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Department of Administration

**Memorandum**

To: Kate Sheehan  
Director

Thru: Keith Murry *Keith*  
Class Studies Supervisor

From: Rob Weber, Kirk Thorsteinson, and Sophie Lager *SM*  
Class Studies Analysts

Date: October 31, 2016

Subject: Corrections Job Class Study (CORRECTED)

**Abstract and Findings:**

In partnership with the Department of Corrections, the Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations (DOP&LR) initiated a classification study of the Correctional Officer I-IV job classes. The study was initiated in accordance with ongoing maintenance of job classes and to populate all position descriptions in the Online Position Description system. The specifications for Correctional Officers I-III were last reviewed November 16, 1978; the Correctional Officer IV job class was established November 8, 1999.

This memorandum addresses the study processes and results of the Correctional Officer I-III job classes. The study included 981 positions, all in the Department of Corrections at the Correctional Officer I/II (coupled class) and Correctional Officer III levels.

Job analysis identified a new body of work between the Correctional Officer II and III levels, resulting in a shift in the Correctional Officer titles; the new job class is titled Correctional Officer III. The legacy Correctional Officer III job class is retitled Correctional Officer IV. The legacy Correctional Officer IV job class will be retitled to Correctional Supervisor to reflect primary responsibility as a supervisory job class and addressed in a separate phase.

Existing salary range assignments remain unchanged and the new Correctional Officer III job class is inserted in the series at range 14.

Class codes were revised to reflect changes in the structure and ensure accurate conversion to the expanded series: Correctional Officer I (PJ0311, Range 11), Correctional Officer II (PJ0312, Range 13), Correctional Officer III (PJ0315, Range 14), and Correctional Officer IV (PJ0316, Range 15).

The new and revised job class series and position allocations are effective November 1, 2016.

**Study Contacts:**

The primary study contact for the Corrections Job Class Study was April Wilkerson (Administrative Services Director). Additional contacts included Dean Williams (Department of Corrections Commissioner), Clare Sullivan (Deputy Commissioner of Institutions), and Bruce Busby (Director of Institutions).

**History of Job Classes:**

The Correctional Officer job class series began in the Department of Health and Social Services and is currently in the Department of Corrections. The Correctional Officer job class series was established March 1, 1970 as a two level series, salary ranges 13 and 15. At the request of the Department of Health and Social Services, effective November 16, 1971 the Correctional Officer Trainee job class was created to provide a means of entry into the Correctional Officer series. In response to a Department of Health and Social Services request to revise existing job class specifications, effective November 16, 1978 the series was retitled to Correctional Officer I-III and the I level's salary increased from 9 to 11. In 1991, class specifications for the series were updated to include Alaska Police Standards Council (APSC) requirements for employment. Correctional Officers hired after February 9, 1991 became subject to requirements established by the APSC while those continuously employed prior were grandfathered.

**Class Analysis:**

The State's classification plan provides for the grouping of positions into job classes when they are sufficiently similar with respect to duties and responsibilities, degree of supervision exercised and received, and entrance requirements so that: 1) the same title can be used to clearly identify each position; 2) the same minimum qualifications for initial appointment can be established for all positions; 3) the same rate of basic pay can be fairly applied to all positions; and 4) employees in a particular class are considered an appropriate group for purposes of layoff and recall. Job classes should be constructed as broadly as is feasible as long as the tests of similarity are met.

Prior to interviewing incumbents a survey was distributed to all Correctional Officers I-IV to gather information pertaining to their duties associated with their current positions with a response rate of approximately 50 percent. In the course of this project, 126 Correctional Officers I-III were interviewed; 63 Correctional Officers II and 63 Correctional Officers III. These interviews revealed that Correctional Officers continue to perform a wide variety of administrative, operational, and educational duties in support of the safety and security of adult correctional facilities, personnel, and inmates, but the way these duties are performed has shifted over time. The mission of State of Alaska correctional institutions has shifted from incarceration to incarceration with rehabilitation, with correctional staff providing support for a rehabilitative and therapeutic environment focused on preparing inmates for re-entry to society. This requires greater and more personal interaction between the Correctional Officers and inmates, and as a result, there is an increased demand for skills in oral communication, crisis management, inmate management, cultural comprehension, and the ability to maintain cooperative relationships and model socially acceptable attitudes and behavior.

