

U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Division for Human Capital Leadership & Merit System Accountability  
Classification Appeals Program

Atlanta Field Services Group  
75 Spring Street, SW., Suite 1018  
Atlanta, GA 30303-3109

**Classification Appeal Decision**  
**Under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code**

**Appellant:** [appellant]

**Agency classification:** Budget and Financial Technician,  
GS-503-6

**Organization:** Office of the [name]  
[name] Service  
Veterans Affairs Medical Center  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
[location]

**OPM decision:** Facility Services Assistant (OA)  
GS-1603-6

**OPM decision number:** C-1603-06-01

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Marta Brito Pérez  
Associate Director  
Human Capital Leadership  
and Merit System Accountability

September 17, 2004

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 human resources office must submit a compliance report containing the corrected position description and a Standard Form 50 showing the personnel action taken. Since position descriptions must meet the standard of adequacy in the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*, section III.E, the appellant's position description must also be revised, as discussed in this decision. The report must be submitted within 30 days from the effective date of the personnel action.

**Decision sent to:**

[appellant]  
[address]  
[location]

[name]  
Human Resources Manager  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Network Business Office, VISN [#]  
[address]  
[address]  
[location]

Office of Human Resources Management (054B)  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW.  
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Deputy Assistant Secretary for  
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## **Introduction**

On April 8, 2004, the Atlanta Field Services Group of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a classification appeal from [name]. She is employed as a Budget and Financial Technician, GS-503-6, in the Office of the [name], [name] Service, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Department of Veterans Affairs, [location]. The appellant requests that her position be reclassified as a Program Assistant, GS-303-7. We received the complete appeal administrative report from the agency on April 20, 2004. The appeal has been accepted and processed under section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

Both the appellant and her supervisor certified the accuracy of the position description, number [#]. In reaching our classification decision, we have carefully reviewed all information furnished by the appellant and the agency, including her official position description and information obtained from a telephone audit of the appellant's position. We also interviewed the appellant's official supervisor, the Chief of the [name] Service's [name] Branch, [name] Department, and the Facility Management Executive, Chief of the [name] Service, for whom she also provides support.

## **General issues**

The appellant provided position information that she believes was not considered in the agency's review and evaluation of her position. In adjudicating this appeal, our only concern is to make our own independent decision on the proper classification of the appellant's position. By law, we must classify positions solely by comparing their current duties and responsibilities to OPM standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). Therefore, we have considered the appellant's statements only insofar as they are relevant to making that comparison.

## **Position information**

A position description is the official record of the major duties and responsibilities assigned to a position by a responsible management official; i.e., a person with authority to assign work to a position. A position is the duties and responsibilities that make up the work performed by an employee. Classification appeal regulations permit OPM to investigate or audit a position and decide an appeal on the basis of the duties assigned by management and performed by the employee. We classify a real operating position, and not simply the position description.

Our fact finding revealed that the appellant's official position description overstates the duties and responsibilities assigned to and performed by the appellant, particularly with regard to the nature of the knowledge required by the position and the duties and responsibilities associated with the appellant's budget support function. The position description includes budget duties and responsibilities typically found at higher budget levels within the medical center and agency. For example, the position description indicates that the incumbent manages 14 fund control points and performs statistical analysis of expenditures. It indicates that this requires an in-depth or broad knowledge of budget management regulations and performance, maintenance of complex budget transactions, reconciliation of accounts in accounting systems, complications

due to non-standardized transactions and transactions that are interrelated with other systems, resolution of problems referred from lower levels, etc.

The appellant's position has more limited authority for funds management and the work does not require in-depth statistical analysis of complex budget transactions, reconciliation of accounts in accounting systems, etc., as indicated in the position description. The work actually involves the entry of budget data into the service line's automated records and reconciliation of accounts. This funds control function also includes verification of accuracy of all the service line's vouchers, invoices and other transactions and review of data entered into the central accounting system by other medical center offices to reconcile fund control point accounts. The work requires knowledge of standardized regulations, requirements, procedures, and operations related to the transactions processed, knowledge of the data bases associated with service line accounts sufficient to enter data and maintain accounts, and an understanding of the agency's budget process sufficient to understand error reports and take corrective actions.

