

# MEMORANDUM

## State of Alaska Department of Administration Division of Personnel

**To:** Administrative Service Directors  
Human Resource Managers

**Date:** September 16, 2002

**From:** Sharon Barton, Director

**Phone:** 465-4429

**Subject:** HR Classification Study  
Human Resource Technicians

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Attached herewith is the final class specification for the new Human Resource Technician class series. The class specifications are effective September 1, 2001.

### HISTORY

The State of Alaska and the Confidential Employees Association entered into Letter of Agreement (LOA) 01-KK-048 as part of the 2000 – 2003 collective bargaining agreement. The LOA required the State to conduct a classification study of Human Resource job classifications placed primarily within the Confidential Unit. The study was to include, but was not limited to, the following job classes:

- Human Resource Manager I, II, III
- Personnel Officer I, II
- Personnel Specialist I, II, III
- Personnel Assistant I, II
- Employee Resource Consultant Specialist
- Employee Resource Consultant Manager
- Labor Relations Specialist I, II, III
- Personnel Manager I, II

The Labor Management Committee (LMC) established by the contract identified the following problems and concerns to be addressed:

Personnel Assistant I:

- Difficulty exists in recruitment and in the interpretation of the qualifications.

Human Resource Managers:

- Range 19 (HRM I) is obsolete.
- Criteria established at all levels to not seem realistic distinctions of complexity.
- Is this a separate job class series or an extension of the Personnel Officer?
- The level of influence on department/“change element” influence.

Salary Ranges for all HR jobs:

- New factors – delegation and federal mandates

- Retention and recruitment
- Increased liability

Career Tracks:

- Generalist vs. Specialist positions
- Inequity
- No range 16 exists in the generalist – either as a technician or entry professional.

Centralized vs. Delegated:

- Equity in job classes available
- Overtime exemption inequity

The Department of Administration solicited bids to conduct the study and develop new class specifications. A contract was awarded under the procurement rules and the contractor met with the Committee several times, held group interviews with selected incumbents, and produced draft specifications. After several unsuccessful attempts to improve the quality of the work product, the State cancelled the contract. A Working Group composed of the union members of the LMC and several Division of Personnel (DOP) staff members began anew and completed work on the study. The State contracted with Cooperative Personnel Services (CPS) to study the Human Resource Manager and Personnel Manager job classes. The consultant interviewed the incumbents and issued a report and recommendations to the Director of Personnel in July 2002.

All Position Descriptions (PDs) were read and reviewed. A list of duty statements representative of the various HR functional areas and levels of work was developed and distributed to the Human Resource Managers (HRMs). The HRMs categorized the tasks as clerical, technical, or administrative. Responses from each department were compiled and reviewed; the Working Group assigned the category when there was no consensus among the department responses.

Teams of interviewers from the Division of Personnel and the departments conducted position interviews with the incumbents of most positions in the departments and in DOP. The results of the interviews were reported to the Working Group and used, along with the PDs and function lists, to develop and clarify the class specifications.

The consultant interviewed all Human Resource Managers and Personnel Managers as planned, and requested additional interviews with the Classification Manager and the Employee Programs Manager. From those interviews and from information supplied by each department, the consultant prepared a report of findings to the Director of Personnel.

The LMC and the Division of Personnel hosted a briefing in late July at which CPS consultant Rick McWilliams presented his report and recommendations regarding the Human Resource Manager and Personnel Manager class series. Draft specifications were distributed for the other human resource series included in the study. Reallocation of positions in classifications covered by the study was suspended effective August 1, 2002, to allow for completion and implementation of the study.

A formal comment period followed the briefing during which departments were invited to make specific remarks and suggestions about all but the Human Resource Manager, Human Resource

Officer and Personnel Manager job classes. All comments were collected by the Division of Personnel and forwarded to the Working Group, which considered and made a determination regarding each recommendation. Reports summarizing these decisions will be distributed to agencies following implementation of Phase One. While the comment period was underway, two general meetings were held to discuss questions raised by agency representatives. The first meeting addressed the technical series; the second meeting addressed the professional series. Both meetings were well attended, with representation from most departments.

Whereas Phase I of the study was scheduled for implementation on September 16, 2002, the Working Group imposed a deadline of August 1, 2002, for revised PDs to be considered part of the study.

Following revision of the class specifications based on the comments received and the further deliberations of the Working Group, three test allocation sessions were held. Definitions and Distinguishing Characteristics for the following classes were considered: Human Resource Assistant, Human Resource Technician I-III, Payroll Supervisor, Human Resource Specialist I-III, and Human Resource Officer. The Working Group considered the issues raised in the test allocations and made final revisions to the class specifications. In addition, the Working Group concluded that it needed additional information in order to resolve questions about work performed by positions that provide professional human resource services exclusively to specific divisions or regions, as well as those that act as “seconds” or “assistants” to Human Resource Managers. The Working Group determined that action on the individual positions should be deferred to Phase Two, that audits should be conducted, and that final action on class specifications occur in conjunction with the Human Resource Manager and Personnel Manager job classes. The recommendation was forwarded to the LMC.

