



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

**Atlanta Oversight Division  
75 Spring Street, SW., Room 972  
Atlanta, GA 30303**

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

<b>Appellant:</b>	[Appellant]
<b>Agency classification:</b>	Housing Manager GS-1173-11
<b>Organization:</b>	U.S. Department of the Navy
<b>OPM decision:</b>	Housing Manager GS-1173-11
<b>OPM decision number:</b>	C-1173-11-03

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Kathy W. Day  
Classification Appeals Officer

9/1/99  
Date

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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]

[Human Resources Director]

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## **Introduction**

On August 4, 1999, the Atlanta Oversight Division, U. S. Office of Personnel Management, accepted an appeal for the position of Housing Manager, GS-1173-11, [organizational location, U.S. Department of the Navy]. The appellant is requesting that her position be upgraded to GS-1173-12.

The appeal has been accepted and processed under section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code. This is the final administrative decision on the classification of the position subject to discretionary review only under the limited conditions and time outlined in part 511, subpart F, of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

## **General issues**

The appellant's position was downgraded as a result of a Department of Navy consistency review. She disagrees with the agency's evaluation of factors 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 in determining the appropriate grade for her position.

To help decide the appeal, an Oversight Division representative conducted telephone interviews with the appellant's immediate supervisor on August 25, 1999, and the appellant on August 26, 1999. In reaching our classification decision, we have reviewed the audit findings and all information of record furnished by the appellant and her agency, including her official position description, [#].

## **Position information**

The appellant, her supervisor and agency have certified to the accuracy of the position description.

The appellant directs and administers the housing program for all housing under the jurisdiction and control of [installation]. The family housing program includes on-base military housing for families, as well as related utility systems, streets, roads, and grounds. Her responsibilities include administering an off-base housing referral service to locate acceptable rental housing for military personnel. She conducts housing requirements surveys; interprets, establishes, and implements local housing assignment, inventory, utilization and management policies and procedures; formulates short and long range plans for contractor-performed major and minor improvements, repairs, and maintenance; ensures the formulation and submission of budgets for housing funds; and oversees the expenditure of housing funds. The appellant also ensures that required facility inspections are conducted prior to, during, and after occupancy, and advises base officials on all matters and issues related to housing management. The appellant directly and indirectly supervises a subordinate staff of 4; however, supervisory duties take less than 25 percent of her time.

The appellant receives direction from the Public Works Officer, a Navy Commander, who sets overall objectives and establishes resources available. The supervisor and the appellant jointly

develop deadlines, scope, and the level of work to be accomplished. As the installation's technical expert on housing matters, the appellant independently plans and carries out her housing management responsibilities with minimal supervision. The results of her work are considered technically authoritative and are accepted without significant change. Review of completed work is generally in terms of feasibility, compatibility with other work, or effectiveness in meeting requirements or expected results.

### **Series Determination**

The agency placed the appellant's position in the GS-1173 series, and the appellant does not contest that determination.

The Housing Management Series, GS-1173, covers positions whose duties involve either managing or assisting in managing one or more family housing projects, billeting facilities, or other accommodations such as transient or permanent individual and family living quarters, dormitory facilities and restricted occupancy buildings including adjacent service facilities and surrounding grounds. Also included in this series are positions which administer, supervise, or perform work involved in the evaluation of housing management programs, the development of administrative procedures, and the provision of technical assistance to onsite housing management. Positions in this occupation require a variety of housing management and administrative knowledges and related practical skills and abilities in a number of housing-related activities. The appellant's work involves the management, operation and maintenance of Navy owned and controlled family housing units and associated utility systems, grounds, and streets. The appellant's position is properly placed in the GS-1173 series.

### **Title determination**

The title authorized in the GS-1173 standard for positions at GS-9 and above is *Housing Manager*.

### **Standard determination**

Housing Management Series, GS-1173, September 1981.

### **Grade determination**

Since supervisory duties account for less than 25 percent of the appellant's time, the position cannot be evaluated using the General Schedule Supervisory Guide.