Our fact finding also revealed that the appellant's position requires significant knowledge of office automation systems and a fully qualified typist (40 words per minute) to type reports, memos, directives, decision papers, and correspondence. Neither the position's title nor the descriptive material reflect this requirement.

Since position descriptions must meet the standard of adequacy in the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*, the appellant's agency must revise her position description to meet that standard.

The appellant's position supports both the Office of the [name] and the Engineering Department, both within the [name] Service, which provide services to both of the medical center's sites. She provides clerical and program support for the M and O function for 50 percent of the time. The appellant oversees four Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHCO) related monitors, including faulty fire alarm system devices, nurse call systems, utility failures, the Preventive Maintenance (PM) Program, and statistical reports. She maintains and reviews data, monitors compliance with standards, and advises management on trends, status, deficiencies, etc., for these monitors. She serves as a coordination point for repair of critical utility systems to include life safety, medical air, electrical shutdowns, elevators, HVAC systems, etc., and apprises management on the status of work order requests, completion of work, and status and reporting requirements of the PM Program. She maintains contact with the medical center's JCAHCO standards review committee on requirements.

The appellant is responsible for administrative approval of work orders, based on policy and procedural requirements, and work scheduling. She monitors status and material and labor costs of M and O projects. She identifies impact of work projects on medical center offices and services and coordinates with them to identify potential problems associated with repair work, particularly those involving patient care. The appellant performs "in house" diagnosis on requests for repairs by determining if problems relate to actual equipment malfunction or user error, e.g., incorrect nurse call button or fire alarm usage, extent of the problem and probable trade skills required, specific repair location, and other offices that may be impacted by the problem or repair activities, e.g., power or elevator outages. She maintains equipment records,

initiates and tracks PM random sample reviews, and administratively tracks missing equipment. She reviews repair and cost records of office and maintenance equipment, recommends replacement of office equipment, and provides the administrative input for consideration of maintenance equipment replacement. The appellant develops and maintains materials for and provides training to medical center staff on processing work order requests.

The appellant performs budget support and related purchasing and transaction processing duties for 50 percent of the time. She enters allocated funds into the service line's fund control points (materials and supply orders, support service vehicles, transportation, interior design, support service utilities, hazardous wastes, etc.). The appellant uses the database to track allotments, transfers, obligations, and other actions and the availability of funds for operating expenses. She prepares and submits monthly obligation vouchers for utilities, vehicle rental, and recurring contracts. She receives, verifies, and processes all invoices for certification and review by medical center accounting and acquisition offices. The appellant reconciles accounts and prepares monthly, quarterly, and annual budget estimates based on historical and current data. She purchases a broad range of goods and services using three different cards, each with a \$25,000 limit. She also receives purchase requests from the service line's employees, contacts the appropriate vendor, and completes and processes purchase requests. The appellant resolves billing discrepancies by contacting the vendor or contractor.

The appellant receives calls and responds to general inquiries and other requests for information. She prepares a variety of administrative and M and O activity reports, notes trends in maintenance and spending activities, participates in planning meetings and records minutes, and types reports, memos, directives, decision papers, and correspondence from rough draft into final form. The appellant establishes and maintains files and records, including the PM Program data and daily work order activity for each shop and trade, and maintains PM manuals.

The appellant's supervisors provide general instructions on initial or changed assignments. The appellant works independently on standard and repetitive assignments and uses initiative and judgment to accomplish changing work. She resolves problems of a routine and non-routine nature. She is expected to use good judgment and rely on experience to resolve problems requiring deviation from established O and M methods and procedures. The supervisors rely on her judgment and understanding of situations in most instances.

The appellant's position description and other material of record furnish much more information about her duties and responsibilities and how they are performed and we incorporate it into this decision.

