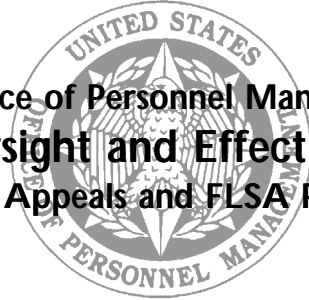


U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Classification Appeals and FLSA Programs



Atlanta Oversight Division
75 Spring Street, SW, Suite 972
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3109

Classification Appeal Decision
Under Section 5112 of Title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [Appellant]

Agency classification: Military Personnel Clerk (OA)
GS-204-4

Organization: U.S. Department of Army

OPM decision: Military Personnel Clerk (OA)
GS-204-4

OPM decision number: C-0204-04-01

Kathy W. Day
Classification Appeals Officer

7/16/99

-
Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, this decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the government. The agency is responsible for reviewing its classification decisions for identical, similar, or related positions to ensure consistency with this decision. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions and time limits specified in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

Decision sent to:

[Appellant]

[Director, Civilian Personnel
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Introduction

On May 19, 1999, the Atlanta Oversight Division, Office of Personnel Management, accepted a classification appeal for the position of Military Personnel Clerk, GS-204-4, [organizational location], U.S. Department of the Army, [geographical location]. The appellant is requesting that the position be classified at the GS-5 level.

This appeal has been accepted and processed under section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code. This is the final administrative decision on the classification of the position subject to discretionary review only under the limited conditions and time outlined in part 511, subpart F, of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

To help decide the appeal, an Atlanta Oversight Division representative conducted phone audits of the appellant's position on June 18, 1999, and June 21, 1999. The audits included interviews with the appellant and the immediate supervisor. In reaching our decision, we have considered the audit findings and all the information of record furnished by the appellant and the agency.

Position information

The appellant is assigned to position description number [#]. The appellant, supervisor, and agency have certified the accuracy of the position description. The position description was found to be adequate for classification purposes.

The primary purposes of the appellant's position are to perform a variety of clerical tasks associated with processing records for enlisted personnel entering the service; to perform military classification tasks; and to provide office automation support. The appellant verifies and extracts a wide variety of factual data from various sources including one-on-one interviews with enlisted personnel. She assembles records and prepares the official personnel file, prepares financial documents, gathers applicable processing forms according to individual situations, and obtains required signatures on pertinent documents. Basic information is provided to enlisted personnel, such as length of training, base pay, minimum time-in-grade before eligibility for promotion, etc. The appellant performs a variety of office automation duties to include utilizing personal computers; inputting data to the military personnel system; and operating printers, facsimile machine, etc.

Series and title determination

The agency determined the appellant's position is properly classified as Military Personnel Clerk, GS-204. The appellant does not dispute the agency determination.

The Military Personnel Clerk and Technician Series includes positions which perform or supervise clerical or technical military personnel work when such work requires a substantial knowledge of the characteristics, requirements, and procedures of military personnel programs and operations and the legislative, regulatory, policy and procedural requirements applicable to military personnel

transactions and activities. Based on our findings, the primary duties of the position involve a variety of clerical tasks associated with processing military personnel into the military service which are properly covered by the GS-204 series. In accordance with the titling practices outlined in the standard, the position is properly titled *Military Personnel Clerk*. The parenthetical title, *Office Automation (OA)*, is added to reflect the office automation requirements of the position. Therefore, the appropriate series and title for this position is *Military Personnel Clerk (OA), GS-204*.

Standard determination

Military Personnel Clerk and Technician Series, GS-204, June 1967.
Office Automation Grade Evaluation Guide, August 1991.

Grade determination

CLERICAL DUTIES

The standard for the GS-204 series uses three fundamental classification criteria which, taken together, provide a means for measurement of the relative grade value of the work. These criteria are: *Nature of Assignment*, which measures those elements of scope and technical complexity inherent in the assignment; *Level of Responsibility*, which evaluates the effect of various degrees of control over the work, including consideration of the amount and kind of supervision received and the extent to which guidelines are appropriate to (and govern the conduct of) the work; and *Knowledge and Skill Requirements*, which considers the breadth and depth of specialized regulatory, procedural, or program knowledges required to do the work and the personal attributes and skills required for its successful performance.

The position is evaluated as follows:

Nature of Assignment

This factor measures the scope and technical complexity inherent in the assignment which make it more or less difficult to accomplish.

At the GS-4 level, assignments involve a wide variety of both procedural and substantive clerical work associated with one or more areas of military personnel administration. The processing of transactions involves review and verification of facts; identification and selection of rules, regulations, and precedents applicable to the case; recognition of gaps or inconsistencies in the record; and recognition of circumstances permitting the application of alternative regulatory provisions.

The appellant's position meets the GS-4 level in that the assignments involve receiving, reviewing and processing records for enlisted military personnel entering the service. This includes interviewing military personnel for information necessary for their official file and record. The appellant verifies and extracts a wide variety of factual data from the enlistment contract, legal documents, medical records, and other documents. Erroneous information contained in the file is corrected by the appellant. The appellant provides basic information to enlisted personnel concerning their entitlements and benefits.

