



United States
Office of Personnel Management

Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions
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Standard: [Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant, GS-0303](#)
[Clerk-Stenographer and Reporter, GS-0312](#)
[Secretary, GS-0318](#)
[Clerk-Typist, GS-0322](#)

Factor: Series selection for various clerical positions

Issue: Relationship of GS-0303 Series to GS-0312, GS-0 318 and GS-0322 Series

Identification of the Classification

An agency provided internal guidance that was inconsistent with instructions in published Office of Personnel Management standards, thereby necessitating the issuance of an Office of Personnel Management advisory opinion. The agency had indicated that placement in the GS-0303 Series is preferred for:

1. Clerk-Typist positions above GS-3 when the grade is based on the clerical work performed; and
2. Clerk-Stenographer positions above GS-4 when the grade is based on the clerical work performed.

Resolution

Concerning 1 above, the standard for the Clerk-Typist Series, GS-0322, provides an extensive discussion related to this issue. Included in the standard's guidance is the following statement:

This series includes positions involving typing combined with clerical duties except when the clerical duties (a) require specialized experience or training and (b) constitute the paramount qualification requirements for the position.

The standard summarizes the discussion by indicating that *any* position that consists of general office work combined with a requirement for a fully qualified typist is to be placed in the Clerk-Typist Series, GS-0322, unless the paramount qualification requirement is best represented by the Clerk-Stenographer and Reporter Series, GS-0312, or the Secretary Series, GS-0318.

The Office of Personnel Management's view is that general office work can, and often does, exist at the GS-4 level. Consistent with the standard, a position consisting of such GS-4 level general office clerical work in combination with a requirement for a fully qualified typist is to be placed in the Clerk-Typist Series, GS-0322, at grade GS-4, regardless of whether the typing work evaluates at GS-4 or below (unless the position belongs in the GS-0312 or GS-0318 Series).

Another issue was the proper series for a position consisting of GS-5 or GS-6 level clerical work in combination with GS-4 level or below typing work. In commenting on the draft standards for the Clerk-Typist Series, GS-0322, and the Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-0303, agencies overwhelmingly indicated that they do *not* find nonspecialized clerical work properly evaluated at grade GS-5 or above. The Office of Personnel Management's view is that positions which require a qualified typist and which also involve clerical work properly classified at the GS-5 level or above do not belong in the Clerk-Typist Series, GS-0322. Such positions should be classified to a series covering more specialized clerical work because the clerical work assigned is specialized rather than general clerical in nature.

The agency guidance was consistent with the Office of Personnel Management's view that a mixed qualified typist GS-5 level specialized clerical position should be placed in a clerical series other than GS-0322. However, the Office of Personnel Management strongly disagreed with the implication that such positions should automatically be placed in the GS-0303 Series. Such specialized clerical work must be placed in the appropriate specialized series in accordance with instructions in the GS-0303 Series standard. The decision as to the appropriate specialized series is not always an easy one. The GS-0303 Series standard discusses considerations that may be involved. Federal Personnel Manual Bulletin 511-24, June 4, 1981, provides further guidance on use of the GS-0303 Series for positions including specialized clerical work and requiring a qualified typist.

Concerning 2 above, the agency's guidance was again inconsistent with Office of Personnel Management standards. The standard for the Clerk-Stenographer and Reporter Series, GS-0312, indicates that all positions requiring the services of a fully qualified stenographer, including positions involving a combination of stenography and clerical work, are to be placed in the GS-0312 Series, except when the clerical duties both (a) require specialized experience and training and (b) constitute the paramount qualification requirement for the positions. The standard further indicates, with respect to situations involving combined stenographic/clerical work, that a stenography position should be placed in the GS-0312 Series if it includes a variety of clerical tasks more specialized than answering the telephone, filing, and distributing mail, when no one kind of specialized clerical experience or training constitutes the paramount requirement. Since

general, nonspecialized clerical work rarely, if at all, exists at the GS-5 level, positions requiring the performance of GS-4 level stenographic duties combined with clerical duties which are grade-controlling (i.e., GS-5 or above) should be classified in a specialized series rather than in the GS-0312 Series. The GS-0312 Series standard emphasizes the need for careful consideration in determining the paramount qualification requirement where specialized clerical work is involved. By no means is placement of such a position in the GS-0303 Series to be automatic. The GS-0303 Series should be used judiciously, and only after extensive job analysis.