### **Series, title, and standard determination**

The agency classified the appellant's position in the Financial Clerical and Technician Series, GS-503, and titled it Budget and Financial Technician. The appellant requests classification of her position in the Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistance Series, GS-303.

The GS-503 series includes positions performing clerical or technician work in support of accounting, auditing, budgeting, or financial management functions when no other established

series in the Accounting and Budget Group, GS-500, is appropriate. The work requires knowledge of the procedures and techniques involved in carrying out the work of an organization and application of procedures and practices within the framework of established guidelines.

The appellant performs budget support and related purchasing duties for 50 percent of the time, but also performs a variety of general clerical and program support duties for 50 percent of the time. These include overseeing PM Program status and reports and other JCAHCO monitors, maintaining M and O activity status, responding to and scheduling maintenance requests, etc.

The GS-303 series requested by the appellant includes processing or maintaining records or documents that represent the transactions or business of an organization, and includes positions for which no other series is appropriate. Positions that involve work for which a specific series exists must be classified in the specific series.

The duties and responsibilities of the appellant's position are characteristic of the work described in the GS-1603 series. This series includes work that involves maintaining schedules for maintenance and/or repair of physical facilities; recording and maintaining information on safety certifications and inspections; collecting and recording budget information; tracking and adjusting work orders; and coordinating contract repairs.

We find that the appellant's position is properly allocated to the GS-1603 series and titled as Facility Services Assistant, based on the series standard's titling instructions and the nature of work assigned to the position. In accordance with the Office Automation Grade Evaluation Guide (OAGEG), the parenthetical title *Office Automation (OA)* is added to the title of positions excluded from the Office Automation Clerical and Assistance Series, GS-326, when such positions require significant knowledge of office automation systems and a fully qualified typist to perform word processing duties. Therefore, the title of the appellant's position must include the parenthetical *OA* to reflect that qualification requirement.

The GS-1603 standard does not have evaluation criteria. The standard specifies that the grade for positions in this series is determined using the Grade Level Guide for Clerical and Assistance Work (the Guide) in conjunction with an appropriate one-grade interval subject-matter position classification standard. We used the Job Family Standard for Clerical and Technical Accounting and Budget Work, GS-500, to evaluate the appellant's budget related duties and responsibilities. The OAGEG is used to evaluate the position's office automation duties.

### ***Evaluation using the Guide***

The Guide provides general criteria for use in determining the grade level of nonsupervisory clerical and assistance work. The Guide describes the general characteristics of each grade level from GS-1 through GS-7 and uses two criteria for grading purposes: *Nature of assignment*, which includes the knowledge required and complexity of the work, and *Level of responsibility*, which includes supervisory controls, guidelines, and contacts.

### *Nature of assignment*

At the GS-6 level, clerical work consists of processing a wide variety of transactions for more than one type of assigned activity or functional specialization. Assignments are subject to different sets of rules and regulations. Technical or assistance work at this level requires considerable evaluative judgment within well-defined, commonly occurring aspects of an administrative program or function. The work may involve responsibility for a stream of products or continuing processes based on direct application of established policies, practices, and criteria. This work typically involves identifying issues or problems and seeking alternative solutions based on evaluation of the intent of applicable rules, regulations, and procedures. The employee usually deals with problems or situations that remain stable and resemble past problems or situations. Assignments often involve problems or situations where there is not one absolutely correct solution, only a best or most appropriate one.

The GS-6 level is met. Comparable to this level, the appellant's work involves performing a full range of standard clerical and program support assignments and resolving issues or problems using alternative solutions based on knowledge and experience of the work and the agency. It also requires processing a wide variety of transactions. For example, the appellant maintains data and processes documents for the service line's budget, purchasing, contract services, supply requests, and work orders. She knows the administrative and program requirements and procedures for assigning funding control and budget object codes, entering information into the service line's financial records, and processing transactions for further review by the medical center's accounting and acquisition offices. She compares job orders, work orders, and requests for funds with account balances and reconciles data; completes monthly obligation vouchers for rentals, utilities, etc.; oversees the JCAHCO monitors; administratively approves and schedules work orders; orders materials from the warehouse; prepares a variety of standard and non-standard reports; etc.

