

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

San Francisco Oversight Division
120 Howard Street, Room 760
San Francisco, CA 94105

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

Appellant: [appellant's name]

Agency classification: Research Program Coordinator
GS-303-07

Organization: [appellant's installation]
Department of the Air Force

OPM decision: GS-303-07
(Title at agency discretion)

OPM decision number: C-0303-07-03

Carlos A. Torrico
Classification Appeals Officer

1/20/99
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's name & address]

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Introduction

On November 18, 1997, the San Francisco Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) received a classification appeal from [the appellant]. Her position is currently classified as Research Protocol Coordinator, GS-303-7. However, [the appellant] believes that the position should be classified at the GS-9 grade level. The appellant works in the [the appellant's installation] Department of the Air Force. We have accepted and decided her appeal under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

General issues

This appeal decision is based on a careful review of all information submitted by the appellant and her agency, as well as telephone interviews with the appellant and her immediate supervisor. Both the appellant and her immediate supervisor have certified to the accuracy of the appellant's official position description (number 8-05998-0). The appellant makes various statements about her agency and its evaluation of her position. In addition, she believes that her position description (PD) compares favorably with GS-9 positions descriptions at other medical centers and has submitted copies of one Air Force and two Army position descriptions. In adjudicating this appeal, our only concern is to make our own independent decision on the proper classification of her position. By law, we must make that decision and classify positions solely by comparing their current duties and responsibilities to OPM standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). Since comparison to standards is the exclusive method for classifying positions, we cannot compare the appellant's position to others as a basis for deciding her appeal, and have considered her statements only insofar as they are relevant to making that comparison.

Position information

The appellant is the chief of the [the appellant's immediate unit] and has occupied the position for approximately ten years. Her unit is one of three; the other two are Research and Development and Veterinary Research. All unit chiefs report directly to the [the appellant's supervisor] Chief (currently a military position - Colonel). The [the appellant's immediate unit] consists of the Chief and four subordinates. The four subordinates are all active military Air Force staff sergeants operating in technician capacities. The work of the unit includes two programs: clinical investigation protocols and gifts and grants. The protocol work involves receiving and reviewing submitted human and animal use protocols to assess compliance with Federal, Department of Defense (DoD), or Air Force (AF) guidance regarding ethical, procedural, and documentary requirements. The unit also reviews and advises the entire medical center on all aspects of directives, policies, regulations and procedures related to planning, approval, conduct, and acceptance of gifts and grants to the medical center.

The appellant's PD, results of our interviews, and other material of record furnish much more information about her duties and responsibilities and how they are carried out.

Series , title, and standard determination

The appellant believes that her position is more administrative and analytical, and may require medical systems specialized knowledges. Consequently, we reviewed both the Management and Program Analysis Series, GS-343, and the Health System Specialist Series, GS-671, to determine whether either of these series were appropriate to the appellant's position.

The Management and Program Analysis Series, GS-343, includes positions which primarily serve as analysts and advisors to management on the evaluation of the effectiveness of government programs and operations or the productivity and efficiency of the management of Federal agencies or both. This series requires knowledge of: the substantive nature of agency programs and activities; agency missions, policies, and objectives; management principles and processes; and the analytical and evaluative methods and techniques for assessing program development or execution and improving organizational effectiveness and efficiency. The work requires skill in: application of fact-finding and investigative techniques; oral and written communications; and development of presentations and reports. This work is typically performed in a staff capacity in that the results of the work support the accomplishment of the principal mission or line program(s) of the agency. Since the results of the work support accomplishment of the overall programs and mission of an agency, such positions are in fact performing staff work for the agency.

The appellant serves as an advisor on the gifts and grants program and as the chief of the protocol management unit. Her advisory work involves application of her expertise on the policies, guidelines, and procedures of the two programs. The incumbent's tenure in the position has made her the expert in both programs, but unlike positions in the GS-343 series, her duties do not require her to analyze or use evaluative methods and techniques to assess program development or execution. There is also no requirement to develop analytical presentations or reports on the management of the programs. When the appellant's supervisor was queried regarding the gathering of statistics for analysis of various projects within the program, he stated that the epidemiologist was responsible for gathering and maintaining any statistics on the program.

