



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

Classification Appeal

In the Matter of Laura Olexa,
Department of Law and Public
Safety, Division of State Police

CSC Docket No. 2014-1723

ISSUED: AUG 14 2014

(RE)

Laura Olexa appeals the attached decision of the Division of Classification and Personnel Management (CPM) which found that her position with the Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of State Police is properly classified as Supervising Accountant. She seeks an Administrative Analyst 1 job classification in this proceeding.

Ms. Olexa received a regular appointment to the title Supervising Accountant on December 11, 2006. This position is located in the Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of State Police, Finance Bureau, and is responsible for supervising an Accountant 1 and an Accountant 2. The position reports to a Supervising Management Improvement Specialist. Ms. Olexa is a provisional in the requested title, and her application appeared to be inconsistent with the definition of the job specification for the title. As such, a classification review of her position was performed at the request of the Division of Selection Services.

The classification review found that Ms. Olexa's assigned duties and responsibilities, as detailed in CPM's decision, were commensurate with the title of Supervising Accountant. On appeal, Ms. Olexa asserts that the primary function of the position is "analyzing procedures to improve the efficiency of a program," and that supervising the maintenance of financial accounts, and ensuring accounting procedures comply with applicable laws and regulations, contribute to the primary function. She states that she supervises and maintains an electronic database that records and reconciles billing, collections, and maintenance of revenue received. She states that in her provisional position, she facilitated the transition to an

updated version of software to track and bill expenditures, increase efficiencies, and which resulted in increased collections. She states that she reorganized procedures to verify bank deposits and eliminate errors, resulting in bank errors being revealed, earlier interest payments on multimillion dollar deposits, and the retirement of previous bank correction procedures. She explains that she has made changes to operating manuals and the organization to facilitate a comparison of billings to collections, resulting in a decrease of duplication of billings and a reduction of payment discrepancies; she states that she compares invoices to backup materials to ensure accuracy and support for billings, and that her analysis of employees, software and processes has resulted in the minimization of year-end budget constraints. The appellant argues that CPM's description of her responsibilities reflects only a part of her duties and that the majority of her duties compare favorably to the title Administrative Analyst 1.

CONCLUSION

The definition set forth in the job specification for the title of Supervising Accountant is:

Under the direction of a principal administrative officer in a State department or agency, has charge of one of the major areas of the accounting program; does other related duties.

The definition section of the job specification for Administrative Analyst 1 states:

Under supervision of a supervisory official in a State department, institution, or agency, performs duties of significant difficulty and/or supervises staff involved with review, analysis, and appraisal of current department administrative procedures, organization, and performance, and prepares recommendations for changes and/or revision therein; does other related duties as required.

At the outset, it is noted that there is a sharp distinction made between a position and an incumbent. A position consists of a group of currently assigned duties and responsibilities requiring employment of one person, while an incumbent is an individual occupying a position. How well or efficiently an employee does his or her job, length of service, volume of work and qualifications have no effect on the classification of a position currently occupied, as *positions*, not employees are classified. See *In the Matter of Debra DiCello* (CSC, decided June 24, 2009). Thus, the knowledge, skills, and abilities of an incumbent are not factors under consideration for classification purposes as they relate to the incumbent and not to the position. Also, as indicated in *In the Matter of Patricia Lightsey* (MSB, decided June 8, 2005), *aff'd on reconsideration* (MSB, decided November 22, 2005), the

outcome of position classification is not to provide a career path to the incumbent, but rather to ensure the position is classified in the most appropriate title available within the State's classification plan.

Classification determinations list only those duties which are considered to be the primary focus of appellant's duties and responsibilities that are performed on a regular, recurring basis. See *In the Matter of David Baldasari* (Commissioner of Personnel, decided August 22, 2006). It is long-standing policy that upon review of a request for position classification, when it is found that the majority of an incumbent's duties and responsibilities correspond to the examples of work found in a particular job specification, that title is deemed the appropriate title for the position. There can only be one primary focus of the position, which is determined by the importance of the task(s) and length of time needed to accomplish that objective.

Quite a few of the appellant's duties involve analysis of procedures, organization, and performance and making recommendations for improvement. However, a review of the appellant's Position Classification Questionnaire (PCQ) indicates that the primary focus of the majority of her duties are commensurate with the Supervising Accountant title. In this case, this position is primarily responsible for supervising the accounting and revenue unit. Any duties that Ms. Olexa may perform regarding improving efficiency of the unit are ancillary to this primary function. On her PCQ, the appellant accounted for 100% of her time without providing any time for planning, organizing and assigning work to her subordinates or evaluating their performance and conduct. Even so, the majority of her duties include supervising the accounting program.