As at the GS-6 level, a majority of the procedures used for the appellant's work are standard, but require resolving issues, such as inconsistencies in the preventive maintenance procedures for similar equipment, discrepancies in funds balances or individual transactions, the need for shop repairs, or missing equipment. She reviews data to note trends in abuse or user error on the nurse call system, repair requests or faulty devices for the fire alarm notification system, problems in meeting PM goals, and participates in meetings to identify corrective measures. She also notes trends for management in other repair and service calls and work scheduled versus work completed. The actions taken or responses made differ in nature and sequence, such as in overseeing the JCAHCO monitors, resolving a variety of budget or purchasing problems or billing discrepancies, or diagnosing repair calls to determine the nature of the problem and need for shop repair and identification of general requirements or priority of the work. Comparable to the GS-6 level, the appellant's duties also require that she have knowledge of organizational programs and operations to provide information and act as the point of contact for administrative requirements for JCAHCO monitors, work orders, and special projects. She coordinates and identifies impact of the work, e.g., power outages, elevator usage, etc., on other medical services and offices.

The GS-7 level is not met. At this level, work consists of specialized duties with continuing responsibility for projects, questions, or problems that arise within an area of a program or functional specialty as defined by management. Assignments involve a wide variety of problems or situations common to the segment of the program or function for which the employee is responsible. Each assignment typically consists of a series of related actions or decisions prior to final completion based on the development and evaluation of information that comes from various sources. The work involves identifying and studying factors or conditions and determining their interrelationships and taking or recommending actions that are consistent with the objectives and requirements of the program or functions. The work requires knowledge and skill to recognize the dimensions of the problems involved, collect the necessary information, establish the facts, and take or recommend action based upon application or interpretation of established guidelines and practical knowledge of the operations, regulations, principles, and peculiarities of the assigned program, function, or activity.

The illustration for work at this level identifies an employee in a single function field office who performs staff support work in budgeting, purchasing, supply management, personnel administration, data processing and files management. The employee collects data for the office operating budget which includes a wide range of program functions in several appropriations and accounts subject to different regulations and procedures, reviews submissions of office staff assistants for proper format and compliance with agency budget requirements, and consolidates material into an annual office budget; sets up controls to monitor expenses during the year; and recommends budget adjustments including restructuring budget allocations or work plans to deal with changing situations such as varying costs for equipment parts, or services, and changes in the availability of funds. The employee also updates supply sources catalogues, purchases supplies, equipment, and services, and processes and tracks purchase documents. He or she also completes requests for personnel actions and writes position descriptions; conducts local recruitment and holds new employee orientation sessions; and maintains and revises an office filing system. The employee collects and retrieves program information from technical specialists and enters and retrieves information from a variety of systems. The work requires a broad understanding and detailed procedural knowledge of budget, purchasing, personnel, and information processing functions of the field office to recognize the dimensions of the problems involved and ability to take or recommend action based upon application or interpretation of established guidelines and practical knowledge of the operations, regulations, principles, and peculiarities of the assigned program, function, or activity.

Although the appellant collects and retrieves information on the service line's office budget, purchase orders, work orders, and JCAHCO monitors, she does not have continuous and final administrative responsibility, as identified at the GS-7 level, to manage these functions. The appellant's supervisors and medical center accounting and acquisition staff analyze and make decisions on budget, purchase, and contracting transactions. Additionally, the appellant's work relates to an organization substantially more limited in administrative complexity than illustrated at the GS-7 grade level. The appellant's tracking of information and identification and or resolution of problems relating to budget and procedural transactions and requirements do not involve the more demanding problems, questions, and issues and their greater analytical demands found at the GS-7 grade level. The appellant's assignments are primarily of a standard and routine nature involving recurring problems such as resolving billing discrepancies and



entering data into the 14 fund control points or comparing work activities to JCAHCO requirements. Assignments are typically accomplished through the execution of a series of related steps, processes and methods. Some of these are readily available and identifiable and others require selecting a course of action from a number of possibilities. The record shows that the appellant's work requires subject-matter knowledge of the organizations' programs and operations, but not the depth of knowledge of an organization's rules, procedures, or practices typical of the GS-7 level.