The GS-1173 standard is written in the Factor Evaluation System (FES) format. Under the FES, positions are placed in grades on the basis of their duties, responsibilities, and the qualifications required as evaluated in terms of nine factors common to nonsupervisory General Schedule positions.

A point value is assigned to each factor based on a comparison of the position's duties with the factor-level descriptions in the standard. The factor point values mark the lower end of the ranges for the indicated factor levels. For a position factor 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 in the standard, the point value for the next lower factor level must be assigned, unless the deficiency is balanced by an equally important aspect which meets a higher level. The total points assigned are converted to a grade by use of the grade conversion table in the standard.

Under FES, positions which significantly exceed the highest factor level or fail to meet the lowest factor level described in a classification standard must be evaluated by reference to the Primary Standard, contained in Appendix 3 of the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards. The Primary Standard is the "standard-for-standards" for FES.

The appellant disagrees with factors 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. We have reviewed the agency determination for factors 6, 7, 8, and 9 and concur with their findings. Therefore, our evaluation will address only those factors with which the appellant disagrees.

#### Factor 1 - Knowledge Required by the Position:

This factor identifies the nature and extent of housing management concepts, principles, policies, regulations, procedures, and processes the employee must know to do acceptable work, and the nature and extent of skills required to apply the knowledges. The agency credited Level 1-7. The appellant believes that Level 1-8 should have been credited.

At Level 1-7, assignments involve the planning, cost management, scheduling and coordinating of housing program requirements with housing residents, local authorities, regulatory agencies and others, and the development of administrative procedures related to the construction, maintenance, improvement, use, and management of housing projects and facilities. The work requires a comprehensive knowledge and skill in the application of housing management principles, concepts, and methodology to a variety of difficult and complex work assignments involving the full range of housing activities including operations and maintenance, cost management and financial planning, assignments and use, annual inspections and special surveys, new construction and improvements, management-tenant relations, and referral services or furnishings management where applicable.

At Level 1-8, in addition to the knowledge required at Level 1-7, the work requires mastery of the housing management field and related expert knowledge of Federal, State, and regional housing policies, concepts, regulations, and laws including related legislative matters and legal precedents to provide expert advisory services to management, technical, and supervisory personnel in government, public or private institutions and agencies; to explore and develop new management techniques and methodology; and to effect solutions to unique or unusually complex problems regarding housing or community facilities, tenant services, or equipment. Also required

at this level is expert knowledge and skill in the identification and application of the latest management concepts and techniques of housing programs to develop and apprise housing policies and procedures, research and analyze management concepts, extend existing principles to new and unusual applications, conduct novel and unprecedented studies to develop management criteria, and prepare advisory materials on matters of regional importance.

Level 1-7 is met. The appellant's work requires in-depth knowledge of and skill in applying a wide range of housing policies, requirements, and procedures in managing a comprehensive installation housing program. She is responsible for the entire range of activities related to the operation and use of housing for military families at her installation including cost management, operations, maintenance, inspections, assignments, construction and improvements, etc.

Level 1-8 is not met. The work performed by the appellant does not require the in-depth or expert knowledge of Federal, State, and regional housing policies, concepts, regulations, and laws necessary to provide expert advisory services on housing related issues and matters to government, public or private institutions and agencies. Her work does not require her to become involved in the development and appraisal of housing policies and procedures, the research and analysis of management concepts, the conduct of novel and unprecedented studies to develop housing management criteria or the preparation of advisory material on matters having regional impact. The appellant is the installation's housing expert and provides advice to installation officials on all matters related to the management and operation of its housing assets. The central focus of her work is the efficient administration of the installation housing program in accordance with the requirements established by her agency. This work does not require the level of knowledge or skills characteristic of Level 1-8.

Level 1-7 is credited for 1250 points.

#### Factor 2 - Supervisory Controls:

This factor covers the nature and extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, the employee's responsibility, and the extent to which completed work is reviewed. The agency credited Level 2-4. The appellant believes that Level 2-5 should have been credited.

