

Position Management Policy

Position Management

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Policy

It is the policy of the State of North Carolina to deliver its programs of service and achieve its objectives through sound management practice. A basic part of this practice is effective fiscally responsible position management.

Position management involves the design and administration of individual positions to achieve a proper balance of values among the following management considerations:

- number of positions;
- total cost of service;
- maximum use of scarce or costly manpower skills;
- maximum attraction, retention, and motivation of competent personnel;
- provision for maximum development opportunities;
- effective use of work processes, equipment, and techniques; and
- clear delineation of duties and responsibilities.

Good position management reflects the composite resolution of these often-conflicting values. It is a continuous and systematic process for determining the number of positions needed, the skill and knowledge requirements of those positions, and the organizational grouping of positions to carry out the work of the organizational unit to which they are assigned.

Position management is inherently the responsibility of managers and supervisors. Staff assistance in this area is available to management from the Office of State Human Resources.

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Position Design

Position design is the structuring of work assignments to achieve organizational goals with the best use of human resources most readily available and by avoiding unnecessary competition for labor in short supply. Each agency and each program of service in State government is in competition for scarce financial and human resources. These represent actual and imposed controls or limitations. Position design has as its goal the improved management of positions within the limitations of available resources. Line managers have many factors to consider in designing positions. These include labor market resources, equipment or work process alternatives, pay competition, competing demands for funds and space, overall goal or program priorities, training possibilities, and many others. To assist management with data collection and analysis of the many considerations, staff assistance, both from within the agency and resources of other staff agencies, should be used.

Position design is accomplished by systematically following several guides which are keys to developing facts necessary to good position management:

- Analyzing the mission and objectives of the organizational unit,
- Determining the tasks to be performed in accomplishing objectives,
- Determining the most efficient methods, work processes, equipment, and techniques for performing identified tasks,
- Designing positions by grouping tasks together on the basis of the most effective use of available people skills, and
- Continuously reviewing assignments and restructuring work of positions, including vacancies, to ensure efficiency and resource stewardship on a current basis.

Position Analysis

In the successful accomplishment of position management, there is a need to define the nature of positions, relative to the mission and dynamics of the organization. Position analysis is the process of describing and evaluating the different kinds and levels of work found in the organization and grouping positions with similar kinds of work on the basis of major factors which includes but is not limited to minimum education/experience

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requirements, decision-making responsibility, as well as variety, complexity and scope of work. Position analysis involves the application of accepted techniques of job evaluation to produce a systematic classification plan that forms the basis for an equitable and logical pay plan, meaningful standards of recruitment and selection, identification of training needs, a framework for performance evaluation, and information to support management in planning, budgeting, and maintaining the organization.

Agency HR Directors with delegated classification authority must ensure positions are properly classified and align with the classification spec, using established OSHR standards and procedures. This includes maintaining the required classification documentation such as an explanation of the basis for the classification, updated position description, organizational profile, and detailed analyst notes.

Basic to an understanding of position analysis are the concepts of a position and job class.

Job Family: A group of jobs involving work of a similar nature but requiring different knowledge, skill and responsibility levels.

Branch: Within a job family, jobs are grouped together into specialized_sub-set categories called branches.

Job: Work consisting of responsibilities and duties that are sufficiently alike to justify being covered by a single Class Spec. More than one employee may be assigned to a job (i.e., the job of administrative assistant II is held by more than one person, but these individuals are in the same job because they all perform similar duties and responsibilities). A job refers to the combination of duties and responsibilities that are carried out by all persons in that classification.

Position: Used to denote the unique responsibilities and duties assigned to one employee. In instances when there is only one person with a certain job title or job description, the position is the same as a job classification. If, however, there are multiple individuals with the same job title/job description, then each individual with that job title has his or her own position. In other words, a position represents a specific person and the unique duties and responsibilities that person performs.

