



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of David Schuster,
Department of the Treasury

CSC Docket No. 2017-2138

Classification Appeal

CORRECTED

ISSUED: OCT 24 2017 (RE)

David Schuster appeals the attached decision of the Division of Agency Services (DAS) which found that his position with the Department of the Treasury was properly classified as Principal Postal Clerk. He seeks a Computer Operator 1 job classification in this proceeding.

Mr. Schuster received a regular appointment to the title Principal Postal Clerk on November 3, 2005. This position is located in the Division of Taxation, Operations, Facilities Management Operations, Printing and Processing Center, reports to a Supervisor of Operations, and has supervisory responsibilities for one Senior Postal Clerk and one Senior Clerk. Upon his request for a classification review of his position, a review of Mr. Schuster's Position Classification Questionnaire (PCQ) and related documentation was performed, along with a telephone audit with the appellant and his supervisor. The classification review found that Mr. Schuster's assigned duties and responsibilities, as detailed in DAS' decision, were commensurate with the title of Principal Postal Clerk.

On appeal, Mr. Schuster asserts that he operates a stored-program electronic computer in the Printing and Processing Center. He states that his duties include routinely checking for variables, database, bad files, or other operation errors when jobs cannot be executed, and he is responsible for backing up the systems, deleting files, dumping storage and upgrading the program software. He provides a description of five stored programs which are executed via the computer console and server. He explains that jobs are executed via the computer console and formatted in batches, and he provides standard operating procedures for processing these jobs

utilizing the described programs. The appellant maintains that Principle Postal Clerk duties are consistent with a mailroom, not a printing and processing center, and his duties require vastly different knowledge, skills and abilities.

DAS replied that the appellant does not work within a subordinate computer center or data center, and his use of computers and printing operation systems serve as primary functional tools to perform work responsibilities. Lastly, it indicates that Mr. Schuster has supervisory responsibility of a lower level incumbent, and Computer Operator 1 is a non-supervisory title.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:3-3.9(e) states that in classification appeals the appellant shall provide copies of all materials submitted, the determination received from the lower level, statements as to which if portions of the determination are being disputed, and the basis for appeal. Information and/or argument which was not presented at the prior level of appeal shall not be considered.

The definition section of the job specification for Principal Postal Clerk states:

Under direction of a supervisory official in a State department or agency which has its own post office, assists in supervising and performs the work involved in the operation of a mail section, utilizing electronic and computerized equipment, including the use, maintenance, service, and repair of equipment used in the preparation of material for mailing and the accounting of postal funds; may drive a single axle truck have a gross weight not to exceed 25,999 pounds to ensure continuity of service, as required; does related work as required.

The definition section of the job specification for Computer Operator 1 states:

Under direction of a Supervising Computer Operator in one of the data centers listed above or in a subordinate Computer Center in a State department, agency, institution, or State college, acts as consul operator and leader of a team of operators responsible for the operation of a single large-scale, multi-programmed computer supporting a complex teleprocessing network with databases and peripheral devices; or, under an appropriate supervising official in a less complex computing facility, serves as lead operator or sole operator of a stored-program electronic computer; does other related duties as required.

The job specification for Computer Operator 1 has two parts, and the appellant is clearly not serving in a data center for the Office of Information Technology or Higher Education. Nor does he work in a subordinate computer

center acting as consul operator and leader of a team of operators responsible for the operation of a single large-scale, multi-programmed computer supporting a complex teleprocessing network with databases and peripheral devices. As such, the appellant's position must be required to be in a less complex computing facility, serving as lead operator or sole operator of a stored-program electronic computer.

At the outset, it is noted that the classification of a position is determined based on the duties and responsibilities assigned to a position at the time the request for reclassification is received in DAS as verified by audit or other formal study. The outcome of position classification is not to provide a career path to the incumbents, but rather is to ensure that the position is classified in the most appropriate title available within the State's Classification Plan.¹ Further, how well or efficiently an employee does his or her job, length of service, and qualifications have no effect on the classification of a position currently occupied, as *positions*, not employees, are classified.