At Level 2-4, the housing supervisor sets the overall objectives and establishes the resources available. The employee and the supervisor jointly establish project deadlines, the scope, and level of work to be accomplished. The employee is responsible for planning and carrying out assignments, resolving the majority of the conflicts that arise, coordinating the work with others as needed, and interpreting policy on own initiative in terms of established objectives. Completed work is reviewed only from an overall standpoint in terms of feasibility, compatibility with other work, or effectiveness in meeting objectives or achieving expected results.

At Level 2-5, the supervisor provides administrative directions with assignments in terms of broadly defined missions or functions. The employee is responsible for independently planning,

designing, and carrying out programs, projects, studies, or other work. The results of the work are considered technically authoritative and normally accepted without significant change. If the work is reviewed, the review concerns such matters as fulfillment of program objectives, effect of advice and influence of the overall program, or the contribution to the advancement of technology. Recommendations for new projects and alteration of objectives are reviewed in terms of the availability of funds and other resources, broad program goals, or national priorities.

Level 2-4 is met. The appellant is responsible for planning and accomplishing work related to the application of housing management program objectives and policies at her installation. Although the appellant works very independently and is the technical expert in her field for [installation], her assignments consist of more than broadly defined mission statements. She conducts her program within the policies, procedures, and objectives established by Navy for administering their housing program. While the published policies and procedures may not completely apply to all situations, the existence of these published program policies, as well as the existence of the NAVFACENGCOM West, which has responsibility for approving policy changes and providing advice and assistance, supports crediting Level 2-4. Level 2-4 fully recognizes the level of expertise, independence, and policy interpretation that are typical of the appellant's position.

Level 2-5 is not met. The appellant is not independently planning and designing the agency's, i.e. Department of Navy's, housing program and policies. She interprets and determines the application of policies and independently plans and manages the housing program for her local installation. Although the appellant functions with a significant degree of independence and her activities are normally accomplished with relatively limited, if any, review of the final work products, the overall mission and function of the housing program are well-defined and its objectives and policies are established at a higher level. The full intent of Level 2-5 is not met.

Level 2-4 is credited for 450 points.

### Factor 3 - Guidelines:

This factor covers the nature of guidelines and the judgment needed to apply them. The agency credited Level 3-3. The appellant believes that Level 3-4 should have been credited.

At Level 3-3, the incumbent is provided a number of agency wide regulations, standards, handbooks, guides, and other materials related to major housing activity areas. These materials do not normally directly address specific work assignments or unusual issues that may arise, and lack sufficient detail on many elements of housing management operations on which to base management decisions and actions. The incumbent is required to use judgment and initiative in selecting, interpreting, and applying the guides and, where necessary, make compromises and adaptations within the intent of the guides to meet established housing objectives. The incumbent must also evaluate the impact of the application of standard agency practices and procedures on housing operations and recommend changes to address new or unique situations or correct deficiencies.

At Level 3-4, the work is characterized by the availability of agency policies, program management guides, legal opinions, and precedents covering the management, use, and operation of housing projects and facilities. These guides are normally inadequate for contending with the unusually difficult problems related to the broad management planning typically encountered at this level. The incumbent is required to select, adapt, and apply housing policies and principles to assignments where precedents are not directly applicable to the coordination of work forces and resources or the negotiation of major issues and conflicts where available precedents are generally not applicable. Work at this level also requires the development of new operating techniques and selection of approaches in evaluating management programs, housing trends, or developments.

Level 3-3 is met. The appellant is provided a number of Federal and Navy regulations, as well as agency general policy and program guides applicable to the major aspects of administering the installation housing management program. These materials do not address all of the possible situations that the appellant may routinely encounter in managing the housing program. The appellant uses judgment, initiative and experience in selecting, interpreting, and applying the available guidance and making compromises and adaptations, where warranted, to resolve unusual problems encountered during the course of her work. The guidance permits a sufficient degree of flexibility for adaptation and interpretation to resolve problems encountered at the installation level.