The Working Group finalized the class specifications and presented its work product and recommendations to the full LMC on September 3, 2002. At that meeting the Working Group recommended that positions providing comprehensive HR services to regions or divisions, as well as those that serve in the capacity of a “second” or an “Assistant HRM,” be given additional scrutiny and that actions on these positions be deferred until Phase Two. The LMC concurred. As a result, DOP staff will audit these positions to develop accurate position information covering the study period. This information will be used to draft Phase Two class specifications and, if appropriate, to recommend revisions to the Human Resource Specialist series to incorporate all or some of the audited work.

The Working Group deferred its review of the consultant’s report until after the implementation of the Phase I class specifications on September 16; work on the Human Resource Managers, Personnel Managers, Human Resource Officer, Payroll Manager, and Retirement & Benefits Manager will be completed at a later date.

The Director approved the final class specifications. The following job classes and series are established:

- Human Resource Assistant
- Human Resource Technician I, II, III
- Payroll Supervisor

Payroll Specialist I, II, III  
AMHS Dispatcher  
Human Resource Specialist I, II, III  
Labor Relations Analyst I, II, III, IV

The interview teams reviewed the PDs, interview notes, and any additional information in conjunction with the final class specifications and recommended individual position allocations.

## **SCOPE**

The study was limited to positions allocated to Human Resource job classifications placed primarily within the Confidential Unit. Positions allocated to job classes shared with other bargaining units were not included (i.e. Analyst Programmers). Departments were invited to submit PDs of individual clerical positions that they believed might perform work properly allocated to a HR class.

## **SERIES CONCEPTS**

Human Resource Technicians (HRT) perform a variety of technical work in one or more standard human resource functional areas, including recruitment and selection, classification, training, employer provided benefit programs, personnel and payroll, and labor relations. Duties are accomplished in compliance with applicable labor contracts, rules, policies, procedures, instructions and guidelines. Incumbents obtain information from multiple sources, identify the appropriate guides and precedents, and interpret and apply them to particular circumstances. The degree of independence to interpret and select from among competing guides determines levels within the series. Lead or supervisory duties may be assigned at any level, but are not class controlling except at the HRT III level.

**Human Resource Technician I** is the entry level of the technical series. Under general supervision, HRTs I complete, process and audit documents and provide technical information and assistance to managers, employees and the public in support of a departmental, Division of Personnel, or Division of Finance human resource program.

HRTs I perform entry level technical work in one or more standard human resource functional areas, including recruitment and selection, classification, training, employer provided benefit programs, personnel and payroll, and labor relations. Positions are assigned routine, recurring technical duties that are well defined, require attention to detail, and are completed in compliance with specific instructions, and readily identifiable and obviously applicable labor contracts, rules, policies, procedures and guidelines. Incumbents obtain information from multiple sources, identify the appropriate guides and precedents, and interpret and apply them to particular circumstances that typically require little variation from standard procedures. Work is ordinarily performed independently and may be reviewed prior to final action or on completion. Situations in which it is difficult to determine or there are disputes about which guides apply or take precedence are ordinarily referred to higher level human resource staff for direction or resolution. Lead or supervisory duties may be assigned, but are not class controlling at this level.

**Human Resource Technician II** is the journey level of the technical HR series. Under general

direction, HRTs II complete, process and audit documents and provide technical information and assistance to managers, employees and the public in support of a departmental, Division of Personnel or Division of Finance human resource program.

HRTs II perform journey level technical work in one or more standard human resource functional areas, including recruitment and selection, classification, training, employer provided benefit programs, personnel and payroll, and labor relations. Positions perform a broad scope of technical tasks in compliance with standard methods, established labor contracts, rules, policies, procedures and guidelines. Incumbents routinely take or effectively recommend action and correct errors in situations that require interpretation, coordination or reconciliation of multiple guides. Decisions typically affect an individual person, or a single event or transaction rather than large groups or systems. Work is performed independently and may be reviewed on completion through standard audits or error reporting. Unusual or sensitive issues are ordinarily referred to higher-level human resource staff for direction or resolution. Lead or supervisory duties may be assigned, but are not class controlling at this level.

**Human Resource Technician III** is the working supervisor level of the technical HR series. Positions supervise department personnel and payroll units and perform advanced technical work completing, processing and auditing personnel and payroll documents.

Under general direction, HRTs III have a dual function: 1) to perform advanced technical work completing, processing and auditing personnel and payroll documents, **and** 2) to supervise personnel and payroll units containing two or more HRTs II. Incumbents have substantial involvement in production payroll and are responsible for handling unusual or sensitive technical matters or projects requiring detailed research and analysis on a frequent or regular and recurring rather than occasional basis. These technical assignments require detailed knowledge of rules, policies, procedures, guidelines, standard practices and labor contracts, and the ability to select and apply them in situations in which facts are difficult to obtain, it is not readily apparent which guides and precedents apply, or there are conflicts between arguably applicable guides. In addition, HRTs III analyze existing work methods and procedures, develop new work processes and recommend implementation. HRTs III are full supervisors and exercise substantial authority to appoint, promote, transfer, discipline and discharge clerical and technical employees.