At the GS-5 level, assignments involve the independent processing of military personnel transactions which present complex and unusual procedural or substantive issues or the review of completed transactions. For example, the GS-5 serves as final clerical reviewer prior to action officer signature or other general organizational approval of military personnel transactions. They serve as an "authoritative source" in the interpretation of rules and regulations as applied to specific sets of circumstances to which they are not directly applicable. Assignments are complicated by the necessity to reconstruct and verify a wide variety of facts relating to the transaction and to select and apply a variety of rules, regulations, procedures, and precedents many of which are inherently complicated, difficult to interpret and not widely or frequently applied. Personal contacts are distinguished from those at GS-4 by the nature of the question or problems dealt with and the degree of authority which is attributed to the procedural or regulatory information supplied. Advice and opinions provided frequently serve as the basis for personal decisions and actions by military personnel or officials in matters having substantial career consequences.

The appellant's work does not meet the GS-5 level in that her work involves routine transactions processed within the confines of detailed regulations and standard operating procedures. Most actions are of a conventional nature and require only minimal research. Completed actions are reviewed by a lead GS-5 clerk. When research is required by the appellant, the sources are easily identified and applied. Also, the degree of authority exercised by the appellant is not what is expected at this level. For example, the appellant stated in the interview that when enlisted personnel question, or become agitated by, a particular requirement or determination, the lead clerk or supervisor is routinely called in as the authoritative voice.

This factor is properly evaluated at the GS-4 level.

Level of Responsibility

This factor evaluates the amount and kind of supervision received and the extent to which guidelines govern the work.

At the GS-4 level, the employee works with relative independence within the framework of established policies and procedures. Instructions are provided regarding new or revised rules, regulations, and procedures. At this grade level, clerks are expected to process the full range of standard transactions independently and completed work is spot checked for accuracy. The supervisor is available to assist with unusual problems.

The appellant's position meets the GS-4 level in that the assignments are recurring in nature and are performed independently following established procedures and specific guidelines. Unusual, complex, or problem cases are elevated to the lead clerk or supervisor.

At the GS-5 level, precedent decisions form an important part of the regulations within which the work is accomplished since many cases cannot be resolved by application of basic published guides. Clerks are held responsible for the substantive sufficiency of the transactions they process. Review of completed work focuses on the precedent setting or policy implications of the completed action as opposed to detailed verification of the accuracy of findings, interpretation of regulations or soundness of conclusions. Supervisory guidance relates to overall changes in policies and procedures and discussions of the implications of the new precedent decisions.

The position does not meet the GS-5 level in that the appellant's choices and judgments are limited to matching situations to guidelines. The appellant is responsible only for applying very detailed operating guides and regulations to standard transactions. The intent of the level of responsibility is not met by the appellant's position.

This factor is properly evaluated at the GS-4 level.

Knowledge and skill requirements

This factor considers the breadth and depth of the specialized regulatory, procedural, or program knowledges required to do the work and the personal attributes and skills required for successful performance.

At the GS-4 level, military personnel clerks possess and employ a thorough knowledge of the format, content and uses of the military personnel record; the procedures and requirements regarding its maintenance; and the variety of laws, rules, regulations, procedures, and precedents relating to the transactions processed. The ability to use judgment in selecting and interpreting the guidelines that are appropriate for each case is important. At this level person-to-person contacts are frequent and require tact and/or persuasion. They also require patience in explaining regulations and in explaining why requested actions cannot be accomplished.

The GS-4 level is met. The appellant uses a variety of specific rules, regulations, and procedures to process enlisted personnel into the military. The appellant performs substantive clerical duties associated with the maintenance of military personnel records. The appellant has to decide which guides are applicable to each case. Interviews with the enlisted personnel serve as a primary basis for obtaining information. The position requires an ability to explain why certain documents are needed or why certain regulations apply to an individual situation.

The GS-5 level requires a more specialized degree of knowledges and experiences to be able to interpret and apply precedents, and resolve complex problems. At this level, the clerk is recognized as a primary point of contact for resolving complex issues and securing necessary changes to rules and regulations. Effective work relationships are maintained in and outside of the office.

The GS-5 level is not met. The lead military personnel clerk and supervisors are recognized as the authorities for complex issues. The appellant interprets very specific, standard guidance as it applies to routine issues. Information is easily coded into the computer system using help menus. The appellant's working relationships are with the enlisted personnel being processed and other personnel within the immediate office. There are no contacts outside the immediate office as would be expected at this level.

This factor is properly evaluated at the GS-4 level.

OFFICE AUTOMATION DUTIES

Office Automation duties are secondary to the requirements of this position and are performed 20 percent of the time. Therefore, these duties are not grade-controlling and only a summary evaluation is provided. The Office Automation Grade Evaluation Guide is referenced to measure nine factors, as follows:

SUMMARY		
FACTOR	LEVEL	POINTS
1. Knowledge Required by the Position	1-2	200
2. Supervisory Control	2-2	125
3. Guidelines	3-2	125
4. Complexity	4-2	75
5. Scope and Effect	5-1	25
6 and 7. Personal Contacts and Purpose of Contacts	6-1	30
	7-a	
8. Physical Demands	8-1	5
9. Work Environment	9-1	5
TOTAL		590

A total of 590 points equates to GS-3 on the Grade Conversion Chart found in the Guide.

Summary

The clerical duties are grade controlling and are evaluated at GS-4. The office automation duties are evaluated at GS-3.

Decision

The position is properly classified as Military Personnel Clerk (OA), GS-204-4.