

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's name]

**Agency classification:** Restoration Technician (General)  
GS-664-9

**Organization:** [name] Clinic  
Veterans Affairs Medical Center  
[name] Center  
[name] Service Line  
Veterans Integrated Service Network [#]  
Network Business Office  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
[location]

**OPM decision:** Restoration Technician (General)  
GS-664-9

**OPM decision number:** C-0664-09-01

/s/ Virginia L. Magnuson

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Virginia L. Magnuson  
Classification Appeals Officer

April 30, 2003

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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]  
location]

[name]  
Network Human Resources Manager  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
[address]  
[address]  
[location]

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

On January 14, 2003, the Atlanta Oversight Division, now the Atlanta Field Services Group, U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), accepted an appeal from [appellant's name]. His position is currently classified as Restoration Technician (General), GS-664-9. The appellant requests that his position be reclassified as Anaplasologist Specialist, GS-301-11. He believes his duties have significantly changed or increased since the position was last evaluated. The appellant's position is located in the [name] Clinic, Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) [name] Center, [name] Service Line, Veterans Integrated Service Network [#] (VISN [#]) Network Business Office, Department of Veterans Affairs, [location]. We received a complete administrative report on February 7, 2003. The appeal has been accepted and processed under section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

In reaching our classification decision, we have carefully reviewed all information furnished by the appellant and the agency, including information obtained during on-site interviews with the appellant and his immediate supervisor.

## **General issues**

The appellant makes various statements regarding his attempts to have his agency reevaluate his position to determine the appropriate title and grade. In adjudicating his appeal, our only concern is to make our own independent decision on the proper classification of his position. By law, we must make that decision solely by comparing his current duties and responsibilities to OPM standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112).

The appellant also states that his position description is inaccurate. After carefully reviewing all the available information, including the official position description, we have concluded that the duties being performed by the appellant are adequately described for classification purposes in the assigned position description. A position description is the official record of the major duties and responsibilities assigned to a position by an official with the authority to assign work. A position is the duties and responsibilities that make up the work performed by an employee. Position classification appeal regulations permit OPM to investigate or audit a position and decide an appeal on the basis of the actual duties and responsibilities currently assigned by management and performed by the employee. An OPM appeal decision classifies a real operating position and not simply the position description. Therefore, this decision is based on the work currently assigned to and performed by the appellant and sets aside any previous agency decision.

## **Position information**

The appellant is assigned to position description number [#]. The appellant's supervisor certified the accuracy of the position description. The appellant did not certify the accuracy of the position description.

The VAMC is a 273 bed teaching hospital that provides a full range of patient care services, with state-of-the-art technology as well as education and research. Comprehensive health

care is provided through primary care, tertiary care, and long-term care in the areas of medicine, surgery, mental health, physical medicine and rehabilitation, neurology, oncology, dentistry, geriatrics, and extended care. The [location] VAMC is part of the VISN [#], which includes facilities in [states]. The appellant's position is located in the [name] Center, [name] Clinic which is responsible for providing prosthetic services for veterans residing in [states].

The appellant spends 100 percent of his time engaged in a variety of activities related to providing restoration services to veterans suffering from varying degrees of disfigurement. The work involves fabricating, fitting, or repairing a variety of prosthetic appliances used to cosmetically replace or restore ears, eyes, noses, other facial areas and body parts. The appellant estimates that 80 percent of his work involves the fabrication of artificial eyes and the 20 percent involves ear inserts, noses and orbital restorations. He takes measurements and impressions for and fabricates and fits custom-made ear inserts, artificial eyes, implants to replace bony portions of facial areas and/or facial tissue, and other body parts. The appellant determines the type and design of the prosthesis to be made, takes impressions of the affected areas, and constructs molds using wax, modeling clay, and other suitable materials. He fabricates the appropriate prosthesis and ensures that coloration and pigmentation are appropriate for the patient and does the final fitting to ensure proper fit and patient comfort and safety.

The appellant advises surgeons on the extent of tissue removal needed to produce a good restoration, consults with patients who are severely disfigured, schedules patients for appointment and assists with or makes travel and lodging arrangements when necessary. He also maintains records, generates reports indicating work performed and cost of labor and materials used for prosthetic appliances, and compiles information for required quarterly reports. He gives lectures and demonstrations on cosmetic restorations to train professional and non-professional staff members and trainees. The appellant also gives demonstrations to facility visitors to give an overview of the work the clinic performs and the processes involved.