The Supervisor of Operations provides a description of the environment. He states that the Division of Taxation implemented an automated (web-based/server) computer environment to electronically process 85% of its taxpayer liability notices, 100% certified mail notices, and other special mailings generated by the Division's Taxpayer Data Warehouse and Data Systems & Technology. He indicates that these mailings were formerly in a mainframe format and processed by the Office of Information Technology. He states that the appellant is not performing his duties in the Taxation Mail Room Operation or Taxation Warehouse. He states that jobs are executed via two Command Center Computers which are web-based deployment with a local SQL server database, and program software stored on servers. The center supports a complex teleprocessing network with various databases, and peripheral devices include three programmable high-speed multifunction printers, and two programmable laser inserters. Documents and jobs are formatted in Word with variables, transmitted in batch format, and retrieved and executed via specialized software and applications. The appellant is required to transfer files, archive and delete job logs on a daily basis, trouble-shoot and analyze errors, and program and setup computerized laser inserters and printers.

The question herein is which job specification definition does Mr. Schuster's duties more closely match. Classification determinations are based on the *primary functions* assigned to the position. In this case, DAS contends that the use of computers and printing operation systems are serving as primary functional tools to perform work responsibilities, which is to process the outgoing mail. The appellant does not determine himself what documents are to be processed, rather, but processes assigned jobs. Since the department switched from manual to electronic computerized systems, he must use the computer and peripheral equipment to

¹ See *In the Matter of Patricia Lightsey* (MSB, decided June 8, 2005), *aff'd* on reconsideration (MSB, decided November 22, 2005).

process these assigned jobs. Neither of the job specification definitions are a paragon of clarity and neither contains duties that are up-to-date with current technology. Indeed, the Computer Operator 1 specification refers to line printers and aligning forms. On the other hand, the machines mentioned in the Principal Postal Clerk job specification are electronic remote meter machines, inserting, sealing and stamping machines, perforated machines, automated presort machines, "remote accounting system," and electronics scales. These devices are outdated in comparison with the equipment that the appellant operates. The focus of the Principal Postal Clerk title is clearly manual in nature, and includes driving a truck to ensure continuity of service. In this regard, the Division of Agency Services should reevaluate the job specification for Principal Postal Clerk to determine if evolving duties have changed the primary focus of the title.

Looking first at the Principal Postal Clerk definition, while it indicates that the incumbent will utilize electronic and computerized equipment, the appellant's position actually utilizes a sophisticated computer and high-speed peripheral devices. The position ensures that assigned jobs are processed within deadlines and the incumbent utilizes a computer console to setup, schedule and execute jobs including programming the inserter and printers. Related duties include ensuring that software is operational; monitoring system consoles to troubleshoot error messages; reporting batch or file processing errors for correction; identifying inefficiencies in the operation and production of jobs; ensuring availability of necessary materials to complete jobs; contacting vendors to schedule repairs of computers, software, applications, and peripheral equipment; maintaining logs and reports; and backing up data on a routine basis. Comparing these duties with the definition of the requested title indicates that the appellant operates a stored-program electronic computer in order to print and process documents, and he could not perform the latter without doing the former. The nature of the position indicates that appellant *must* operate an electronic computer in order to successfully perform in his position, *i.e.*, he would not be able to print and process the mail without doing so. Indeed, most of his duties revolve around operation of a stored-program electronic computer and peripheral devices. In this matter, performance of the required duties for the position incorporate aspects of both titles, but are more closely aligned with Computer Operator 1. Thus, the evidence in this case demonstrates that the appellant's position should be classified as Computer Operator 1.

With respect to supervision, this position is located in a unit which consists of three sections, the Printing and Processing Center, Taxation Mail Room, and Taxpayer Forms Section. The appellant and his two subordinates constitute the Printing and Processing Center. DAS has determined that the standard required to classify titles assigned to the primary level supervisory employee relations group is that position must supervise three or more lower-level employees, including the preparation and signing of their PARs. As such, the position's supervisory duties

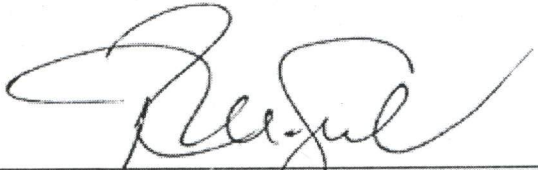
should be removed. The appellant can lead and provide guidance, but supervisory duties and responsibilities belong to the appellant's supervisor.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be granted and the classification of the position encumbered by David Schuster is Computer Operator 1, effective August 20, 2016, and his supervisory duties be removed.

This is the final administrative determination in this matter. Any further review should be pursued in a judicial forum.

DECISION RENDERED BY THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
THE 4th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2017



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