

FY 2010 Eligibility Technician Class Study FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS for Study Conclusion

This FAQ was compiled to address a range of questions common to the conclusion and implementation of a class study, is by no means all-inclusive, and may be updated periodically.

Q: What did change because of the Eligibility Technician study?

A: There were ten specific actions that occurred:

1. The Eligibility Technician series remains at four technical job classes:
 - Eligibility Technician I
 - Eligibility Technician II
 - Eligibility Technician III
 - Eligibility Technician IV
2. The trainee option has been removed from the Eligibility Technician I job class, which will be considered as purely an entry level class performing eligibility determinations and benefits authorizations for public and family assistance programs of limited financial benefit and/or duration of eligibility.
3. With the exception of the minimum qualifications (to facilitate recruitment at the journey level), the Eligibility Technician II job class has been updated but remains fundamentally unchanged. Recruitment may begin at the journey technical level, facilitating quicker access to the career ladder; training and probationary periods coincide; and, after successful completion of training and probation, the incumbents advance to higher steps on the salary range 14 scale more quickly.
4. The Eligibility Technician III job class was identified as performing advanced eligibility work concurrent to or in lieu of functioning as a lead eligibility worker.
5. The option of supervising a small office, such as the Sitka office, has been removed from the Eligibility Technician III job class.
6. The Eligibility Technician IV remains a supervisory job class; however, the supervisory focus of this job class is primarily the staff and operations of a technical eligibility unit.
7. A new series that recognizes professional supervisory work involving the direct management of the staff and operations of one or more offices has been established. This series is titled Eligibility Office Manager and is composed of two classes:
 - Eligibility Office Manager I
 - Eligibility Office Manager II

Establishment of both classes recognizes and strengthens the career ladder for this work.

8. The current body of work does not continue to support the Workforce Development Specialist I, Workforce Development Specialist II, Workforce Development Specialist III, and Workforce Development Specialist IV job classes.

9. Class specifications for all affected job series have been updated and placed in the appropriate job class family.
10. An internal salary alignment has been conducted.

Q: I'm a Workforce Development Specialist and I've heard that this job class is being "abolished." What's going to happen with my position?

A: One primary determination from the study job analysis was that the work of the Workforce Development Specialists I-IV had significantly changed and was more appropriately included in the updated Eligibility Technician I-IV and the newly-established Eligibility Office Manager I-II job classes. All positions allocated to a Workforce Development Specialist job class prior to the study will be reviewed and allocated to an appropriate Eligibility Technician I-IV, Eligibility Office Manager I-II, or other job class outside these series (if appropriate). Once this is complete, the class specifications and their related codes, etc, are no longer used and are considered "abolished."

Q: How are salary ranges assigned to a job class?

A: The salary range of a job class is determined by internal consistency within the State's pay plans, in accordance with the merit principle and with the goal of providing fair and reasonable compensation for services rendered, while maintaining the principle of like pay for like work. In evaluating internal consistency, the difficulty, responsibility, knowledge, skills, and other characteristics of a job are compared with other job classes of a similar nature, kind, and level. The greater the similarity with the studied job class, the greater that weight is given for alignment.

The classification plan groups bodies of work in a hierarchical structure that includes (in descending order) occupational groups, job families, job class series, and then the actual job class. Each position in the classified and partially exempt services has a position description that is reviewed to determine its proper place within this structure. The classification plan is linked to the pay plan in such a fashion that job classes align for salary range placement not only within their own families and occupational groups, but also across all other occupational groups.

The pay plan links the classification plan to the compensation schedule articulated in AS 39.27.110 or other such schedules as may be determined by collective bargaining.

Job classes align within the pay plan by the eight classification factors; nature, variety and complexity of work; nature of supervision received; nature of available guideline to do the work; initiative and originality required; purpose and nature of person to person work relationships; nature and scope of recommendations, decisions, commitments and consequences of error; nature and extent of supervision exercised over work of other employees, and qualification(s) required.

The parameters of the State's pay plan are articulated at AS 39.25.150(2). The State Personnel Act requires that the State's pay plan be: (A) Based upon the position classification plan; and

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(B) provide for fair and reasonable compensation for services rendered, and reflect the principle of like pay for like work.

Q: What will happen if my salary range changes or if I'm reallocated?

A: Please refer to your current Collective Bargaining Agreement's language governing reclassification. For reference:

- Relevant contract language for GGU members is found in Article 21.06(F) of the ASEA Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- Relevant language for SU members is found in Article 24.8(F) of the APEA Supervisory Unit Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- There will be differences across Collective Bargaining Agreements, but to quickly paraphrase:
 - For reclassification to another class of the same salary range most Collective Bargaining Agreements call for employees to retain their merit anniversary date (MAD), status (probationary or permanent), and step placement.
 - For reclassification to a higher salary range based upon work already being performed most Collective Bargaining Agreements call for employees to retain their MAD, status, and be placed at the same step within the new salary range. Employees at a Pay Increment step will have a new Pay Increment anniversary date upon entering the higher range.
 - If your position is reclassified to a lower salary range your pay will remain the same. How this is specifically implemented depends on your bargaining unit contract and where you are in step placements within the salary range.
 - More specific inquiries should be directed to your HR Service Center contact.

Q: Do the changes in range for some positions result in a change to the rate that leave is accrued?

A: No. The rate of leave that an employee may accrue is determined by time of service at a rate consistent with your Collective Bargaining Agreements. Relevant language may be found in Articles 25 and 26 of the ASEA Collective Bargaining Agreement, for GGU members, or Article 29 of the APEA Collective Bargaining Agreement, for SU members.