Level 3-4 is not met. The appellant furnished examples of situations that she has encountered where guidelines were inadequate to resolve what she considers unusually difficult problems. These included issues of service members requesting changes or exceptions to general policies related to the length of housing assignments or the order of priority of assignments, and the impact of workforce downsizing on the operation of the overall housing program. She also contends that, since the installation is located in a relatively isolated area with limited affordable off-base housing, she must expend a considerable amount of time adapting and interpreting available guidelines to deal with these factors. The problems encountered and solutions developed by the appellant do not reflect the level of difficulty associated with broad management planning or negotiation of major issues and conflicts as described at Level 3-4. Additionally, the appellant is not responsible for the development of new operating techniques intended to credit this level.

Level 3-3 is credited for 275 points.

#### Factor 4 - Complexity:

This factor covers the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of tasks, steps, processes, or methods involved in the management, operation, and use of housing assets and resources; the difficulty in identifying what needs to be done; and the difficulty and originality involved in performing the work. This factor covers two levels of housing-related management. At the lower level, the work involves a number of related tasks in support of specific management or technical operations required in the implementation of housing programs or the operation and maintenance of physical housing assets. At the upper level, the work involves broad management planning and budgeting



as a means of coordinating work forces and other resources, and consulting or negotiating with housing managers, tenants, and community representatives on broad programs or problems concerning the development, operation, maintenance, and utilization of housing assets. The agency credited Level 4-4. The appellant believes that Level 4-5 should have been credited.

At Level 4-4, the work consists of continuing assignments involving direct responsibility for the management control of one or more housing projects, facilities, or complexes. The work typically involves the application of the full range of methods and processes related to the planning, acquisition, construction, operation, occupancy, maintenance, improvement, and use of a variety of housing assets including Government-owned, assisted, leased, rented, or privately-owned facilities. Decisions regarding what needs to be done require assessment of operations such as project organization and fiscal management; reporting systems; furnishings, supplies and equipment; maintenance conditions and general housekeeping; occupancy and assignment activities; and tenant relations. The work usually requires the assessment of such critical project activities as occupancy turnover rates, current and projected operating costs, utility conservation efforts and structural or physical condition of housing assets to formulate recommendations or directives governing housing operations and maintain control of allotment obligations and expenditures to ensure funding limitations are observed. The work also requires analysis of problem areas or deficiencies; determination of the feasibility of improvements or repairs within established cost targets; and the development of recommendations and justification concerning funds, personnel, and materials to accomplish all housing activities.

At Level 4-5, the work consists of assignments involving management planning, cost control and coordination of work forces and resources; negotiating with management and tenants on complex program matters and problems; and/or providing expert advisory services to management, technical, and supervisory personnel in the agency, in other government agencies, and in public or private institutions regarding housing management programs and the development, acquisition, operation and use of housing assets. Decisions regarding what needs to be done include the identification and definition of the nature and scope of novel and obscure problems that often require analysis and evaluation of factors such as general housing trends, market conditions, construction methods, material costs, sources of supply or services, housing prices, and/or applicable area ordinances, regulations, or laws governing the occupancy and operation of housing projects. These factors are subject to continuous change resulting from national or regional housing policies or priorities, construction industry developments, utility cost fluctuations, and various other general business activities. The work requires the identification of the latest techniques, procedures, and concepts in the field of housing management to develop and appraise program policies and procedures; the research and analysis of altered management concepts or methodology and the extension of existing practices to new and unusual applications; and the conduct of novel and unprecedented studies to develop management criteria and prepare advisory materials on matters of regional or national importance.

Level 4-4 is met. The appellant is directly responsible for the management of the family housing facilities located at [installation]. Her work routinely involves the application of the full range of

methods and processes associated with planning, acquisition, construction, operation, occupancy, maintenance, and improvement of Government-owned and privately-owned housing facilities. In her capacity as the installation housing manager, the appellant is routinely required to assess issues such as the adequacy of the overall housing budget; maintenance, repairs, and improvements; housing occupancy rates and assignments; utilities conservation; landlord-tenant relations, etc. Her assessment activities result in decisions regarding how to operate the housing program in a manner to achieve its goals and objectives and in the development of recommendations and justification for funding, personnel, and materials required to accomplish all of the activities required in the operation of the housing program.