Correctional Officers I continue to learn and perform skills for the custody, security, and rehabilitation of prisoners in an adult correctional institution or facility. Incumbents participate in

on-the-job and classroom training programs through the Department of Corrections Training Academy and Field In-Service Training Program. Correctional Officers I are expected to complete training, obtain APSC certification, and progress to journey level within 14 months of hire so they can perform the full range of security duties.

Correctional Officers II are the journey level of the series and are responsible for performing the full range of security duties in an adult correctional institution or facility. This level performs work independently and may be assigned any standard post within a facility.

Job analysis identified a new body of work between the Correctional Officer II and legacy Correctional Officer III levels. These positions compose the specialized level of the series with increased responsibility and authority to make higher level decisions such as training and certifying security staff, conducting prisoner transports, making disciplinary decisions for prisoner conduct, time accounting calculations, and/or being in charge of a canine. Due to the specialized nature of these positions, when present in institutions their numbers are limited and tied to their primary duty assignment. Specialized training and/or certifications are substantiated in individual position descriptions. Other positions may possess specialty certifications without having specialized duty assignments. This level is identified as Correctional Officer III.

Correctional Officers IV are the lead level of the series; incumbents lead the work of one or more subordinate Correctional Officers and/or administrative staff or serve as a permanent instructor at the Department of Corrections Training Academy. Incumbents may be required to possess specialized training and/or certifications if they work and lead positions in a specialized field, such as Records, Prisoner Transportation, and/or security.

The work is categorized as first responder as the work involves providing for the safety and security of the public and protection from destructive forces and requires specialized knowledge and training to enforce laws and respond to situations endangering life or property; however, the work does not meet the requirements outlined in the Salary Alignment of Emergency Response Jobs Memorandum dated August 15, 2013.

**Class Title:**

A class title should be the best descriptive title for the work. It is intended to concisely and accurately convey the kind and level of work performed and should be brief, easily recognized, gender neutral, and understood by potential applicants.

Correctional Officer I-IV continues to be appropriate for identifying positions responsible for performing a wide variety of administrative, operational, and educational duties in support of the safety and security of adult correctional facilities, personnel, and inmates.

**Minimum Qualifications:**

The minimum qualifications established for a job class must relate to the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform the work and must not create an artificial barrier to employment of individuals in protected classes. Required training should be limited to the basic formal training that customarily prepares individuals for work in the field. Experience requirements are intended to ensure new employees can successfully perform the work after a period of orientation or familiarization. Required experience should be directly related to the actual duties of positions in the

class and should not be equivalent to the work to be performed. “Minimum qualifications” should not be confused with “desired qualifications.”

The minimum qualifications for Correctional Officers I have been set to allow the widest possible candidate pool with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to gain APSC certification. Correctional Officers are required to complete the Alaska Correctional Officer Academy or equivalent program accredited by the APSC prior to progression to the Correctional Officer II level.

Performance of work at the Correctional Officer III requires considerable knowledge of correctional statutes, regulations, and procedures; skill in understanding and impartially applying institutional policies, procedures, and techniques used with inmate populations; and detailed knowledge and skill in one or more areas of specialization. This combination of knowledge and skills is traditionally gained through experience performing duties which support the custody, security, and reformation of prisoners in an adult correctional institution at the Correctional Officer II level. Due to the specialized nature of the work performed by Correctional Officers III, possession of special certification(s) or additional training directly related to the primary function of the specific position, as noted in individual Position Descriptions, is also required.