The appellant works under the general supervision of the Restorations Technician (General), GS-664-11, who functions as the Restorations Manager and has administrative and technical responsibility for organizing and directing the day-to-day activities of the clinic. The appellant independently plans and carries out the full range of restoration assignments which frequently involve a significant degree of complexity and difficulty due to patients suffering extensive disfigurements. The appellant consults with his supervisor only on highly unusual or potentially precedent-setting cases or when encountering situations that require in-depth research.

The position description contains more information about how the position functions and we incorporate it by reference into this decision.

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

The agency classified the appellant's position in the Restoration Technician Series, GS-664, with the title Restoration Technician (General). The appellant believes that his position

should be classified in the Miscellaneous Administration and Program Series, GS-301, and titled Anaplasologist Specialist.

The primary purpose of the appellant's position is the fabrication of various prosthetic appliances used for cosmetic restorations of eyes, ears, noses and other facial areas, and body parts. The work requires knowledge of methods used in making impressions and molds, modeling, fabricating, tinting, and fitting a variety of facial and other prostheses. The work also requires skill in using a variety of small hand tools, ovens, lathes, power buffing and polishing machines, mixing acrylics and adhesives, sculpturing anatomical parts, and mixing and applying colors to simulate human tissue.

The appellant's position is covered by the GS-664 series. This series includes all classes of positions the duties of which are to advise on, supervise, or perform technical work involving the development, design, fabrication, fitting to patients, and repair of custom-made medically prescribed appliances used primarily for cosmetic and restorative purposes. The prime objective of the work is to compensate for loss or damage to various areas of the human body by restoring a normal appearance that will facilitate the patient's social and vocational rehabilitation. This objective is attained through the use of painting, sculpturing, molding, and casting techniques and working with a wide variety of materials in the fabrication of appliances which are as natural in appearance (size, form, texture, translucency, color, etc.) as the original tissues of the patient's normal feature or body member.

The appellant is not engaged in work classifiable in the GS-301 series. The GS-301 series includes positions the duties of which are to perform, supervise, or manage nonprofessional, two-grade interval work for which no other series is appropriate. The work requires analytical ability, judgment, discretion, and knowledge of a substantial body of administrative or program principles, concepts, policies, and objectives. The appellant is not engaged in comparable two-grade interval administrative work. Based on the appellant's duties and responsibilities, classification in the GS-301 series is inappropriate for this position.

The published position classification standard for the GS-664 series must be used for grade level determination in evaluating the appellant's position. There are three principal areas of restoration technician work (ear inserts, artificial eyes, and facial and body). Most restoration technicians perform work in all three areas; however, some positions may be found in which work is limited to one or two of them. Where the position involves substantial work in two or all three areas, the proper title is Restoration Technician (General). The agency has determined that this title is proper for the appellant's position and we concur.

### **Grade determination**

The GS-664 standard is written in narrative format and uses three basic classification criteria, considered together, to determine the grade level of positions from GS-7 through GS-11: *Nature and variety of work*, *Supervision received*, and *Knowledge and abilities required*.

*Nature and variety of work*

This factor refers to types of restorations worked on; type and extent of experimental and developmental work performed; responsibility for lectures, seminars, and other educational activities; responsibility for giving advice to physicians, surgeons, etc.; and responsibility for organizing and running a restoration clinic program.

At the GS-9 level, restoration technicians independently perform the full range of restoration work which, on a regular and recurring basis, includes a significant amount of work which is unusually difficult and responsible. This typically includes fabrication of prostheses to be implanted internally to replace missing bony parts of the body and fabrication of cosmetic facial restorations for extensive anatomical losses such as combined nose and orbital areas, cheek and maxillary bony areas, large orbital areas in which both tissue and bone have been lost, etc. Work at this level also includes responsibility for making preoperative recommendations to surgeons on tissue removal deemed necessary for the production of good restoration appliances and giving lectures and demonstrations on cosmetic restorations for training purposes.

The GS-9 level is met. Comparable to this level, the appellant is responsible for independently carrying out the full range of difficult and complex assignments involving cosmetic restorations of facial areas and body parts through the use of prostheses. His work primarily involves designing, fabricating, fitting, and repairing custom-made eye, ear, nose and facial, and body prostheses. These are intended to achieve a cosmetically normal appearance for veterans suffering from extensive disfigurements resulting from disease, injuries, or surgical procedures. The appellant consults with surgeons regarding the degree of tissue removal needed to enhance the restoration process. He has limited involvement in providing training to professional and non-professional staff at the facility, conducting demonstrations for visitors, and giving presentations on cosmetic restoration when participating in job fairs at local educational institutions.