Positions classified in the Health System Specialist Series, GS-671, provide support to health care management officials by analyzing, evaluating, advising on and/or coordinating health care delivery systems and operations. These positions require a high degree of analytical ability, and specialized knowledge of the basic principles and practices related to management of health care delivery systems. Qualifications for this type of position include: knowledge of missions, organizations, programs, and requirements of health care delivery systems in general and in the country at large; knowledge of unique characteristics of the specific health care delivery system serviced (e.g., facility resources and programs, medical school affiliations and the role of organization of professional societies and volunteer groups); familiarity with regulations and standards of various regulatory and credentialing groups and ability to reconcile contradictory requirements in preparing staff recommendations and/or in coordinating clinical and administrative services; familiarity with government-wide, agency, and facility systems and requirements in various administrative areas such as budget, personnel, and procurement; recognition of the different functions and motivations of

various employees and groups in the health care delivery system and ability to communicate effectively with each in order to gather information, present recommendations, and coordinate services; and, ability to analyze problems and present both written and oral recommendations taking into full consideration the wide range of factors and requirements which affect the management of the health care delivery system.

The appellant's position provides advisory services on the clinical investigations protocol and gifts and grants programs. However, unlike positions in the GS-671 series, it does not require a high degree of analytical ability nor specialized knowledge of the basic principles and practices related to management of health care delivery systems as described above in the qualifications for the GS-671 series. The appellant's advisory services consist of her knowledge of the policies, regulations, directives, guidelines, processes and procedures involved with the two programs within the unit and not with the function and processes of a health care delivery system.

The appellant's work is best assigned to the Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-303. Positions in that series perform or supervise clerical, assistant, or technician work for which no other series is appropriate. The work requires a knowledge of procedures and techniques involved in carrying out the work of an organization and involves application of procedures and practices within the framework of established guidelines. The classification standard for the GS-303 series (dated January 1979) contains no grading criteria. However, since the appellant's clerical and technician duties make up 75% of her work, we have selected the Grade Level Guide for Clerical and Assistance work (dated June 1989) to grade that portion of the position. This guide covers the work of processing transactions and performing various office support and miscellaneous clerical and assistance duties within a framework of procedures, precedents, or instructions. Clerical work involves preparing, receiving, reviewing, and verifying documents; maintaining office records; locating and compiling data or information from files; compiling information for reports; keeping a calendar and informing other of deadlines and other important dates; and similar clerical support work within an organization. Assistance work (similar to the appellant's) involves performing technical work to support the administration or operation of the programs of an organizational unit. This work requires a working knowledge of the work processes and procedures of an administrative field and the mission and operational requirements of the unit.

This position oversees the operation of two programs: the gifts and grants program and the clinical investigation protocols program. This assistance work requires extensive knowledge of the policies, directives, guidelines, processes and procedures of both programs in order to determine that gifts, grants, and research protocols comply with existing guidelines. Once a protocol is submitted, it is reviewed for correct format, completeness of forms, accuracy of supplied data, and compliance with appropriate policies and guidelines. This position monitors the procedures and processes used to receive, review, distribute, or reject gifts, grants, or proposals. In the grants capacity, the responsibility involves the review of submitted protocols, determining if the requests for grant monies is justified according to the guidelines, and determining the amount of monies to be allocated to the study. Depending upon whether the gifts are monetary, supplies, or equipment, different

procedures apply to acceptance and distribution. In addition, the appellant reviews guidelines and applies them to the specific situation.

The appellant also supervises four military positions at the staff sergeant level. This supervisory work is performed 25% of the time and meets the requirements for application of the General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG), dated April 1998. Therefore, the appellant's supervisory responsibilities are evaluated by application of the GSSG.

This position is best graded by application of the Grade Level Guide for Clerical and Assistance Work and the GSSG.

As discussed on page 4 of the GS-303 standard, there are no titles specified for positions in this series. In such cases the agency may select an appropriate title in accordance with the titling instructions contained in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards. However, as noted in the GSSG, the word "Supervisory" is required as a prefix to any title selected.

Grade determination

Evaluation of Supervisory Duties

The GSSG employs a factor-point evaluation method that assesses six factors common to all supervisory positions. To grade a position, each factor is evaluated by comparing the position to the factor level definitions for that factor and crediting the points designated for the highest factor level which is met in accordance with the instructions specified to the factor being evaluated. The total points accumulated under all factors are then converted to a grade by using the point-to-grade conversion chart in the GSSG. Each factor is evaluated as follows for the appellant's position:

Factor 1, Program Scope and Effect - Level 1-1 - 175 points

This factor addresses the general complexity, breadth, and impact of the program areas and work directed, including the organizational and geographic coverage. It also assesses the impact of the work both within and outside the immediate organization. To credit a particular factor level, the criteria for both Scope and Effect must be met.

a. Scope - This element addresses the general complexity and breadth of (a) the program or program segment directed; and (b) the work directed, the products produced, or the services delivered.

