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24;<br>OPM GS-638                  |
| Chief, Audiology &/or Speech Pathology, GS-665-14 | OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24;<br>OPM GS-665                  |
| Director, Domiciliary, GS-670-13                  | HRML 05-94-**  |
| Chief, Prosthetics & Sensory Aids, GS-672-13      | PCL 05-91-29;<br>OPM GSSG<br>HRML 05-93-24                 |

\*Up to and including the indicated grade level.

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| <u>Title/Series/Grade*</u>                      | <u>Principle Standard/Guidance</u>                                      |
|---|---|
| Chief, Environmental Mgmt, GS-673-13            | OPM GS-673  |
| Veterinary Medical Ofcr, GS-701-13              | OPM GS-701  |
| Chief, Biomedical Engineering, GS-858-14        | OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24  |
| Chief, Engineering, GS-801-14                   | OPM Hospital Engineer<br>GEG, OPM GS-800;<br>OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24 |
| Chief, Acquisitions & Materiel Mgmt, GS-1101-14 | OA&MM Ltr. dtd 2- -94;<br>OPM GSSG;<br>HRML 05-93-24                    |

**References for Classification of Regional Positions**

| <u>Title/Series/Grade*</u>                      | <u>Standard/Guidance</u>                          |
|---|---|
| Personnel Management Specialist, GS-201-14      | OPM GS-201  |
| Emergency Preparedness Planning Ofcr, GS-301-14 | OPM Administrative<br>Analysis GEG                |
| Health Care Facility Specialist, GS-301-14      | OPM Administrative<br>Analysis GEG                |
| Computer Specialist, GS-334-14                  | OPM GS-334  |
| Management & Program Analysis Ofcr, GS-343-14   | OPM GS-343;<br>OPM Administrative<br>Analysis GEG |

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| <u>Title/Series/Grade*</u>                       | <u>Standard/Guidance</u>   |
|--|--|
| Program Analyst, GS-343-14                       | Ibid   |
| Budget Officer, GS-560-14                        | OPM GS-560   |
| Health Systems Specialist, GS-671-14             | OPM GS-671;<br>OPM Administrative<br>Analysis GEG                |
| Industrial Hygienist, GS-690-14                  | OPM GS-690   |
| General Engineer, GS-801-14                      | OPM GEG for<br>Professional Engineering<br>Positions; OPM GS-810 |
| Safety Engineer, GS-803-14                       | OPM GS-803   |
| Acquisition & Utilization Specialist, GS-1101-14 | OPM GEG for Supply<br>Positions                                  |
| Health Systems Acquisition Manager, GS-1101-14   | Ibid   |
| Health Physicist, GS-1306-14                     | OPM GS-1306  |

\*Up to and including the indicated grade level.

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Attachment B.

**Position Management & Position Classification Concerns**

1. Facility and regional managers who prepare and review position descriptions should review the assignments and organization of service chief (and other) positions with good position management principles in mind. Prior to classifying such positions, facility and region staff should assure that the following issues are addressed and appropriately resolved:

Signatory levels (on OF-8, item 20) reflect current, approved organizational alignment. Chain of command is consistent with current policy and procedure.

Position description accurately describe work actually being performed. If position is evaluated against the General Schedule Supervisory Guide, description includes percentage of time involved in performance of major responsibilities/duties. The supervisory ratio should be appropriate for the work being done.

Program functions assigned to the position are appropriate.

There is no overlap of responsibilities between this position and others in the organization. There should be no conflict or duplication of responsibility between this position and other staff positions at the facility. There is no layering of managerial or supervisory controls.

Responsibilities assigned the position are delegated to the lowest practicable level for their satisfactory accomplishment. Work is efficiently and economically organized and assigned. The highest grade level duties are concentrated in highest graded positions. The proposed classification is appropriate for existing budgetary constraints for the organization.

2. Facilities preparing and evaluating position descriptions also need to be aware of the particular program's perspective. For these reasons, it is advisable to be attentive of the following issues:

Position description should cover the major significant program elements, requirements, responsibilities and management role. Program emphasis should be in conformance with overall departmental and VHA missions and objectives. Responsibilities should comply with VHA policies and procedures at the field facility level of operation for the program.

If there are any non-VHA, and/or extra-VA assignments included in the description, they should not present any ethical or conflict of interest issues.

Organizational structure must comply with existing VHA policies dealing with alignment and supervisory responsibilities. Supervision should be appropriate to the level of the position and adequately described. Professional staff should be supervised by higher-level professionals, (therapists supervised by higher level therapists, etc.).

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If there are any regional or national responsibilities, they must be properly authorized. The position description should adequately describe these responsibilities, and a description of the supervision of that work must be provided.

3. For facilities or regional staffs involved in the classification of regional positions, they should be concerned with these additional position management and organizational issues.

Assignments must be related to VHA mission.

Organizational structures should reflect those approved by facility or higher-level management.

The proposed grade should be consistent with grades currently established within the Region and among regions. (Ref: PAID and other appropriate reports.)

Any conflicts of responsibility between line and staff functions within the facility and/or region need to be resolved. All staff level positions also need to be consistent with good position management principles.

Regional responsibilities should be appropriate and adequately described, including supervisory controls. If regional or headquarters responsibilities are included in a particular position description, the Item 20 of the OF-8 should be certified by the appropriate authority at the appropriate organizational level.

4. In addition, for review of regional positions, position management considerations should include:

The percentage of time spent on higher (or lower) level duties. Duties should be appropriate to the another position (or organizational level), i.e., organized in the most economical manner. Lower level duties should be removed from higher paying positions. Work should be organized in the most efficient manner.