This factor is credited at the GS-6 level.

#### *Level of responsibility*

At the GS-6 level, the employee performing clerical work is recognized as an authority on processing transactions or completing assignments within a complicated framework of established procedures and guidelines, often when there are no clear precedents, and is regarded as an expert source of information on regulatory requirements for the various transactions. The employee adapts and applies numerous and varied guidelines. An employee performing technical or assistance work receives assistance with interpretation of policy from the supervisor. Completed work is evaluated for appropriateness and effectiveness in meeting goals. Guidelines such as regulations, instructions, evaluation criteria, and prior case or action files are available, but they are often not completely applicable to the assignment or have gaps in specificity. The employee uses judgment in interpreting and adapting guidelines for application to specific cases or problems. At this level, the employee bases decisions and recommendations on facts and conventional interpretations of guidelines rather than on theory or opinion. The employee contacts employees or managers, either within or outside the agency, to provide, receive, or develop information in order to identify problems, needs, or issues, and/or to coordinate work efforts or resolve problems.

The GS-6 level is met. The appellant exercises judgment and uses previous instructions and applicable procedures to independently carry out her clerical assignments. Her guidelines are varied, covering several clerical and administrative support functions, and include VA policies, circulars, directives, Federal codes and manuals, pertinent JCAHCO standards, etc. The guidelines generally are applicable, but require adaptation to cover new and unusual work situations. The appellant is regarded as an expert source of information on processing transactions within the service line and, as shown by her development of course material and staff training within the center, on completing electronic work order requests. She also participates in her organization's management meetings to provide status or administrative considerations for work or projects under discussions and is a point of contact for other offices and contractors or vendors on status of actions. Her recommendations to her supervisors for purchases and transfers of funds among control points are normally accepted.

Comparable to the GS-6 level, the appellant's work is reviewed for overall technical soundness and conformance to agency policies, legal, or system requirements. Completed work is also reviewed by sampling in the quality review system and/or spot checked by the supervisor for results and conformity to established requirements and deadlines. The methods are seldom reviewed in detail. In performing her assistance work, the appellant makes decisions based on

factual information, e.g., the circumstances relative to repair or construction requests or the records relating to preventative maintenance activities or customer service complaints. As at the GS-6 level, the appellant contacts others, e.g., medical center staff, vendors and contractors, or JCAHCO staff, in order to identify problems, needs or issues, or to coordinate work efforts or resolve problems.

At the GS-7 level, the supervisor makes assignments in terms of objectives, priorities, and deadlines. The employee independently completes assignments in accordance with accepted practices, resolving most conflicts that arise. Completed work is evaluated for appropriateness and conformance to policy. Guidelines for the work are more complex than at the next lower grade because the employee encounters a wider variety of problems and situations that require choosing alternative responses. Guides, such as regulations, policy statements, and precedent cases, tend to be general and descriptive of intent, but do not specifically cover all aspects of the assignments. Guidelines apply less to specific actions and more to the operational characteristics and procedural requirements of the program or function. The employee must use significant judgment and interpretation to apply the guides to specific cases and adapt or improvise procedures to accommodate unusual or one-of-a-kind situations. The contacts and purpose of contacts are usually the same as at the next lower level. The GS-7 employee, however, serves as a central point of contact to provide authoritative explanations of requirements, regulations, and procedures and to resolve operational problems or disagreements affecting assigned areas.