The appellant indicated that she performed each of the following five duties for 10% of the time: analyzes financial and accounting data for programs; performs accounting and maintenance of essential accounts and other records for assignments for the State Audit, and is responsible for billing programs; analyzes operational accounts to ensure sufficient funds are billed and collected for services, reconciles each billing monthly, and closes out and prepares adjustments to accounts; participates in administrative planning meetings, and prepares and directs preparation of statistical reports for review and discussion; organizes and analyzes appropriated accounts with the use of software and prepares statistical and financial data to create reports. For 5% of the time, the appellant supervises the processing and segregation of incoming revenue and analyzes data to ensure confirmation of procedures to guidelines and standard practices, and deposits revenue appropriately into segregated accounts. These six duties account for 55% of the appellant's work, and involve supervision of an accounting program. As such, this is the primary focus of the position.

In addition to the above, the appellant indicated that she spent 10% of her time analyzing the operation of the unit to ensure that their operational problems are brought to light through budget studies or the budget implications of legislation, and by compiling, interpreting and analyzing data to make recommendations; providing financial information and preparing billings to outside agencies, evaluating billings and making recommendations for the development and application of financial programs and policies, and approving accounting documents. It is noted that the instructions for the Work (Duties) Performed section of the PCQ include, "Make descriptions so clear that persons unfamiliar with the work can understand exactly what is done." The description of this duty lacks clarity and it appears that the appellant is phrasing an accounting duty in administrative analysis language. In this one task, the appellant is analyzing the operation of the unit, providing financial information and preparing billings, making recommendations for the development and application of financial programs and policies, and approving accounting documents. She may also be studying budgets and legislation. As these duties are so diverse, the actual duty performed cannot be evaluated.

In another duty, performed 10% of her time, the appellant stated that she supervises and maintains an electronic database. In her explanation of this duty, the appellant states that she provides policy guidance and assistance, directs technical staff with planning, maintenance and improvement of Computer Systems, and performs testing analysis and sign off for implementation of new systems or changes to current systems. This duty is not regularly performed by incumbents in either title.

For another 10% of her time, she analyzes and reviews procedures to make administrative improvements, changes to operating manuals and computer systems, and organizational changes in procedures to regularly reconcile payments against those billed on a regular basis. For this duty, she adds that she investigates and supervises the collection from vendors and agencies that are delinquent in their payments and recommends and supervises development of solutions to problems while acting as a point of contact regarding billing discrepancies. This description begins with an administrative analysis duty and ends with an accounting task. Accordingly, the amount of time spent performing accounting functions versus the amount of time spent doing administrative analysis functions within this percentage of time cannot be determined.

For 15% of the time, the appellant analyzes reports to determine backlogs in substandard operations. This includes convincing others to accept changes in regulations, developing procedures to conform with audit findings, developing the Accounting Software, and enacting procedures to verify bank deposits to eliminate errors. While the evaluation of procedures and operations in order to effect improvement is very similar to the work of an Administrative Analyst, the

appellant's duties are not primarily those of that title. Instead, the appellant finds areas of improvement while performing accounting duties and makes those changes. Unless there are a large number of reasons for backlogs and substandard operations, eventually the appellant must return to her responsibility of supervision of billing, collection, and maintenance of revenue duties.

It is long-standing policy that upon review of a position classification, when it is found that the majority of an incumbent's duties and responsibilities correspond to the examples of work found in a particular job specification, that title is deemed the appropriate title for the position. The appellant has not established that she is performing Administrative Analyst work for more than half of the time.


Accordingly, a thorough review of the entire record fails to establish that Laura Olexa has presented a sufficient basis to warrant an Administrative Analyst 1 classification of her position.

ORDER

Therefore, the position of Laura Olexa is properly classified as a Supervising Accountant.