The appellant's position meets Factor Level 1-1 (page 13) where the scope of work is procedural, routine, and typically provides services or products to specific persons or small, local organizations. The appellant's unit encompasses two programs: the protocol management and the gifts and grants programs. Work directed involves a combination of procedural and technical tasks, providing services to specific persons or small local units.

The appellant's programs do not meet Level 1-2 (page 13) for scope where the function or services support *most* of the activities comprising a typical agency field office, an area office, a small to medium military installation, or comparable activities within agency program segments. The [the appellant's immediate unit] is one of three units which make up the [the appellant's branch]. The [appellant's branch] is one of six organizational segments in the medical squadron. The medical center consists of four squadrons.

b. Effect - This element addresses the impact of the work, the products, and/or the programs described under "Scope" on the mission, and programs of the customer(s), the activity, other activities in or out of the government, the agency, other agencies, the general public, or others.

The appellant's position meets Level 1-1 (page 13) for effect. Like that level for the protocol management and the gifts and grants programs, the work directed affects and facilitates the work of others in efficiently and effectively carrying out the activities of the two programs of her immediate organizational unit. Like this level, the unit responds to specific requests from others for protocol data, and for information on the receipt of gifts, and distribution and tracking of funds.

This position does not meet Level 1-2 (page 13) for effect where services or products support and significantly affect installation level, area office level, or field office operations and objectives; or provide services to a moderate, local or limited population of clients or users comparable to a major portion of a small city or rural county.

In summary, we find that both Scope and Effect are evaluated at Level 1-1. Thus the correct overall evaluation of Factor 1 is 1-1 and 175 points are assigned.

Factor 2, Organizational Setting - Level 2-1 - 100 points

This factor considers the organizational situation of the supervisory position in relation to higher level management.

The appellant's position meets Level 2-1 (page 18) where the position is accountable to a position that is two or more levels below the first SES, flag, or general officer, equivalent or higher level position in the direct supervisory chain. The appellant is subordinate to a colonel who is the chief of the [appellant's branch]. The chief, [the appellant's branch] is supervised by the Chief of the Medical Support Squadron. The Chief of the Medical Support Squadron answers to the Commander of the Medical Center who is a flag officer.

Factor 2 is assigned Level 2-1 and 100 points are credited.

Factor 3, Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised - Level 3-2 - 450 points

This factor covers the delegated supervisory and managerial authorities which are exercised on a recurring basis. To be credited with a level under this factor, a position must meet the authorities and responsibilities to the extent described for the specific level.

In order to meet Level 3-2 (pages 18-20), a position must meet any one of the conditions described in paragraphs a, b, or c under Factor Level 3-2. This position meets Level 3-2c. Supervisors at that level must carry out at least three of the first four, and a total of six or more of the 10 responsibilities listed on pages 19-20 of the GSSG. The appellant meets all ten of the responsibilities. For example, she meets numbers 1 and 3 in that she plans work to be accomplished by subordinates, setting and adjusting short-term priorities, and evaluates the work performance of subordinates.

In order to fully meet Factor Level 3-3 (pages 20-21) a position must meet the conditions described in either paragraph a or b under this factor level. The appellant's position does not meet level 3-3a because it does not have the managerial authority to set a series of annual, multi-year, or similar types of long-range work plans and schedules for in-service or contracted work. This position does not have lower or subordinate units that it oversees, and it is not closely involved with high level program officials (such as agency level staff personnel) in the development of overall goals and objectives for assigned staff functions, programs or program segments. This position does not meet any of the criteria for assignment of Level 3-3a.

To meet Level 3-3b, a position must meet a minimum of eight of the fifteen authorities or responsibilities listed on pages 20-21 of the GSSG. Based on our review we find that the appellant's position exercises none of the 15 responsibilities. For example, her position does not meet elements 1,3,5,6, and 8 as those elements involve subordinate supervisors. The position does not meet element 4 as neither program in the unit has significant annual resources equating to multimillion dollar levels of funding. It does not meet authorities 10,11, and 13 because the appellant is not delegated authority to approve serious disciplinary actions, make decisions on costly or controversial training for employees, or approve expenses comparable to within-grade increases, extensive overtime, and employee travel. Element 12 does not apply because there is no contracted work in the unit.