Performance of work at the Correctional Officer IV level requires considerable knowledge of correctional statutes, regulations, and procedures; skill in understanding and impartially applying institutional policies, procedures, and techniques used with inmate populations; and the ability to lead staff, including assigning work, setting task priorities, checking quality of work, evaluating performance, and instructing and training. This combination of knowledge and skills is traditionally gained through a minimum of two years’ experience performing duties which support the custody, security, and reformation of prisoners in an adult correctional institution at the Correctional Officer II level or higher, but may also be gained through experience performing the full range of probation/parole duties to assess, evaluate, and guide incarcerated or released felony adult offenders. Due to the specialized nature of the work performed by some Correctional Officers IV, possession of special certification(s) or additional training directly related to the primary function of the specific position, as noted in the individual Position Descriptions, may also be required.

### **Fair Labor Standards Act**

The positions in this study are covered by the minimum wage and maximum hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as Amended (FLSA). While exemption from the provisions of the Act are determined based on the specific circumstances of an individual employee on a work-week basis, there are general aspects of the classes and their influence on the exemptions for employees in bona fide executive, professional, or administrative positions that can be addressed in general.

Correctional Officers I-IV do not meet the Executive Employees exemption because their primary duty is not management of a line function of the agency or supervision of employees; do not meet the Administrative Employees exemption because their primary duty level of authority does not include the exercise of discretion and independent judgment with respect to matters of significance; and do not meet the Professional Employees exemption because their primary duty does not require knowledge of an advanced type in a field of science or learning customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction. Correctional Officers I-IV will not meet any FLSA exemptions and will be eligible for overtime.

**Class Coding and Salary Analysis:**

A Class Code is assigned based on the placement of the job class in the classification schematic of Occupational Groups and Job Families. Occupational Groups are made up of related Job Families and encompass relatively broad occupations, professions, or activities. Job Families are groups of job classes and class series that are related as to the nature of the work performed and typically have similar initial preparation for employment and career progression.

The Correctional Officers I-IV perform work that falls under the Corrections Job Family (PJ03), which includes classes of positions that advise on, administer, supervise or perform work involved in the supervision, safeguarding, therapy and/or vocational training of people committed to correctional facilities or detention centers. Initial preparation for employment is typically through specialized on-the-job training with subsequent career progression based on progressively responsible experience. A combination of current and new Class Codes and AKPAY Codes will be used as follows:

<b>Job Class</b>	<b>AKPAY Code</b>	<b>Class Code</b>
Correctional Officer I	P7646	PJ0311
Correctional Officer II	P7653	PJ0312
Correctional Officer III	K0169	PJ0315
Correctional Officer IV	K0170	PJ0316

The State primarily aligns the salary ranges of job classes internally. Under internal alignment, the salary range of a job class is determined based on internal consistency within the State's pay plans with the goal of providing fair and reasonable compensation for services rendered and 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 job classes of a similar nature, kind, and level first in the same job family; then within other job families within the same occupational group.

To ensure internal consistency with the State's pay plan the Correctional Officer I-IV job classes were compared with the Juvenile Justice Officer I-III job class series within the PJ03 Corrections job family. While the knowledge, skills, and abilities have shifted to accommodate the Department's focus on rehabilitation, Correctional Officers I, II, and IV continue to align with the Juvenile Justice Officer job class series at the trainee, journey, and lead levels of responsibility. The Correctional Officer III job class is properly aligned between the journey and lead levels.

Based on the analysis of the duties and responsibilities typical of the job class series, the comparison with other job classes, the goals for the pay plan, and the need to provide sufficient range separation between classes to recognize and compensate differences in skills, difficulty, and responsibility, it is recommended that Correctional Officers I remain assigned to salary range 11; Correctional Officers II remain salary range 13; Correctional Officers III will be inserted at salary range 14; and Correctional Officers IV remain salary range 15.

These revisions are effective November 1, 2016.

Attachments:

Final class specifications

Allocation Spreadsheet

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