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# NASA Procedural Requirements

**COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY**

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Request Notification of Change (NASA Only)

## **Subject: Position Management and Classification**

**Responsible Office: Office of Human Capital Management**

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## **Chapter 3. General Position Classification**

### **3.1 Position Documentation**

3.1.1. The prescribed position description format for positions covered by published Factor Evaluation System classification standards and narrative standards are specified in The Classifier's Handbook. The Factor Evaluation System format is the preferred format for all General Schedule (GS) positions.

3.1.2. All position descriptions, whether in narrative or Factor Evaluation System format, must include a statement by the supervisor attesting to the accuracy of the position description. This statement is usually included on the cover sheet of a position description.

3.1.3. The position description must include the major duties of the position in terms of the applicable factor pattern set forth in the governing classification standards for that particular occupation.

3.1.4. The duties and responsibilities constituting all NASA positions at GS-15 and below must be officially documented on a NASA Form 692, Position Description.

3.1.4.1. NASA Form 692, Position Description will also be used to document FLSA status, position sensitivity, competitive level codes, and files will contain documentation of the judgments made for position risk designations, position sensitivity, and other information pertinent to the position.

3.1.5. An adequate position description will provide a forthright presentation of the work assigned to the position and all the information needed to determine the pay plan, series, title, and grade of the position when the appropriate classification criteria are applied to the position.

3.1.6. Documentation of the judgments made, e.g., narrative evaluation statements, for the classification of certain categories of positions is required for the following:

3.1.6.1. Supervisory positions.

3.1.6.2. Positions that exceed the published grade-level criteria in the governing standard.

3.1.6.3. Positions for which there are no specific published grade-level criteria (e.g., GS-301, GS-341).

3.1.6.4. Positions whose classifications reflect in some measure the impact of the incumbent on the position.

3.1.6.5. Positions that are borderline GS/FWS.

## **3.2 Distribution of the Position Description**

3.2.1. Hard or soft copies of position descriptions (NASA Form 692) are to be maintained by the respective Center Human Resources Office and distributed as follows:

3.2.1.1. The signed original is retained by the respective Human Resources office.

3.2.1.2. A copy is provided for the employee.

3.2.1.3. A copy is provided for the supervisor of the position.

3.2.1.4. Additional copies may be provided for organizational files, series or occupational files, official personnel folders, and operating official's office files. All evaluation statements are filed with the original position descriptions in the respective Human Resources office. The evaluation statement need not be distributed to other points.

## **3.3 Classification Files**

3.3.1. The office responsible for classification should maintain the official files of original position descriptions. The file may also include charts of organizational segments presenting basic information.

## **3.4 Classification Appeals for General Schedule (GS) Positions**

3.4.1. An employee in a GS position may appeal initially to either the Center Human Resources Director; the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, NASA Headquarters; or bypass the NASA appeal levels and file an appeal directly with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

3.4.1.1. An employee may not file an appeal with the Agency and OPM at the same time.

3.4.1.2. An employee may file an appeal to OPM through the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division at which time the Agency has to act on the appeal within 60 days or forward to OPM.

3.4.1.3. In instances where the employee's appeal has been addressed to the Center Human Resources Director or the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, the addressee has the option of forwarding the appeal to the appropriate regional office of OPM without issuing a final decision. In such cases, the appeal must be forwarded to OPM within 30-calendar days of receipt, and the employee must be notified in writing of this intention and his or her concurrence obtained. If the employee does not concur, the appeal will be canceled.

3.4.2. A classification decision made by the Center Human Resources Director may be appealed to the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, or to the appropriate OPM Regional Office, or both sequentially. Also, a classification decision made by the Director Workforce Management and Development Division, may be appealed to the appropriate OPM Regional Office.

3.4.3. Filing Instructions and Time Limits

3.4.3.1. Employees are encouraged, but not required, to file all appeals through each lower level. By doing so, the opportunity is afforded for corrective action, if warranted. Also, the appeal process is expedited because the opportunity is provided for each level to include with the appeal additional information that is needed by the succeeding level. This includes such material as supplemental information clarifying the position's duties and responsibilities, the Center's and Agency's analysis of the position, and a copy of the official position description.

3.4.3.2. Within NASA, a written decision will be provided within 30-calendar days after all required information has been collected. When an appeal addressed to the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, is filed through the Center Human Resources Director, it must be forwarded by that official within 30-calendar days of date of receipt, unless acted upon favorably in the meantime.

3.4.3.3. When an appeal addressed to the OPM Regional Office is filed through Agency appeal levels (i.e., the Center Human Resources Director and/or the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division) it must be forwarded to the OPM Regional Office within 60-calendar days from date of initial receipt, unless one of the Agency levels acts favorably on it in the meantime.

#### 3.4.4. Protection of Retroactive Benefits

3.4.4.1. An appeal decision reversing a classification action that resulted in a downgrade or loss of compensation may be made retroactive, providing the initial classification appeal is filed with either one of the Agency levels or OPM no later than 15-calendar days after the effective date of the reclassification action. Also, any further appeal must be filed no later than 15-calendar days after the effective date of the reclassification action.

3.4.4.2. OPM may extend the time limits stated in paragraph 3.4.4.1 if an appellant can show that he or she was not notified of these limits and was not otherwise aware of them or that circumstances beyond his or her control prevented filing within these limits.

#### 3.4.5. Information Required When Appealing Within NASA

3.4.5.1. A classification appeal must be made in writing, signed by the appellant, and addressed to the level that the appellant selects.