Level 4-5 is not met. The appellant's work assignments do not normally involve highly complex program issues and problems requiring her to identify and define novel or obscure problems characteristic of Level 4-5. The work also does not involve situations requiring that she extend existing practices to new or unusual applications, or develop housing management criteria or prepare advisory material on matters of significance either regionally or nationally. The appellant cited as examples of novel or obscure housing problems, the flag officer's residence and the impact of the installation's remoteness and climatic conditions on construction costs and the long and short range maintenance plans. Although the examples require the appellant to analyze and evaluate factors such as construction methods, material costs, and sources of supplies or services, applicable methods, sources, and related information are available. The situations with which the appellant usually deals are not subject to continuous changes resulting from national or regional housing policies or priorities, developments in the construction industry, fluctuating utility costs, or other such factors. The problems associated with the examples given would be typically found at any installation with old housing facilities and various climatic conditions specific to the location. The appellant's assignments generally involve conventional problems and issues that are often experienced at various other installations.

Level 4-4 is credited for 225 points.

Factor 5 - Scope and Effect:

This factor covers the relationship between the nature of the work in terms of purpose, breadth, depth of housing assignments, and the effect of the work product and services both within and outside the organization. The agency credited Level 5-3. The appellant believes that Level 5-4 should have been credited.

At Level 5-3, the primary purpose of the work is to plan, schedule, coordinate, and monitor the operational management and efficient use of housing projects, facilities and resources; analyze problem areas; and recommend or implement corrective measures based on housing program requirements. The work involves dealing with a variety of occupancy related problems, formulation of directives, and evaluation of the adequacy of services provided. It affects the efficiency of the operation of the housing program and the living conditions of the families being housed.

At Level 5-4, the incumbent functions as a specialist with expertise in housing techniques and methodology and, in this capacity, provides advisory services on specific problems, projects, programs, and functions to other agency organizations. The focus of the work at this level is on the development of management programs and criteria related to the application of agency housing policies. The work impacts major segments and activities of the agency's housing policies and programs.

Level 5-3 is met. The primary purpose of the work performed by the appellant is the administration, control, and management of housing related operations and activities involving facilities located at [installation]. In this capacity, the appellant is responsible for the full range of housing activities including ensuring installation level conformance with agency housing policies; serving as a technical expert to advise installation officials on methods, processes and agency policies relating to management, maintenance, operation and utilization of housing; monitoring the utilization of housing facilities and resources; and analyzing problems and recommending solutions or implementing corrective measures for a variety of occupant problems. Her work affects the efficient operation of housing services at the installation and the quality of the living conditions of military personnel and their families.

Level 5-4 is not met. The appellant is not responsible for providing advisory services on housing management techniques and methodology to other organizations as is required at this level. Her work also does not affect major segments and activity areas of the agency's, i.e., Department of Navy, housing policies and programs. The appellant serves as the installation's technical expert on matters involving the local housing program for [installation]. The focus of her work is the implementation of the housing program at the local level, not the development of housing management programs and policies at the agency level for use by other housing specialists.

Level 5-3 is credited for 150 points.

<b>SUMMARY</b>		
<b>FACTOR</b>	<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
1. Knowledge Required By The Position	1-7	1250
2. Supervisory Controls	2-4	450
3. Guidelines	3-3	275
4. Complexity	4-4	225
5. Scope and Effect	5-3	150
6. Personal Contacts	6-3	60
7. Purpose of Contacts	7-3	120
8. Physical Demands	8-2	20
9. Work Environment	9-1	5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2555</b>

A total of 2555 points falls within the range for GS-11, 2355 to 2750 points, according to the Grade Conversion Table in the standard.

### **Decision**

The position is correctly classified as Housing Manager, GS-1173-11.