The GS-7 level is not met. Unlike that level, the appellant's work is reviewed for overall technical soundness in addition to conformance to policy. It is also subject to a quality review sample or spot checked by the supervisor for results and adherence to requirements and timelines. The appellant's work involves recurring processes, e.g., transaction processing, documenting, and resolution of discrepancies and problems, administrative responsibility for work orders, oversight of JCAHCO monitors, and does not vary from month to month as anticipated at the GS-7 level. The appellant also does not normally receive assignments in terms of objectives, priorities, and deadlines. Guidelines cover most aspects of assignments and do not require adaptation or improvising of procedures to accommodate unusual or one-of-a-kind situations. Although the appellant is the main point-of-contact for employees and vendors and contractors and provides assistance to organizations served, the main purpose of contacts is to exchange factual information regarding the organization and its functions rather than to provide authoritative explanations of requirements or resolve operational problems involving a complex administrative assignment typical of the GS-7 grade level.

This factor is credited at the GS-6 level.

Both *Nature of assignment* and *Level of responsibility* are evaluated at the GS-6 level. Therefore, the appellant's general clerical and assistant duties are properly evaluated at the GS-6 level.

***Evaluation using the Job Family Position Classification Standard for Clerical and Technical Accounting and Budget Work, GS-0500***

The Job Family Position Classification Standard for Clerical and Technical Accounting and Budget Work, GS-0500 is written in the Factor Evaluation System (FES) format, under which

factor levels and accompanying point values are assigned for each of the following nine factors. The total is converted to a grade level by use of the grade conversion table provided in the standard. The factor point values mark the lower end of the ranges for the indicated factor levels. For a position to warrant a given point value, it must be fully equivalent to the overall intent of the selected factor level description. If the position fails in any significant aspect to meet a particular factor level description, the point value for the next lower factor level must be assigned, unless the deficiency is balanced by an equally important aspect that meets a higher level.

The appellant disagrees with the agency's determinations for Factors 1 and 4. After careful review of the record, we concur with the crediting of Levels 3-2, 5-2, 6-2, 7-b, 8-1, and 9-1. Our analysis of the remaining factors follows.

*Factor 1- Knowledge required by the position*

This factor considers the nature and extent of information an employee must understand in order to do the work and the skills needed to apply that knowledge. The agency credited this factor at Level 1-3.

At Level 1-3, the work requires knowledge of a body of standardized regulations, requirements, procedures, and operations associated with clerical and technical duties related to the assigned budget support function. This includes knowledge of the various steps and procedures to perform a full range of budget support duties related to recurring or standardized transactions (e.g., auditing cash processing documents for completeness or verifying the availability of funds by account and obligating necessary dollar amounts) and knowledge of various budget or other financial procedures to support transactions that involve the use of different forms and the application of different procedures. It also may include knowledge of one or more automated data bases associated with a specific accounting, budget, or other financial management function sufficient to input a range of standard information or adjustments, understand recurring error reports and take corrective action, and generate a variety of standard reports. It may include knowledge of the structure and content of accounting, budget, or other financial management related documents, e.g., invoices, reports, etc., to investigate and resolve routine or recurring discrepancies, check documents for adequacy, or perform comparable actions that are covered by established procedures and knowledge of frequently used and clearly stated regulations and rules to determine if a transaction is permitted or to respond to recurring questions from agency personnel, clients, and others.

Level 1-3 is met. The appellant exercises extensive knowledge of the organization's budget in tracking expenses daily in 14 fund control points and monitoring the running balances to identify and reconcile any discrepancies. The appellant uses knowledge of operational distinctions among the various accounts. She reviews purchase orders, contracts, and other claims against obligated funds and uses this information to compile, consolidate, organize, and summarize information about the different accounts. She also uses this information to develop daily and weekly reports to management and for inclusion in annual budget estimates and a variety of one-time recurring reports that are submitted to the supervisor for approval. As at Level 1-3, the appellant's work involves standard procedures and operations associated with routine, recurring,

standardized transactions related to the organization's financial activities. The medical center's accounting and acquisition offices provide fiscal and procurement guidance and further review of processed transactions as well as entry of data into the VA financial system. The appellant's duties are similar to an illustration in Level 1-3 which describes reviewing documents such as purchase requests and invoices to verify codes and dollar amounts, comparing requests for funds with account balances, adjusting account balances to reflect expenditures and other actions, and preparing recurring reports.