3.4.5.2. An employee's appeal letter must include the following:

- a. Employee's mailing address and office telephone number.
- b. The position description number, title, pay plan, series, and grade of the position.
- c. The organizational unit and location of the employee's position.
- d. The title, pay plan, series, grade, or other classification action sought.
- e. Factual presentation of the reasons why appellant believes his or her position is improperly classified.
- f. A copy of the official position description.
- g. Name, address, and business telephone number of the employee's representative, if a representative has been designated.

#### 3.4.6. Effective Date of Appeal Decisions

3.4.6.1. A change brought about by an appeal decision (of either NASA appeal level or OPM) takes effect no earlier than the date of the appeal decision and no later than the beginning of the fourth pay period following the date of decision unless permission has been obtained from OPM for further delay. A classification action may not be effected retroactively.

3.4.6.2. Center Human Resources Directors must furnish the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, a copy of the SF-50 effecting any change resulting from a decision rendered by the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division.

3.4.6.3. Notifying Incumbents Concerning Appeal Rights. When a classification appeal decision is unfavorable to the employee, the employee must be advised concerning further rights of appeal within NASA and to OPM, including the right to appeal directly to OPM if desired. If such a decision would result in loss of grade or compensation, the decision must also inform the employee of the necessity to file any subsequent classification appeal

with OPM, no later than 15-calendar days after the effective date of the reclassification in order to protect retroactive pay benefits that he or she might be entitled to in connection with the appeal. The time limit for filing a subsequent appeal with the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, may be extended if the employee is able to demonstrate that he or she was not notified of these time limits or that there were extenuating circumstances.

3.4.6.4. Reporting OPM Appeal Decisions. Center Human Resources Directors should furnish the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, an information copy of appeal decisions rendered by regional offices of OPM.

## **3.5 Job-Grading Appeals of FWS Jobs**

3.5.1. An employee in an FWS position may appeal initially to either the Center Human Resources Director or to the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, NASA Headquarters. An employee in an FWS job may not file an appeal directly to OPM without first going through the NASA appeal process. If the employee is not satisfied with the NASA decision, he or she may appeal to OPM.

### **3.5.2. Filing Instructions and Time Limits**

3.5.2.1. Employees are encouraged, but not required, to file applications for review of their jobs through the Center Human Resources Director. This provides an opportunity for resolution or corrective action, if warranted. Also, the job-grading review process is expedited because the opportunity is provided for each level to include with the application additional information which is needed by the next level; e.g., official position description, the Center's analysis of the position.

3.5.2.2. Within NASA, a written decision on an application filed with the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, should be provided within 60-calendar days of the date the employee files an application for review. If a decision has not been issued within the 60-day timeframe, the employee may request the Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management to make the final decision on the job.

3.5.2.3. If an employee elects to file an appeal with OPM after NASA has issued its final decision, the appeal must be filed within 15-calendar days of the date of receipt of the NASA decision; and the employee must specify that part of the NASA decision with which he or she disagrees.

### **3.5.3. Protection of Retroactive Benefits**

3.5.3.1. A NASA review decision that reverses a job-grading decision that resulted in loss in grade or pay may be made retroactive to the effective date of the action being reviewed for the change, provided the employee's application was filed within 15-calendar days of the effective date of the change to lower grade. However, when the NASA decision raises the grade of the job above its grade immediately preceding the downgrading, retroactivity applies only to the extent of restoration to the grade immediately preceding the downgrading.

3.5.3.2. OPM may extend the time limit for filing an appeal if circumstances beyond the employee's control prevented him or her from filing it within 15-calendar days, or the employee was not notified or was not otherwise aware of the time limit for filing an appeal.

### **3.5.4. Information Required When Applying for a Job-Grading Review Within NASA**

3.5.4.1. An application for review must be in writing, signed by the requester, and addressed to the level that the requester selects.

3.5.4.2. An employee's letter of application for review must include the following:

- a. Employee's name, mailing address, and office telephone number.
- b. The number, title, pay plan, series, and grade of the job.

- c. Organizational unit and location of the employee's job.
- d. The title, series, and grade or other job grading action sought.
- e. Factual presentation of the reasons why the employee believes his or her job is erroneously graded.
- f. A copy of the official job description.
- g. Name, address, and business telephone number of the employee's representative, if a representative has been designated.

3.5.4.3. In instances where the employee has filed the application for review through the Center Human Resources Director, the Center Human Resources Director is encouraged to attempt resolution at that level before forwarding it to the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, for a final decision. The employee may file with OPM only after NASA has rendered its decision on the application.

### 3.5.5. Effective Date of NASA Decisions

3.5.5.1. When the final NASA decision on an application for review will result in a change, the decision takes effect no earlier than the date of the decision and no later than the beginning of the first pay period, which begins after the 60th day from the date the application was filed.

3.5.5.2. Center Human Resources Directors must furnish the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, a copy of the SF-50 effecting any change resulting from a decision rendered by the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division.

3.5.6. Notifying Incumbents Concerning Appeal Rights. When a decision by the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, on an appeal will lead to loss of grade or pay for the employee, the employee must be promptly notified of the decision and of his or her rights to appeal to OPM. The notice must inform the employee of the need to file further appeal within 15-calendar days of the effective date of the change in order to establish or preserve his or her rights to adjustment.

3.5.7. Reporting OPM Appeal Decisions. Center Human Resources Directors will ensure the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, has an information copy of appeal decisions.

## 3.6 Implementation and Review of Classification Standards

3.6.1. New or updated classification standards and/or classification guides must be applied to covered positions within 12 months of the date of issuance from OPM.

3.6.2. Periodically, OPM will issue draft standards and request comments from Agencies having covered positions. The Director, Workforce Management and Development Division will initially review these draft standards and request comments from the Centers having covered positions. For draft standards where NASA is a lead agency, the Centers having covered positions will be required to test apply and comment on the draft standards, as requested by the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, who will coordinate the Agency response.

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