



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: [Medical Technologist, GS-0644](#)
Factor: Exclusions
Issue: Selection of a series for classification of cytotechnology and histotechnology positions

Identification of the Classification Issue

For a number of years, some cytotechnologist and histotechnologist positions were classified in the Medical Technologist Series, GS-0644, as "professional medical technologist positions specializing in cytology or histology work." They were excluded from that series when the Office of Personnel Management published updated classification and qualification standards for medical technologist positions in 1983. The study indicated that these positions had different duties, responsibilities, and qualification requirements, and different curricula.

The current Medical Technologist classification standard excludes positions (other than medical technologists) that primarily require the application of professional knowledge and skill in an allied health field (p.4, exclusion 6). Such positions, when they are not appropriately classifiable in any other existing series, are classified in the General Health Series, GS-0601. Because the exclusion does not mention specific allied health fields, however, it may not be clear to everyone what positions are covered.

Resolution

The intent of exclusion 6 was that cytotechnologist, histotechnologist, nuclear medicine technologist, and other non-medical technologist allied health positions belong in the GS-0601 series *when performance of the work requires the application of professional knowledge and skill*. In other words, under current Office of Personnel Management standards and exclusions 3 and 6 of the Medical Technologist standard, cytotechnology and histotechnology positions should

be classified in the Pathology Technician Series, GS-0646, or, if they require the application of professional knowledge and skill, in the General Health Science Series, GS-0601. Pages 5 through 8 of the Medical Technologist standard provide a discussion of the distinguishing characteristics of professional technologist and supporting technician work.