At Level 1-4, work that requires an in-depth or broad knowledge of a body of accounting, budget, or other financial management regulations, practices, procedures, and policies related to specific financial management functions. This includes knowledge of various interrelated steps, conditions and procedures required to assemble, review, and maintain complex accounting, budget, or other fiscal transactions (e.g., reconciling accounts in accounting systems involving subdivision of accounts, frequent and varied adjustments to accounts, or extensive balancing and reconciling of detailed summary accounts); or to resolve problems in balancing accounts, adjusting discrepancies, developing control records, verifying the accuracy of budgetary data, adjusting dollar amounts of accounts by line item and object class, and preparing reports on the status of funds. This level also requires knowledge of various accounting, budget, or other financial regulations, laws, and requirements such as pay and leave rules and administrative rules associated with recording and tracking budgetary transactions, tax laws, entitlement rules, documentation requirements, schedules, and deductions, to ensure compliance and recommend action. It requires knowledge of extensive and diverse accounting, budget, or other financial regulations sufficient to resolve nonstandard transactions and complaints and provide advice as needed.

Level 1-4 is not met. The appellant's work does not involve accounting related activities requiring the in-depth or broad knowledge of accounting or financial management functions associated with complex accounting and budget transactions; reconciliation of accounts in systems with extensive subdivision or accounts; or nonstandard procedures, transactions, or discrepancies. Actions requiring this level of knowledge are handled by the medical center's accounting staff and offices at higher agency levels. The appellant works with accounts that are reasonably straight forward and are covered by routine procedures.

Level 1-3 is credited for 350 points.

#### *Factor 2- Supervisory controls*

This factor considers the nature and extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, the employee's responsibility, and the review of completed work. The agency credited this factor at Level 2-3.

At Level 2-2, the supervisor provides general standing instructions on recurring assignments by indicating what is to be done, applicable policies, procedures, and methods to follow, data and information required, quality and quantity of work expected, priority of assignments, and deadlines. Standing procedures may cover the steps involved in processing documents or transactions. The supervisor provides additional specific guidance and reference sources on new,

difficult assignments that are not covered by standing instructions. The employee uses his or her own initiative and also resolves recurring clerical and technical tasks without specific instructions. Some employees at this level work more independently than others, receiving little day-to-day supervision. However, their work is limited or controlled by readily applicable instructions or procedures that specifically describe how the work is done and the kind of adaptations or exceptions that can be made. Recurring assignments are reviewed through quality control procedures involving the spot checking of selected work products.

Level 2-2 is met. The appellant independently carries out her assignments which are standard and repetitive in nature, such as updating the 14 fund control points and reconciling accounts against budget transaction reports. Comparable to Level 2-2, the processes used are routine or standardized though the specific information varies based on the transaction involved. Most of the work performed is covered by specific methods and procedures and does not require supervisory input or intervention. The appellant refers instances involving deviation from established methods or procedures, new or unusual assignments, or unusual problems to the supervisor for guidance or may obtain assistance from the medical center's accounting or acquisition office staff. As at Level 2-2, completed work is reviewed in terms of technical soundness and conformance to policy and is reviewed by a quality review system sampling or spot checked by the supervisor.

At Level 2-3, the supervisor assigns work with standing instructions on objectives, priorities, and deadlines and provides guidance for unusually involved situations. The supervisor may assign work according to a standardized control system and provide standard general instructions about timeliness, objectives and relative priorities for doing the work. The employee independently processes the most difficult procedural or technical tasks or actions and handles problems and deviations in accordance with instructions, policies, previous training, or accepted practices. Completed work is evaluated for overall technical soundness and conformance to agency policies, legal, or system requirements.