Factor 3 is assigned Level 3-2 and 450 points are credited.

Factor 4, Personal Contacts - Levels 4A-1, 25 points/4B-1, 30 points

This is a two part factor which assesses the nature and purpose of personal contacts related to supervisory and managerial responsibilities. The nature of contacts, credited under Subfactor 4A, and the purpose of those contacts, credited under Subfactor 4B, must be based on the same contacts.

Subfactor 4A - Nature of Contacts

Factor 4A covers the organizational relationships, authority or influence level, setting, and difficulty of preparation associated with making personal contacts involved in supervisory and managerial work. To be credited, the level of contacts must contribute to the successful performance of the work, be a recurring requirement, have a demonstrable impact on the difficulty and responsibility of the position, and require direct contact.

The appellant's position meets Subfactor Level 4A-1 (pages 22-23) where contacts are with subordinates within the organizational unit supervised, with peers who supervise comparable units within the larger organization, and/or with the staff of administrative and other support activities when the persons contacted are within the same organization as the supervisor. These contacts are typically informal and occur in person at the work place of those contacted, in routine meetings, or by telephone.

This position does not meet Subfactor Level 4A-2 (page 24) where frequent contacts are made with members of the business community or the general public; higher ranking managers, supervisors, leaders and staff of program, administrative, and other work units and activities throughout the field activity, installation, command or major organizational level of the agency; case workers in congressional district offices; technical or operating level employees of State and local governments; and reporters for local and other limited media outlets.

This subfactor is evaluated at Level 4A-1 and 25 points are credited.

Subfactor 4B - Purpose of Contacts

This subfactor covers the purpose of the personal contacts credited in Subfactor 4B, including the advisory, representational, negotiating, and commitment making responsibilities related to supervision and management.

The appellant's position meets Subfactor Level 4B-1 (page 26) where the purpose of the contacts is to discuss work efforts for providing services; to exchange factual information about work operations and personnel management matters; and to provide training, advice, and guidance to subordinates.

This position does not meet Subfactor Level 4B-2 (page 26). Unlike that level, she does not plan and coordinate the work directed with that of others outside the subordinate organization, and she is not required to resolve differences of opinion among managers, supervisors, leaders, employees, contractors or others.

This subfactor is evaluated at Level 4B-1 and 30 points are credited.

Factor 5, Difficulty of Typical Work Directed - Level 5-3 - 340 points

This factor measures the difficulty and complexity of the basic work most typical of the organization directed.

The appellant supervises four military positions which provide technical support services for her programs. We have reviewed these positions and have found that they perform a combination of miscellaneous clerical and assistance support work. By application of the Grade Level Guide for Clerical and Assistance Work, we have determined that these military positions perform work comparable to the GS-5 level. Our fact-finding revealed that they function at that grade level for 100% of their work time. Therefore, by application of the chart on page 28 of the GSSG, when the highest level of base work is GS-5 or 6, Factor Level 5-3 is assigned and 340 points credited to the position.

Factor 6, Other Conditions - Level 6-1 - 310 points

This factor measures the extent to which various conditions contribute to the difficulty and complexity of carrying out supervisory duties, authorities, and responsibilities. To evaluate Factor 6, two steps are used. First the highest level that a position fully meets is initially credited. Then, if the level selected is either 6-1, 6-2, or 6-3, the Special Situations listed after the factor level definitions are considered. If a position meets three or more of the situations, then a single level is to be added to the level selected in Step 1. If the level selected under Step 1 is either 6-4, 6-5, or 6-6, the Special Situations may not be considered in determining whether a higher factor level is creditable.

The appellant's position meets Factor Level 6-1 (page 30) where the work supervised or overseen involves clerical, technician, or other work comparable in difficulty to the GS-6 level, or lower. The level of supervision requires coordination within the unit to ensure that timeliness, procedure, accuracy, quality and quantity standards are met.

This position does not meet Factor Level 6-2 (pages 30-31) where technician and/or support work is comparable in difficulty to GS-7 or GS-8 work, or work at the GS-4, 5, or 6 level where the supervisor has full and final technical authority as defined in the GSSG over the work. Although the appellant supervises work comparable to the GS-5 level, her duties do not require that she have full and final technical authority for all technical determinations, and unlike Level 6-2 she does not have any subordinate supervisors assigned to her unit.