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 13th DAY OF AUGUST, 2014


Robert M. Czech
Chairperson
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and
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Enclosure

c: Laura Olexa
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Robert M. Czech
Chair/Chief Executive Officer

December 5, 2013

Ms. Barbara Haley, Deputy Administrator
Department of Law and Public Safety
Division of Personnel
P.O. Box 081 Trenton, NJ 08625-0081

**Re: Classification Review–Administrative Analyst 1, Position # 004372,
Log # 05130026**

Dear Ms. Haley:

This is to inform you and the incumbent, Laura Olexa, of our determination concerning the classification review referenced above. The determination is based upon the results of a detailed analysis of the Position Classification Questionnaire, information obtained during a phone audit on October 9, 2013, and additional clarifying documentation received November 25, 2013.

Issue:

Ms. Olexa is serving provisionally (PAP) in the title, Administrative Analyst 1 (50076,29, R29), and holds permanent status (RAP) in the title, Supervising Accountant, (50455,27,S27). A review of Ms. Olexa's duties was initiated as a result of a request from the Division of Selection Services, Civil Service Commission, upon receiving an application for the promotional examination for the title, Administrative Analyst 1 (PS5811P). The description of current job duties provided in the application appears to be inconsistent with the definition of the job specification for the title.

Organization:

Ms. Olexa is currently assigned to the Finance Bureau, Division of State Police, Department of Law and Public Safety. She reports to Joseph Wysocki, Supervising Management Improvement Specialist (50087, 34, V34). Ms. Olexa is responsible for the supervision of two subordinate employees assigned the titles, Accountant 1 and Accountant 2.

Findings of Fact:

The incumbent performs the following duties and responsibilities:

- Oversees the Accounting Revenue Unit and provides supervision to employees working in the titles, Accountant 1 and Accountant 2.
- Supervises the processing of revenue received, ensuring procedures conform with standard accounting practices and state issued guidelines.
- Maintains essential reports and records for auditing purposes.
- Analyzes accounts for accuracy; reconciles monthly billing and closes out accounts at the end of the fiscal year.
- Prepares and directs preparation of statistical reports to identify insufficient revenue collection and address billing issues.

Review and Analysis:

The definition section of the class specification for the title, Administrative Analyst 1 (50076,29,R29) states:

"Under supervision of a supervisory official in a state department, institution, or agency, performs duties of significant difficulty and/or supervises staff involved with review, analysis, and appraisal of current department administrative procedures, organization, and performance, and prepares recommendations for changes and/or revision therein; does other related duties as required."

An incumbent properly classified in this title evaluates the functioning of a department to improve work systems and determine if established programs are essential, effective and economically efficient. She/He investigates administrative practices to identify inefficiencies and eliminate unnecessary procedures and positions. She/He evaluates program objectives, methods of operations, costs, and accomplishments to identify problem areas and prepare recommendations to improve administrative functioning.

The primary responsibility assigned Ms. Olexa's position is not analysis of administrative procedures to improve the efficacy of a program. The primary function of the position is to supervise the maintenance of financial accounts and ensure accounting procedures comply with applicable laws and regulations.

The definition section of the class specification for the title, Supervising Accountant (50455,27,S27), states:

"Under the direction of a principal administrative officer in a state department or agency, has charge of one of the major areas of the accounting program; does other related duties."

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A position assigned this title is responsible for reviewing and editing accounting records and fiscal reports prepared by subordinate accounting personnel. She/He provides supervision, instruction and coordinates the work activity of assigned staff.

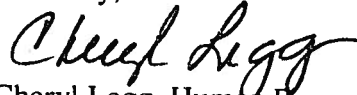
The duties and responsibilities assigned to Ms. Olexa's position compare most favorably with the definition section and examples of work of the class specification for her permanent title, Supervising Accountant (50455,27,S27).

Determination:

The appointing authority is advised Ms. Olexa's position is properly classified in the title, Supervising Accountant (50455,27,S27).

Should the employee believe she is performing out-of-title work duties in the title, Supervising Accountant, in accordance with the New Jersey Administrative Code 4A:3-3.9 she may appeal this determination within twenty (20) days of receipt of this notice. She must include a copy of this letter with her appeal. The appeal should be addressed to Written Record Appeals Unit, Division of Appeals and Regulatory Affairs, P.O. Box 312, Trenton, New Jersey 08625- 0312. Please note that the submission of the appeal must include written documentation and/or argument substantiating the portions of the determination being disputed and the basis for appeal.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Legg, Human Resource Consultant 5
Classification and Personnel Management

CL/sr

C: Laura Olexa
Mirella Bednar
Jane Bando
File