



Personnel and Labor Relations Classification Services Guidance

June 1, 2023

Working Titles and Exempt Job Class Titles – General Guidelines

Working Title:

A working title is an unofficial job title used to describe a function in greater detail or more easily recognized terms, or to differentiate between similar roles in a workgroup or similar specialties in a job classification. Working titles are assigned to specific positions, not to the general job class.

With some limitations, working titles may be used in both internal and external communication. The official class title must be used in documents for personnel administration activities for a position in the Classified and Partially Exempt Services (such as Personnel Action Request Forms, Performance Evaluations, Online Hiring Center Requisitions, Staffing Charts, etc.). A working title may be used **in addition to** the official title in job vacancy announcements and on staffing charts.

A working title should meet the following goals:

- Provide a more specific description of the function or work performed to better facilitate business communication.
- Be consistent with professional/industry practice.
- Be consistent with other working titles in the work unit/department.

Protocols for selecting a working title:

- An official class title established in the Classification Plan covering the Classified and Partially Exempt services **may not be used** as a working title for a position in another job class.
- A title that is similar to and easily confused with an official class title may not be used as a working title.
- A former class title may be used as a working title by an employee whose position was allocated under the former title, when the former title is no longer an official title. (For example: an Audit and Review Analyst may use their former title of Internal Auditor as a working title since it is no longer used as an official class title. A Dietitian may not use their former title of Public Health Specialist as a working title, because it is still an official class title in the Classification Plan.)
- A working title that misrepresents the authority of the employee may not be used. (For example: a working title with “supervisor” or “manager” may not be used if the employee does not supervise other employees or have managerial authority and responsibility for supervising subordinates and controlling goals, resources, personnel, and activities.)
- A title whose use is protected by statute or regulation may not be used as a working title unless the employee meets the legal criteria to use the title. (For example: an employee may not use a working title that includes “Social Worker” or “Engineer” unless they possess the appropriate license.)
- Terms given specific meaning in the State’s Classification Plan should be avoided and may not be used if their established meaning misrepresents the employee’s duties and responsibilities. (For example: “specialist” and “analyst” mean work that is at the professional level; “assistant” means work that is clerical or paraprofessional.)

DOPLR does not require getting approval before using a working title; however, departments may establish their own requirements and restrictions. If you have questions about using a specific working title, or your department's policy, contact your agency's Human Resource Business Partner or DOPLR Recruitment Services.

Exempt Job Class Titles:

Exempt positions are excluded from Title 39, Chapter 25, State Personnel Act and the Personnel Rules adopted under it. Therefore, positions may be classified, salaries established, and recruitment and selection conducted irrespective of the merit principle as defined in 39.25.010. Most exempt service positions are established under AS 39.25.110, but may be assigned by other specific statute(s).

- Working titles are allowed, however an official class title established in the Classification Plan covering the Classified and Partially Exempt services **may not** be used as a working title for an exempt position, [such as Deputy Director](#).

If you have any questions, please contact DOPLR Classification Services.

This document supersedes previous guidance on the same subject.