Special Situations

As explained above, if the level selected is either 6-1, 6-2, or 6-3, the Special Situations listed in the GSSG (pages 34-35) after the factor levels are to be considered. There are eight special situations. As discussed below, this position does not meet any of the eight.

Variety of Work: This situation is to be credited when more than one kind of work, each kind representing a requirement for a distinctly different additional body of knowledge on the part of the supervisor, is present in the work of the unit. A “kind of work” usually will be the equivalent of a classification series. We have found that all subordinate positions in the unit would be classified under the Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-303, if they were not military. Therefore, no credit is given for this situation.

Shift Operations: This situation can be credited when the position supervises an operation carried out on at least two fully staffed shifts. This is not the case in the appellant’s position, thus no credit is given for this situation.

Fluctuating Work Force or Constantly Changing Deadlines: This situation can be credited when the workforce supervised has large fluctuations in size and these fluctuations impose on the supervisor a substantially greater responsibility for training, adjusting assignments, or maintaining a flow of work while absorbing and releasing employees. Constantly Changing Deadlines can be credited when there are frequent, abrupt, and unexpected changes in work assignments, goals, and deadlines which require the supervisor to constantly adjust operations under the pressure of continuously changing and unpredictable conditions. The [the appellant’s unit] has been a stable unit for ten years and there have been no large fluctuations in size. Subordinates are usually in their positions for three years or more. The work is also stable and predictable because the protocols are written to cover certain time frames, usually a year. Milestones are written into the protocols to measure and track tests and results according to a time frame. The work environment is not characterized by frequent, abrupt, and unexpected changes in assignments, goals, or deadlines. Gift acceptance is sporadic and infrequent and does not impact the work situation on a regular basis. No credit is given for this situation.

Physical Dispersion: This situation is credited when a substantial portion of the workload for which the supervisor is responsible is regularly carried out at one or more locations which are physically removed from the main unit, under conditions which make day-to-day supervision difficult to administer. Although some of the technical work in the appellant’s unit is carried out in a laboratory situation, this does not constitute a substantial portion of the workload. No credit is given for this situation.

Special Staffing Situations: This situation is credited when: (1) a substantial portion of the work force is regularly involved in special employment programs; or in similar situations which require involvement with employee representatives to resolve difficult or complex human resources management issues and problems; (2) requirements for counseling and motivational activities are regular and recurring; and (3) job assignments, work tasks, working conditions, and/or training must be tailored to fit the special circumstances. The appellant’s position does not meet this situation, therefore this element is not credited.

Impact of Specialized Programs: This situation is credited when supervisors are responsible for a significant technical or administrative workload in grades above the level of work credited in Factor 5, provided the grades of this work are not based upon independence of action, freedom from

supervision, or personal impact on the job. The appellant's subordinates are all working at the level credited in Factor 5, therefore no credit is awarded for this element.

Changing Technology: This situation is credited when work processes and procedures vary constantly because of the impact of changing technology, creating a requirement for extensive training and guidance of subordinate staff. The appellant's unit does not meet this situation as the technology is not constantly changing, thus it does not require extensive training and guidance over the subordinate staff. No credit is given for this situation.

Special Hazard and Safety Conditions: This situation is credited when the supervisory position is regularly made more difficult by the need to make provision for significant unsafe or hazardous conditions occurring during performance of the work of the organization. In the appellant's case, there are no special hazards or safety conditions occurring during the performance of her unit's work. No credit is given for this situation.

Summary:

By application of the GSSG we have evaluated the appellant's supervisory duties as follows:

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Points</u>
Factor 1, Program Scope and Effect	1-1	175
Factor 2, Organizational Setting	2-1	100
Factor 3, Supervisory & Managerial Authority Exercised	3-2c	450
Factor 4, Personal Contacts		
4A, Nature of Contacts	4A-1	25
4B, Purpose of Contacts	4B-1	30
Factor 5, Difficulty of Typical Work Directed	5-3	340
Factor 6, Other Conditions	6-1	<u>310</u>
		1430 points

A total of 1430 points is credited to the appellant's position. According to the point-to-grade conversion chart on page 36 of the GSSG, this total falls within the GS-7 range (1355-1600). The appellant's supervisory duties are correctly evaluated at the GS-7 level.