## **ANALYSIS**

The LMC recognized difficulty exists in recruitment and in the interpretation of the qualifications for the paraprofessional series and identified discrepancies between the work performed by positions at each level. The Working Group considered the full range of technical work and identified three levels of complexity and responsibility in the technical work performed as part of a human resource function.

Positions in the Human Resource Technician series are distinguished by the performance of technical tasks in one or more human resource functional areas. Allocation to this series is contingent upon the assignment and performance of class controlling work in support of a departmental or central agency human resource function. The work characteristic of the Human Resource Technician series was previously described in the Personnel Assistant series.

Levels in the Human Resource Technician series are distinguished by the independence required, scope, variety and complexity of work and scope of authority assigned. At the entry level (HRT I) positions perform routine, recurring technical duties that are well defined, require attention to detail, and are completed in compliance with specific instructions, and readily identifiable and obviously applicable guides which are applied to particular circumstances that typically require little variation from standard procedures. At the journey level (HRT II) positions independently perform a broad scope of technical tasks in compliance with guides and refer unusual or sensitive issues to higher-level staff for direction or resolution. At the advanced level (HRT III) positions perform advanced technical work completing, processing and auditing personnel and payroll documents and supervise personnel and payroll units containing two or more HRTs II.

### **SALARY ANALYSIS**

In accord with the principal of internal alignment, the salary ranges for the Human Resource Technician series were compared to clerical, paraprofessional and supervisory classes in the Personnel and Employee Relations family (P14XX), the Accounting and Fiscal family (P12XX), the General Administrative family (P19XX), the Document Examination family (P75XX), the Labor and Employment Services family (P46XX), the Arts, Photography and Information family (P36XX), the Vocational Rehabilitation family (P33XX) and the Clerical and Secretarial family (P11XX).

The classes most comparable to the Human Resource Technician I are Wage-Hour Technician (R10), Law Office Assistant (R11), Publications Technician I (R11), Recorder II (R11), Retirement and Benefits Technician II (R12), Accounting Technician I (R12), PFD Technician (R12), Status Examiner (R12), Vocational Rehabilitation Assistant II (R12) and Law Office Assistant II (R13). These are entry-level paraprofessional positions within an administrative or professional field. Positions work under the supervision of fully proficient and experienced practitioners. Incumbents in the HRT series complete, process, and audit documents and provide technical information and assistance in one or more standard human resource functional areas. The technical work performed and the audits conducted are directly comparable to the work performed by Accounting Technicians I and Retirement and Benefits Technicians II. Allocation to salary range 12 is appropriate.

The classes most comparable to the Human Resource Technician II are Administrative Assistant (R13), Accounting Technician II (R14), PFD Technician II (R14), Retirement and Benefits Technician III (R14), Word Processing Center Supervisor (R14) and Vocational Rehabilitation Assistant III (R15). These are journey level paraprofessional positions within an administrative or professional field. Positions perform a broad scope of technical tasks in one or more standard human resource functional areas. Incumbents independently take or effectively recommend action and correct errors in situations that require interpretation, coordination or reconciliation of multiple guides. The independence, complexity of work, and level of responsibility are directly comparable to the work performed by Accounting Technicians II, PFD Technicians II, and Retirement and Benefits Technicians III. Allocation to salary range 14 is appropriate.

The classes most comparable to the Human Resource Technician III are PFD Unit Supervisor (R15), Law Office Manager (R15), Recorder IV (R15), Administrative Manager I (R15) and Accounting Supervisor I (R16). These are the working supervisor levels of paraprofessional

series. HRT III positions have substantial involvement in production payroll and are responsible for handling unusual or sensitive technical matters or projects requiring detailed research and analysis as well as supervising the work of journey level positions. The supervisory authority with responsibility for performing the advanced paraprofessional work is directly comparable to the PFD Unit Supervisor and Recorder IV. Allocation to salary range 15 is appropriate.

Human Resource Technicians III and Payroll Supervisors both supervise a department payroll unit; however, the Payroll Supervisor has full delegated responsibility for the payroll function, regularly exercises decision-making authority for departmental personnel and payroll related work processes and procedures, and is responsible the more complex analytical and evaluative aspects of the payroll related work rather than performance of the process oriented assignments typical of the Human Resource Technician III. Due to the substantive difference in the scope of responsibility and authority to manage the payroll system of a department, the Human Resource Technician III is allocated one range lower than the Payroll Supervisor.

## **CONCLUSION**

The technical work performed in support of a departmental, Division of Personnel, or Division of Finance human resource function and the knowledge, skills and abilities required indicate the positions are appropriately grouped into a class series. Three distinct levels of technical work were identified: entry, journey, and working supervisor. The class specifications accurately define and distinguish the work, allow for career progression, and provide minimum qualifications that will provide a broad pool of qualified applicants.

Human Resource Technicians I, II, and III are assigned salary ranges 12, 14, and 15 respectively.

The attached class specifications are established September 16, 2002, and are effective retroactively to September 1, 2001, pursuant to LOA 01-KK-048 as amended.

Attachments