At the GS-10 level, positions have full technical and administrative responsibility for planning and organizing the work of a clinic which provides all types of restoration services. The employee is responsible for developing plans and budget estimates covering the needs of the clinic, maintaining proper records, preparing activity reports, and formulating and executing local policies and practices.

The GS-10 level is not met. The appellant's supervisor has full administrative and technical responsibility for organizing, planning and directing day-to-day operations, developing operational plans and budget estimates, attending committee meetings with members of other services, and representing the clinic in the absence of his immediate supervisor. The appellant has no role in organizing or directing overall activities of the clinic.

The GS-9 level is credited.

*Supervision received*

This factor relates to the type of review given work and whether the supervision is technical or administrative in nature.

At the GS-9 level, restoration technicians work under the general supervision of a higher grade restoration technician. Only unusual and precedent-setting cases are referred to the supervisor for technical supervision and consultation.

The GS-9 level is met. The appellant works under the general supervision of the Restoration Technician (General), GS-664-11, and carries out his regular and recurring assignments without direction or guidance from him. Highly unusual or precedent-setting cases are referred to the supervisor for decisions or guidance regarding steps to be taken.

At the GS-10 level, work is carried out under the general administrative supervision of the director of professional services or the station director.

The GS-10 level is not met. The appellant does not work with this degree of independence in completing his assignments. Technical guidance, when necessary, and general supervision is provided by the higher-grade Restoration Technician (General) who has administrative and technical responsibility for the clinic's operations.

The GS-9 level is credited.

*Knowledges and abilities required*

This factor refers to knowledge of materials and techniques used for cosmetic restorations and the ability to use them; ability to give advice to physicians, surgeons, etc.; ability to carry out or conduct experimental and developmental activities; ability to give lectures and conduct seminars and other educational activities; and the ability to meet and deal with patients, their families, members of the hospital or clinic staff, and outside groups.

At the GS-9 level, performance of the work requires the ability to fabricate and fit the most difficult types of cosmetic prosthetic appliances; the ability to advise surgeons on the extent of tissue removal deemed necessary for the production of good restoration; the ability to deal effectively with patients who have suffered the most serious sorts of disfigurements; the ingenuity to independently carry out experimental and developmental work; and the ability to prepare and give lectures and demonstrations. Experimental and developmental work requires the knowledge and ability to test materials for their suitability in relation to tissue tolerance, elasticity, color life, porosity, density, etc.

The GS-9 level is met. The appellant's regular and recurring work involves unusually difficult facial restorations resulting from extensive anatomical losses. These cases typically involve significant disfiguration resulting from surgery for various forms of cancer. The appellant confers with surgeons regarding the extent of the removal of tissue and bone to ensure proper fit for the appliances he fabricates. His duties require that he deal effectively

with veterans who may be grossly disfigured, severely handicapped, or experiencing emotional problems. In addition to these contacts, the appellant's normal duties require him to deal with professional and administrative staff at other VA facilities and organizations providing services to veterans and occasionally with representatives of manufacturers of products the clinic uses. The clinic provides limited training for a small number of interns each year and the appellant assists the higher-grade technician in providing this training.

At the GS-10 level, performance of the work requires a high degree of originality, resourcefulness, ingenuity, and sound judgment to resolve the wide variety of problems encountered in directing the activities of a restoration clinic. To run a clinic effectively, the employee must be able to meet and deal with the Clinic Director or Manager, physicians, surgeons, manufacturers' representatives, community leaders, veterans groups, and foreign visitors. He/she must be adept in conducting educational activities for the clinic. This includes assigning work for training purposes, giving lectures, and conducting seminars.

The GS-10 level is not met. The appellant's supervisor has responsibility for organizing or directing the activities of the clinic or resolving associated problems. The appellant is primarily responsible for independently planning and carrying out his own assignments. His contacts generally relate to patient care and are not for the purpose of running the clinic as is typical of the GS-10 level.

The GS-9 level is credited.

All three of the classification criteria are credited at GS-9.

The appellant requests classification at the GS-11 level. A grade level represents a band or range of difficulty and higher grade levels represent increasingly greater levels of difficulty and responsibility. A position must meet a level of difficulty at one grade before being considered for classification at the next higher grade. Since the appellant's position does not meet the GS-10 level of difficulty, it cannot be considered for classification at GS-11.

### **Decision**

The appellant's position is properly classified as Restoration Technician (General), GS-664-9.