Evaluation of Nonsupervisory Duties

As mentioned previously, the standard for the Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-303, has no grading criteria. Therefore the Grade Level Guide for Clerical and Assistance Work is used to grade the appellant's nonsupervisory work. The Grade Level Guide for Clerical and Assistance Work uses two factors to grade positions: (1) Nature of the Assignment and (2) Level of Responsibility.

Nature of Assignment:

At the GS-7 level (page 19), which is the highest level for this factor described in the guide, the work consists of specialized duties with continuing responsibility for projects, questions, or problems that arise within an area of a program 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. Decisions or recommendations are 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 as appropriate to the defined area of work. The employee must be concerned about taking or recommending actions that are consistent with the objectives and requirements of the program. This 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. This work also requires practical knowledge, developed through increasingly difficult, on-the-job experience dealing with the operations, regulations, principles, and peculiarities of the assigned program, function, or activity.

Like the GS-7 level, the appellant performs specialized duties including: reviewing both human and animal research protocol submittals for compliance with existing policies, regulations, directives, procedures, and assuring completeness and accuracy of all forms and consents required before they are reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). The appellant also performs as a Primary Reviewer. In that capacity she reviews a proposal and gives an oral presentation to the committee as to how the research will be conducted. Indicative of the specialized nature of her work is the fact that she is required to attend two professional conferences annually in order to keep apprised of any changes in Food and Drug Administration, National Institute of Health, and Department of Defense (DoD) policies and guidelines. In monitoring the grants and gifts program, the appellant oversees the Air Force Surgeon General's Office grant funds requested, and justified by her for the medical center. Similar to the GS-7 level, her assignments involve a series of related actions encompassing a wide variety of problems or situations which require development, identification and evaluation of information from various sources. They require recommending or initiating actions that are consistent with the objectives and requirements of the program. Illustrative assignments include : approving or disapproving a proposed research study, requesting changes and additions to proposed research, evaluating techniques to be used in reviews, determining what laboratory specimens will be necessary, etc. The appellant oversees a process to input data of each research subject into the Composite Health Care system and she initiates audits of all patient health care records on a semi-annual basis. As the grants coordinator, the appellant determines if funding requests are feasible, establishes a checkbook, and tracks and reports funding expenditures. The appellant has established data bases that track all expenditures including those from government sources, private individuals, and corporations. Similar to the GS-7 level, the preceding assignments require practical knowledge and on-the-job experience dealing with the operations, regulations, principles, and peculiarities of the assigned program and

functions. The appellant has acquired this practical knowledge through many years of experience with her assigned programs.

Level of Responsibility

At the GS-7 level (pages 19-20), which is the highest level for this factor described in the standard, the supervisor makes assignments in terms of objectives, priorities, and deadlines. The assignments are completed independently in accordance with accepted practices, resolving most conflicts that arise. Completed work is evaluated for appropriateness and conformance to policy. Guidelines at this level are complex because a wider variety of problems and situations are encountered that require choosing alternative responses. Guides such as regulations and policy statements tend to be general and descriptive of intent, but do not specifically cover all aspects of the assignments. These guidelines apply more to the operational characteristics and procedural requirements of the program or function rather than specific actions. Employees use significant judgment and interpretation in applying guides to specific cases and adapt or improvise procedures to accommodate unusual situations. At this level, the employee serves as a central point of contact to provide authoritative explanations of requirements, regulations, and procedures, and to resolve operational problems affecting assigned areas.

The appellant has many years of experience in this position. Consequently, although the supervisor may outline the overall objectives of assignments, the appellant knows what the objectives, priorities and deadlines are and operates independently. Like the GS-7 level, her completed work is evaluated on her ability to meet program objectives and comply with policies and directives. Guidelines used are complex in that there are many in number, some of which overlap. They also differ for the different programs. Thus the appellant uses judgment in interpreting, adapting, and applying guides to research protocol submittals and to various grant requests and gifts accepted by the medical center. Similar to the GS-7 level, the appellant is the central point of contact for the research protocol function and the gifts and grants program. She is the in-house expert on the policies, directives, guides, and instructions for both programs. Her supervisor and the medical center director depend on her to resolve issues and problems within her programs with little or no assistance. The appellant keeps them apprised of any controversial issues and/or situations.

Summary

We have evaluated both the appellant's supervisory and nonsupervisory duties at the GS-7 level. Therefore, this position is properly graded at the GS-7 level.

Decision

The proper series and grade for the appellant's position is GS-303-7. Assignment of an appropriate title is at the agency's discretion.