Level 2-3 is not met. The appellant does not independently process difficult procedural or technical tasks or resolve problems of the complexity envisioned at this level. The work is recurring and standardized and established instructions or methods are generally available. Though the appellant works independently in accomplishing day-to-day work, this involves performing familiar assignments according to previous instructions and standard procedures. The appellant is not authorized to independently deviate from standard budget methods and practices and is required to notify the supervisor of problems, such as low fund accounts.

Level 2-2 is credited for 125 points

#### *Factor 4, Complexity*

This factor covers the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of tasks, processes, or methods involved in the work performed, the difficulty involved in what needs to be done, and the originality involved in performing the work. The agency credited this factor at Level 4-2.

At Level 4-2, the work involves performing related procedural tasks in processing accounting, budget, and other financial management transactions. For example, processing a transaction may involve verifying codes and other information; reconciling balances; using standard formulas to calculate and/or verify calculations; assembling appropriate forms and reports; entering the data into automated file systems; and answering routine procedural inquiries. The employee makes decisions and corrects errors based on review or knowledge of similar cases or samples, or by selecting from among other clearly recognizable alternatives. The employee takes action using established instructions, practices, or precedents for processing of accounting or budget documents.

At Level 4-3, the work involves performing various accounting, budget, or financial management support related duties or assignments that use different and unrelated processes, procedures, or methods. At this level, the employee determines what action to take by identifying the nature of the problem, question, or issue, and determining the need for and obtaining additional information through oral or written contacts or by reviewing regulations and manuals. The employee may have to consider previous actions and understand how these actions differ from or are similar to the issue at hand before deciding on an approach. For example, employees use different established procedures to review and reconcile various financial documents and records; resolve a variety of problems through coordination with vendors or employees; and review and reconcile various types of transactions involving multiple funds or a number of different control accounts or contacts.

Level 4-3 is met. The appellant's work involves 14 fund control point accounts in two different appropriations. The procedures for maintaining the accounts are standardized and similar, but the appellant uses varying and unrelated processes, procedures and methods in performing budget support functions. She makes purchases, computes monthly utility expenditures using local rate structures, reviews contracting requirements to ensure proper billing and payment if processed, reviews invoices and vouchers for completeness and accuracy of all information, reconciles these transactions with data in the agency's financial system as necessary, and develops budget estimates using historical and other data. Comparable to Level 4-3, the appellant verifies factual information or makes financial determinations based on issues involved in each situation. She decides what needs to be done by identifying the nature of a problem or information or data required for a report and obtaining it from service line departments, vendors, contractors, and medical center staff support offices. This may require contacting vendors or contractors or cross checking accounts covering an entire year.

Level 4-3 is credited for 150 points.

#### *Summary*

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Points</i>
1. Knowledge required by the position	1-3	350
2. Supervisory controls	2-2	125
3. Guidelines	3-2	125
4. Complexity	4-3	150
5. Scope and effect	5-2	75

6. & 7. Personal contacts/Purpose of contacts	2-b	75
8. Physical demands	8-1	5
9. Work environment	9-1	<u>5</u>
<i>Total Points</i>		910

The total of 910 points falls within the GS-5 range (855-1100) on the grade conversion table provided in the standard.

### ***Evaluation using the OAGEG***

The appellant's OA duties are evaluated using the OAGEG. Her OA duties however, cannot be graded higher than her clerical and assistance duties since they do not routinely involve a wide variety of nonstandard automation problems or assignments requiring knowledge of *advanced* functions of more than one type of software, e.g., developing methods for automating complex administrative reports, including the detailed functional procedures needed to automate the data. The appellant uses a variety of standard software functions, resulting in evaluation of her OA work at a lower grade than the GS-303 work. Therefore, her OA work does not impact the final grade level work of the position.

### ***Summary***

The general clerical and assistance duties are evaluated at the GS-6 level. The budget duties are evaluated at the GS-5 level. The office automation duties do not affect the overall worth of the position.

### **Decision**

Based on mixed grade principles, the appellant's position is classified as Facility Services Assistant (OA), GS-1603-06.