Q: When will changes to my position take effect?

A: All study actions are effective July 1, 2010. No actions will be retroactively applied to any date prior to July 1st.

Q: I'm receiving a salary range increase as a result of the study. When will I see the increase in pay?

A: All study actions are effective July 1, 2010, and will show-up on the July 28th payday.

Q: What if my overtime eligibility changes?

A: Please meet with your supervisor to discuss internal policy and procedures.

Q: My position is currently an Eligibility Technician I (Flex I/II) and flexible staffing is being removed. Does this mean I will be unable to flex to the Eligibility Technician II level after the study is completed?

A: All former flexibly staffed Eligibility Technician I/II positions will be reclassified as non-flexibly staffed Eligibility Technicians II. Flexibly staffed positions currently at the Eligibility Technician I level will be reclassified to Eligibility Technicians II on July 1, 2010.

Q: If my position has changed ranges, do I have to serve a new probationary period, and how long will it be?

A: An employee's status (probationary or permanent) does not change; however, Supervisory bargaining unit members who will receive a greater benefit by applying Article 24.8.C, will have a new probationary period.

Q: When is it appropriate to change job class titles?

A: In addition to analyzing and organizing jobs according to like subject-matter, nature of work, and difficulty of responsibilities, all classification systems further organize jobs by category of work. Typically, these categories are aligned as:

- Clerical
- Technical/Paraprofessional
- Professional
- Managerial
- Skilled Craft and Labor
- First Responder

Please remember that this is a categorization of work for classification purposes only. The State of Alaska classification plan and general classification principles apply the term "Specialist" to the titles of job classes that have been classified as professional category of work. This same plan and principles apply the term "Technician" to the titles of job classes that have been classified as technical/paraprofessional category of work. Job analyses performed during the study indicated that the Eligibility Technicians I-IV continued to perform technical work and, as such, should retain the term "Technician".

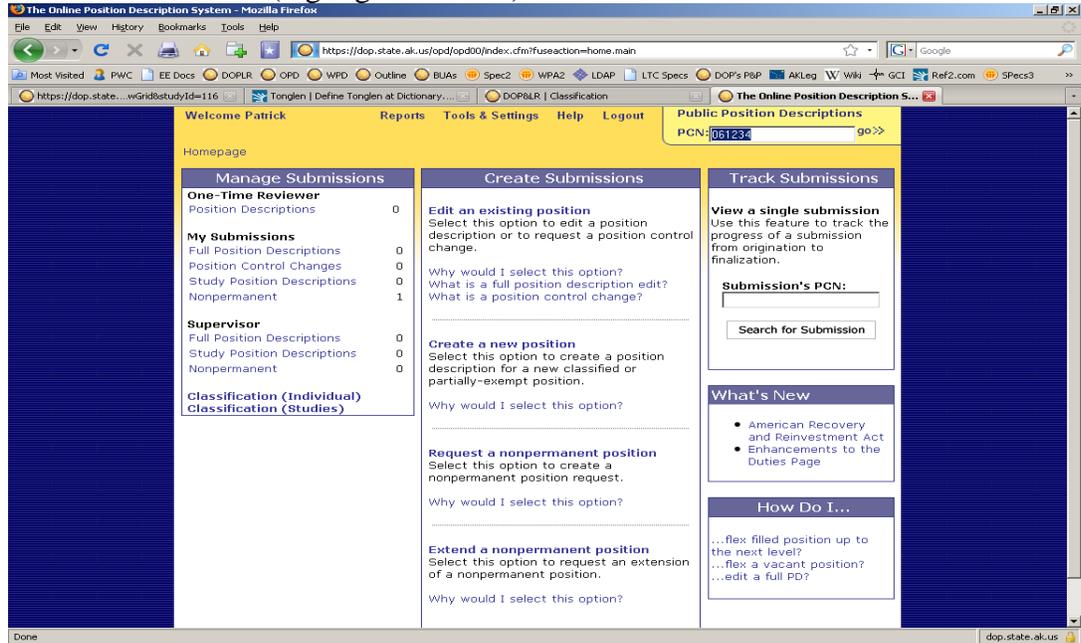
Q: My question wasn't really answered by the above FAQ information. How may I seek additional information?

A: Good question. Of course, one should always consult with his/her supervisor, first; however, there are additional resources available:

1. If you have further questions about this study or the study and classification processes in general, you may:
 - a. Reference the Classification Homepage at <http://doa.alaska.gov/dop/classification/>.
 - b. Reference the "Classification Demystified" edition of *HR Solutions* at <http://doa.alaska.gov/dop/fileadmin/StatewidePlanning/pdf/hrsolutions/FY06Issue1.pdf>.

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- c. Specific study memoranda may be accessed at <http://doa.alaska.gov/dop/classification/archivedClassStudiesList/>.
2. If you wish to review your formal PD, please go to the Online Position Description (OPD) system at <https://dop.state.ak.us/opd/>.
 - a. Your username and password is the same as your State email account.
 - b. Once in the system, you may type your PCN (with no dashes) into the “Public Position Descriptions” function in the upper-right corner of your OPD homepage and follow the links (highlighted below).



3. You may contact the FY2010 Eligibility Technician Study lead analyst at patrick.morrissey@alaska.gov with study and classification-specific questions.
4. You may also direct inquiries to your HR Service Center for additional questions regarding:
 - Payroll - miki.cole@alaska.gov.
 - Recruitment - kaitlyn.essary@alaska.gov.
 - All other related personnel issues of a sensitive nature, unique circumstances, and/or need for more individualized consideration - aaron.gelston@alaska.gov or cindy.carte@alaska.gov.