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Classification Plan

The State Human Resources Commission, subject to the approval of the Governor, establishes policies and rules governing a position classification plan which shall provide for the classification and reclassification of all positions subject to Chapter 126 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

The State Human Resources Director is authorized to allocate and reallocate individual positions consistent with the established classification and pay plan.

The classification plan for the State of North Carolina consists of all classes established by the State Human Resources Commission for positions subject to the State Human Resources Act, together with procedures for maintaining the plan and standards for each class. In grouping positions into classes, they are first grouped by the type of work, for example, administrative, trades, accounting, or nursing. Second, the duties and responsibilities are evaluated or weighted to determine their relative level. This evaluation process involves the examination of the relative presence and degree of common factors which include but is not limited to minimum education/experience requirements, decision-making responsibility, as well as variety, complexity and scope of work.

Class Specification

- Classification Specification (class spec), this is a broad summary of the essential duties and responsibilities of a job. It is not intended to describe all the duties of each position in the class but rather to give a composite view of the class so as to set it apart from other classes. A class spec identifies the nature of the work performed, minimum education and experience required to perform the essential duties and responsibilities, and the knowledge, skills and abilities required. OSHR creates class specs in collaboration with agency HR staff and presents to the State Human Resources Commission as the approving authority for all class specs. Class Specs are used by agency HR analysts and OSHR for the job evaluation process.
- Class Title - The class title is the official title to be used for payroll, position management and other human resources and budget records. It may cover

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positions in several agencies and does not preclude the use of more specific working titles, if individual agencies so desire. In a series where Roman numerals are used to indicate more than one level of work, the numeral "I" always denotes the lowest level.

- Description of Work - This section describes by a general statement and then by more detailed statements the type of work and responsibilities which characterize the class. A consideration of such factors as scope, variety and complexity of work, relative independence of action, supervision received and exercised, and other distinguishing features are also included.

Recruitment Standards

- Knowledge, Skills and Abilities - Knowledge, skills, and abilities set forth the requirements of employees for successful work performance in positions allocated to the class. They are written in terms of what is required of new employees at time of appointment or promotion. They do not specify the desirable qualifications of a thoroughly experienced employee in the class. Their purpose is to be of assistance in the recruitment, examination, and placement of applicants. They may be used also to identify training guides to develop promotability of lower level employees. Personal characteristics such as honesty, courtesy, dependability, sobriety, and industry are not mentioned; they are requirements for all employees in all classes of work in State service.
- Minimum Education and Experience - This section is a translation of the knowledge, skills, and abilities section into quantifiable training and experience standards. It is a Statement of the minimum qualification requirements which an applicant for a vacant position in the class should possess at the time of appointment. As prerequisites, these are requirements for all employees in all classes of work in the State service.
- Special Requirements - In this particular section are listed specific licenses or certificates needed by an employee to perform a given job. Such licenses are those required for persons engaged in certain occupations such as law, medicine, or jobs

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requiring the operation of dangerous equipment. This section may also be used to specify conditions of physical endurance or emotional stability highlighted by demand of positions in a class, where such conditions are primary selection factors.

Benchmarks

A benchmark is a description of a real position having duties and responsibilities typical of a group of jobs in an occupational category, described in terms of factors which determine the level of the position or positions. Each benchmark includes the following sections: (1) Class Title, (2) Major Duties, (3) Factor Descriptions.

- Class Title - The class title is the official title to be used for payroll, position management, and other human resources and budget records. It may cover positions in several agencies and does not preclude the use of more specific working titles, if individual agencies so desire.
- Major Duties - This section describes the major level determining duties of the position. This list reflects duties of a specific position and is not exhaustive.
- Factor Descriptions - This section describes the relative degree of major evaluation factors present in the position. The factors described are those which are used to evaluate all positions in an occupational category. While factors are the same for all jobs in a given category of occupations, they may vary from one occupation to another. Factors which are generally common to all positions include minimum education/experience requirements, decision-making responsibility, as well as variety, complexity and scope of work. This list of factors is not exhaustive.

