

MEMORANDUM

State of Alaska
Department of Administration
Division of Personnel & Labor Relations

To: Dianne Kiesel
Director

Date: June 1, 2007

From: Sarah Brinkley
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Subject: Executive Director, DH&SS Boards Study

Introduction:

The Department of Health & Social Services (DH&SS) submitted a position description for PCN 060601 in early January 2007 requesting a range change, and in mid-February 2007 followed up with a request for a salary analysis of the single position job class, Executive Director, DH&SS Boards, to which this PCN is currently allocated. In the classification questionnaire of the position description, the supervisor notes the fact that by Executive Order, as of July 2005, administration for the Advisory Board on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and the Alaska Mental Health Board were combined; the two former Executive Directors were asked to resign and duties of the positions were merged into PCN 060601.

Study Scope:

This salary analysis covers the single-position job class, Executive Director, DH&SS Boards (range 22). This professional position belongs to the partially exempt service.

Internal Alignment:

The salary range of a job class is determined based on internal consistency within the State's pay plans, in accordance with merit principles, 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 in the same occupational group and job family or related job families.

The Executive Director, DH&SS Boards job class provides staff support to the Advisory Board on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and the Alaska Mental Health Board in planning, coordinating, and administering the programs and activities needed to accomplish statutorily mandated Board goals and responsibilities. Characteristic duties include assisting the Boards in program planning, development, implementation and evaluation; developing, monitoring and implementing the Boards' budgets; engaging in persuasive negotiations for resources or commitments of support; providing educational outreach to the public on the mental health, behavioral health, substance abuse and co-occurring disorder issues and needs; supervising

support staff; and coordinating development of a variety of reports, briefing papers, option papers and draft regulations or legislation.

The work requires advanced education and advanced professional program management experience. Work is assigned in general terms and performed independently. Initiative is used to anticipate and orchestrate support for the Boards' needs; develop plans, procedures, budgets, and educational outreach materials; and plan, manage and direct special projects. The scope of contacts is statewide, both internal and external to State government, and for the chief purpose of garnering support for and managing Board proposals, projects and programs. The scope of decisions and recommendations is focused primarily on Board administration, with the potential for beneficiaries' loss of service program funding and an escalation of unmet beneficiary needs. The Executive Director, DH&SS Boards directs the work of professional planning, research and program coordination staff as well technical and clerical support staff.

Professional type work, by definition, is creative, analytical, evaluative, interpretive, and requires a range and depth of specialized and theoretical knowledge in a field of science or learning characteristically acquired through education or training equivalent to a bachelor's degree or higher. The work requires the exercise of discretion, judgment, and personal responsibility for the application of an organized body of knowledge that is constantly studied to make new discoveries and interpretations, and to improve data, materials, and methods.

Comparison classes for the Executive Director, DH&SS Boards were selected on the basis of also being professional, partially-exempt director or administrator job classes for health- or social service-related boards and commissions. Job classes fell within four job families: Health Administration, Nursing (professional), Mental and Behavioral Health Services, and Business Regulation and Compliance. The first three job families belong to the PG Medical, Public Health and Related occupational group, while the last job family belongs to the PC Business Development and Regulation occupational group.

PG01: Health Administration. The Executive Director, DH&SS Boards job class itself falls within the Health Administration job family of classes that advise on, plan or coordinate health programs and services. Initial preparation for employment is typically through advanced education in a medical field and experience with subsequent career progression based on progressively responsible experience. Comparisons within this family were made to the following job class:

- Range 23 Executive Director, Alaska Commission on Aging

PG03: Nursing, Professional. This family includes classes of positions that administer, supervise or perform professional nursing work. Included are classes of positions that teach nursing, provide consultative services, or evaluate or administer programs related to nursing. Initial preparation for employment is typically through advanced education in nursing with subsequent career progression based on progressively higher education and responsible experience. Licensure as a Registered Nurse is typically required. Comparisons within this family were made to the following job class:

- Range 23 Executive Administrator, Board of Nursing

PG05: Mental and Behavioral Health Services. This family includes classes of positions that advise on, administer, supervise or perform work related to mental health, alcoholism, developmental disabilities, counseling and other related programs. Initial preparation for employment is typically through advanced education in a behavioral science with subsequent career progression based on specialized education and responsible experience. Comparisons within this family were made to the following two job classes:

