

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



Chicago Oversight Division  
230 South Dearborn Street, DPN 30-6  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

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

**Appellant:** [Appellant's Name]

**Representative:** [Representative's Name]

**Agency Classification:** Management and Program Analyst  
GS-343-11

**Organization:** Veterans Affairs Medical Center  
[Name of] Service Line  
[City, State]

**OPM decision:** **GS-501**  
Title at discretion of agency

**OPM decision number:** C-0501-00-01

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Frederick J. Boland  
Classification Appeals Officer  
\_\_\_\_\_  
9/29/00  
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).

Since this decision changes the classification of the appealed position, it is to be effective no later than the beginning of the fourth pay period after the date of this decision (5 CFR 511.702). The servicing personnel office must submit a compliance report containing the corrected position description and a Standard Form 50 showing the personnel action taken. The report must be submitted within 30 days from the effective date of the personnel action.

### **Decision sent to:**

[appellant's name and address]

Mr. Ronald E. Cowles  
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human  
Resources Management  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Washington, DC 20420

[name and address of appellant's  
representative]

[name and address of appellant's servicing  
personnel office]

Director, Customer Advisory  
and Consulting Group  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Ave, NW (Routing Code 051)  
Washington, DC 20420

## Introduction

The appellant is assigned to position number 517-2508, which the agency classified as Management and Program Analyst, GS-343-11, on June 10, 1999. The position is located in the Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center, [Name of] Service Line, [City, State]. The appellant believes that his position description is accurate, but feels he deserves more credit because of the nature of the guidelines he follows, the complexity of his work, and the nature and purpose of his personal contacts (Factors 3, 4, 6 and 7 of the classification standard).

## Position information

The appellant is one of approximately 26 employees on the [Name of] Team. He reports to a Financial Manager, GS-505-12.

The appellant manages the Decision Support System (DSS) for the VA Medical Center in [City, State]. DSS is an automated managerial cost accounting system for the delivery of medical care that provides VA managers with cost and clinical information to consider when making clinical decisions, managing workload, and controlling medical care costs.

The appellant's principal duties are:

- refining data coding and making report modifications,
- analyzing and auditing that data to assure validity and accuracy,
- preparing financial and work reports by inputting data into standard computerized formats, and
- extracting and inputting financial and workload data.

In response to our request for specific work examples of general effectiveness, productivity, and efficiency analyses that his position description alludes to, the appellant indicated either he had no examples or described much more limited assignments than the position description's language suggests. Examples of such duties that he does not perform are highlighted in the following statements taken from the position description.

Ability to identify, analyze, and recommend solutions to problems in organizational structure, staffing, administrative procedures, work processes, or workload distribution.

The duties require interpretation and application of fiscal policies and procedures in order to analyze programs and determine the most efficient methods of operation.

Assignments require analysis of interrelated issues of effectiveness, efficiency, and predictability affecting major administrative programs of the medical center.

Studies are often complicated by the need to consider and evaluate the impact of changes in technical and agency requirements; political, economic, and social consequences of changes in the type or amount of services provided; or the changing nature of the program's clients and beneficiaries.

Difficulty characteristic of this level is encountered in planning and establishing the long-range goals of this program, objectives, and measurement criteria.

Consequently, the letter transmitting this decision to the agency requests that it correct the position description wherever it is inconsistent with our findings.

## **Analysis and findings**

### **Series and Title Determination**

The appellant's principal duties require specialized knowledge characteristic of the Accounting and Budget, GS-500, occupational group (which includes accounting, budget administration, related financial management, or similar work). The work does not demand professional knowledge (e.g., of accounting) and matches no particular occupational series within the GS-500 group (e.g., Budget Analysis or Financial Management). Finance and accounting related positions for which no specific GS-500 series is appropriate are classified to the Financial Administration and Program, GS-501, series, which covers work, like the appellant's, involving analytical, forecasting, and interpretive functions associated with the management and control of resources or funds, tracking and control of funds for special programs, or similar work. The GS-501 series appropriately reflects the analytical and fiscal nature of the appellant's principal duties.

Largely absent from the position are assignments concerning the general effectiveness, productivity, and efficiency studies that typically differentiate Management and Program Analysis, GS-343, work from specialized analytical work, such as budget and financial analysis. While some GS-343 positions require, like the appellant's position, an understanding of budgetary and financial management principles and techniques, they all involve, unlike the appellant's position, studies of organizational effectiveness and efficiency, assessments of program development and execution, or similar work.

Analysts conducting such studies might focus, for example, on employee or organizational efficiency and productivity or a service's organization, staffing, work methods, and procedures. They might analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of line program operations in meeting established goals and objectives. Though the appellant provides reports that might be used along with other information and data in such studies, he does not conduct such broad and general studies. Instead, he employs knowledge of cost, budget, and financial analysis to aid managers in obtaining and understanding the useful measures and comparisons that DSS can produce.

The GS-501 series has no prescribed position titles. Agencies may designate the official title of positions in such cases, consistent with instructions on title construction appearing in the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*, Section III, H, 2.

## **Grade Determination**

Because the GS-501 series has no grading criteria of its own, the grade level determination must be made by comparison with a standard for a closely related kind of work, i.e., involving analogous knowledge and skills.

The Budget Analysis Series, GS-560, standard addresses work in the same occupational family as the appellant's position. It provides grade level criteria for evaluating two-grade interval work in a fiscal environment closely related to the appellant's. Though not a perfect match, it is one of the few standards addressing non-professional fiscal work and the specialized knowledge requirements fiscal work demands. These specialized requirements are not contemplated, for example, in general standards like the Administrative Analysis Grade Evaluation Guide, which is unsuitable for evaluating most of the appellant's work. For this reason, the guide specifically excludes:

*Positions involving financial or other specialized administrative duties and responsibilities which are more thoroughly covered by criteria in specific occupational standards (e.g., Financial Management Series, GS-505; the Accounting Series, GS-510; the Auditing Series, GS-511; or the Budget Analysis Series, GS-560). Such positions should be evaluated through reference to the appropriate subject-matter standard.*

The appellant's principal duties are analogous to that of GS-560 analysts who advise management on effective and efficient means for acquiring and using funds to support agency programs and activities. The GS-560 grading criteria address such work along with other specialized work, similar to the appellant's, that concerns the accuracy, validity, and technical treatment of fiscal data in forms, schedules, and reports.

The agency should exercise its first level classification authority to determine the appropriate grade of the position by applying the GS-560 grading criteria. Subsequently, if the appellant believes his work warrants more credit than his agency allows, he may pursue his appeal by specifying each of the grading factors he believes were given insufficient credit and the reasons his work meets all of the GS-560 criteria for higher credit.

## **DECISION**

The proper occupational classification of the position is the Financial Administration and Program, GS-501, series. Titling of the position is at discretion of the agency. The agency should exercise its first level classification authority to determine the appropriate grade by applying the GS-560 grading criteria.