Minimum Education and Experience Requirements for Each Class

It shall be the policy of the State to establish job-related minimum qualification standards wherever they are practical for each class of work in the position classification plan. The standards will be based on the required skills, knowledge and abilities common to each classification. The qualification standards and job-related skills, knowledge, and abilities shall serve as guides for the selection and placement of individuals.

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The education and experience statements serve as indicators of the possession of identified skills, knowledge, and abilities and as guide to primary sources of recruitment; reasonable substitutions of formal education and job-related experience, one for the other, will be made. The State Human Resources Commission recognizes that a specific quantity of formal education or number of years' experience does not always guarantee possession of the identified skills, knowledge, and abilities for every position in a class. Qualifications necessary to perform successfully may be attained in a variety of combinations. Management is responsible for determining specific job-related qualifications that are an addition to minimum standards; such qualifications must receive prior approval of the State Human Resources Director. Management shall be responsible for any adverse effects resulting from the use of selection standards that have not been established or approved by the State Human Resources Director.

The State Human Resources Director is authorized to modify education and experience requirements for established classes consistent with this policy and the Director shall report such changes to the State Human Resources Commission.

Maintaining the Classification Plan

The Office of State Human Resources is generally responsible for establishing, revising and maintaining the Classification Plan for the entire State government. Agency heads may report the need for classification action; or the Office of State Human Resources may initiate studies of single positions, occupational groups, or organizational groups of positions to determine that classifications are current. While central control of the Classification Plan is retained by the Office of State Human Resources, adherence to and the maintenance of the plan is the responsibility of everyone concerned with employment. This includes individual employees, immediate supervisors, agency HR directors, and agency heads.

- Employees - When an employee thinks his/her position is not in the right class, the employee should request that the supervisor conduct a review of the duties of the position. The request should include a Statement of reasons for believing the job classification is wrong. It should be reviewed by the supervisor and agency head or the representative of the agency head and if the request seems justified, the agency

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head should submit it, along with comments, to the Agency Human Resources Office. The position will then be studied to determine if the classification should be changed. The position will be submitted to the Office of State Human Resources if it exceeds the agency's classification flexibility or delegation of authority.

- Supervisors and Agency Heads - A major responsibility for the classification plan rests with line management - agency heads and supervisors. They are responsible for determining the duties and responsibilities of positions, for assigning individual employees to work and informing them of their assigned duties, and for reporting changes in duty assignments and organization and the need for classification action to the Agency Human Resources Office and Office of State Human Resources. These are integral parts of their general responsibility for efficient and fiscally responsible resource management.
- Agency HR Directors – are responsible for ensuring compliance and application of OSHR classification principles, procedures and standards including development of mechanisms for accountability, which will ensure classification decisions are applied consistently and equitably across the agency.

Establishment and Revision of Classes

Classification studies may reveal from time to time the need to establish new classes or revise existing classes. These actions must be recommended by the State Human Resources Director and approved by the State Human Resources Commission and the Governor. Likewise, classes which are no longer used are abolished with the Commission's approval.

- Allocation and Reallocation of Positions - Every position subject to the State Human Resources Act is allocated to an appropriate class in the Classification Plan. The allocation of a position is its assignment to a class containing all positions which are sufficiently similar in duty assignments to justify common treatment in selection, compensation, and other employment processes. A class may consist of a single unique position or of many like positions.

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- Tentative and Flat Rate Provisions for Temporary Classifications - The State Human Resources Director is authorized to establish temporary classifications with tentative pay grades or flat rate salaries when sufficient information is not available to make permanent classification and pay recommendations to the State Human Resources Commission. When sufficient information is available, the Director will make a recommendation to the Commission which will incorporate the temporary classification and pay into the established classification and pay plan. Such temporary classes, tentative pay grades and flat rate salaries shall be administered according to all applicable rules and regulations approved by the State Human Resources Commission.
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