- Range 21 Coordinator, Suicide Prevention Council
- Range 22 Executive Director, Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education

PC02 Business Regulation and Compliance. This family includes classes of positions that administer, supervise or perform work related to the regulation, including financial regulation, of businesses and occupational licensing. Initial preparation for employment is typically through advanced education in the professional area regulated or experience with subsequent career progression based on progressively responsible experience. Comparisons within this family were made to the following job class:

- Range 18 Executive Administrator, State Medical Board

Analysis:

The five comparison classes and the subject class share a common primary purpose of administering the affairs of their respective board, commission or council and providing staff support for its functions. These positions work independently with minimal oversight from department executives, and represent their organization with the legislature, other State agencies, constituent groups and the public.

Minimal differences among the classes do exist. The Executive Administrator, Board of Nursing job class requires licensure as a registered nurse, and involves oversight of a chemical dependency program, administration of nursing licensure, and approval of nursing school and continuing education programs in Alaska. The incumbent refers complaints and allegations of statutory violations by licensees for investigation by the Division and the Department of Law. Similarly, the Executive Administrator, State Medical Board forwards complaints and allegations for investigation. Both may represent and communicate their respective board's interest during preparation of disciplinary agreements and other legal documents, and may assist with the compilation and interpretation of evidence in cases of alleged wrong doing by licensees.

The class specifications for the Executive Administrator, Board of Nursing (currently SR 23 after a 2-range pay increase for all nursing-related job classes) and Executive Administrator, State Medical Board (SR 18) are very similar and yet as a result of a class study concluding in May 2003, the ranges were established as 21 and 18. The class study files, which might shed some light on this apparent disparity, are not among the Division of Personnel's collection and therefore these classes are eliminated from consideration.

The Executive Director, Alaska Commission on Aging (SR 24) was abolished in 1984 and reestablished ten years later, at which point range 23 was assigned at the Department of Administration's request, with the justification that this neatly placed it halfway between division Directors at range 26, and Program Coordinators at range 20. No analysis of duties, responsibilities and authority was conducted, and therefore this job class is also excluded from consideration in establishing equitable compensation for the Executive Director, DH&SS Boards.

Historically, the Executive Director, Advisory Board on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and the Executive Director, Alaska Mental Health Board job classes existed within the Department and functioned at range 22. When the Executive Director, Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (formerly titled Governor's Council for the Handicapped and Gifted) was established in February 1990, comparison was made to the very similar Executive Director, Alaska Mental Health Board, and this class too was assigned range 22. Then in January 2002, the Coordinator, Suicide Prevention Council job class was established. It compared favorably with all three of the DH&SS board Executive Director job classes but was established at range 21 to recognize the Council's smaller staff and budget size, which translated to less responsibility and complexity in those areas. Finally, the Executive Director, DH&SS Boards was established in June 2005 when administration for the Advisory Board on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and the Alaska Mental Health Board was combined and the duties of those two previous single-board executive directors were merged into one position. The classification characteristics of the two former parent classes were virtually identical and both had been assigned range 22. While it is true that the volume of work assigned to the new merged position is greater than that of each of the former single-board parent classes, the nature of the responsibilities, the complexity of assignments and the authority level granted to the position did not change with the merger and thus range 22 remained the appropriate compensation for this job class. Between the establishment of the new merged class and present, the duties and responsibilities assigned to the class have remained constant, and therefore range 22 continues to be supported.

Conclusions:

The Department requested that a pay analysis be conducted for the Executive Director, DH&SS Boards to determine if the combining of duties of two former classes should have rightfully resulted in a range increase for the resulting merged class. Salary assignment for positions in the classified and partially exempt service are determined through internal alignment with other State job classes. Based upon a review of comparable classes, the Executive Director, DH&SS Boards remains at salary range 22. PCN 060601 is therefore being processed as an update, effective June 1, 2007.

cc: William Hogan, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Health & Social Services

Janet Clarke, Assistant Commissioner
Department of Health & Social Services

Management Services – DH&SS Group

Technical Services – DH&SS Group

Employee Services

Employee Records (original PD, FLSA worksheet & copy of memo)