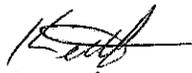




Memorandum

To: Nicki Neal
Director

Thru: Keith Murry 
Class Studies Supervisor

From: Kirk Thorsteinson 
Class Studies Analyst

Date: October 15, 2013

Subject: Unemployment Insurance Specialist Job Class Study

Preamble:

In March, 2013 a classification study request was made of the Unemployment Insurance Specialist IA, IB, and II job classes by the Alaska State Employees Association in accordance with Article 17.02 B of the General Government Unit (GGU) collective bargaining agreement. Started in May, 2013, this study is the last GGU study by contract provision.

Study Scope:

The Unemployment Insurance Specialist IA and IB job classes were abolished on 4/2/2013. The Unemployment Insurance Specialist III job class was added to the scope, in keeping with standard practices and classification principles to ensure the entire series was evaluated. As a result of reclassifying Unemployment Insurance Specialists over the years to the Employment Security Specialist job class series in order to provide organizational simplicity and greater flexibility to complete work, the study positions are now the last Unemployment Insurance Specialist II and III in the State. The study covers one Unemployment Insurance Specialist II and one Unemployment Insurance Specialist III position within the Employment Security Division.

Study Contacts:

Study contacts for the Unemployment Insurance Specialist Job Class Study included David Lefebvre (Unemployment Insurance Support Services Manager), Gerald Pierce (Human Resource Consultant

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IV), and David Harwell (Employment Security Analyst II) from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

History of Job Class:

The Benefits Assistant and Benefits Specialist job class series were established in 1969. In 1978 it was determined a job class study was necessary due to an increase in the number of positions, larger work units, and various changes in the Benefits Section. One goal of the study was to look at the possibility of developing a class series which would parallel the Employment Security Specialist job classes which included IA, IB, II, III, and IV levels.

As a result, the Unemployment Insurance Specialist series was created on June 16, 1978. At that time the series included Unemployment Insurance Specialist IA, IB, II, III, IV, and V job classes. As a result of the reorganization of the Employment Security Division, the Department of Labor requested several class specification revisions, reclassifications, and updating of position descriptions. On November 16, 1979 the Supervisor of Benefits job class was revised and became the Unemployment Insurance Specialist VI. Per the request of the Director of Employment Security, the minimum qualifications for the Unemployment Insurance Specialist III and IV job classes were revised on September 1, 1980 to allow more freedom of movement between the Division's various job classes. Due to extended periods of time without PCNs allocated, the Unemployment Insurance Specialist V and VI were abolished on October 17, 1994; the Unemployment Insurance Specialist IV was abolished on January 26, 2000; and, as mentioned above, the Unemployment Insurance Specialist IA and IB were abolished on April 2, 2013.

Class Analysis:

The State's classification plan provides for the Occupational 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 Occupational 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.

Evaluation of the Unemployment Insurance Specialist II position indicated it was performing a wide variety of functional assignments necessary to the delivery of Unemployment Insurance programs including unemployment insurance benefits payments. Current responsibilities assigned align with the scope, definition, and distinguishing characteristics of the Employment Security Specialist job class series. The current duties are identical to those of Employment Security Specialist IBs in the Unemployment Benefit Payment Control Unit. The position is responsible for performing average-

difficulty technical non-adjudication work, including preparing, printing, and monitoring Wage Audit Notices (WANs) to detect potential unreported work and earnings of Alaska Unemployment Insurance Benefit claimants, and determines corrections to be made to weekly work and earnings by subject claimants on Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims. The incumbent makes an initial assessment of potential fraudulent intent in claimant reporting of associated work, weekly earnings, and job separation and refers potential fraud cases to Unemployment Insurance Fraud Investigators. The position also works with incarcerated clients to determine eligibility for Unemployment Insurance Benefits and initiates collection of overpaid Unemployment Insurance Benefits, then writes and issues an eligibility determination, stating facts and reasoning for the determination.

Due to being a senior employee in the Unemployment Insurance Benefit Payment Control Unit, the incumbent has received additional training and currently specializes in tasks to include 'releases for excess funds,' distributing the incarceration list, and serving as the main contact for other states' Interstate Reciprocal Overpayment Recovery Arrangement requests. In order to promote knowledge transfer and equalize training opportunities and workload, all Employment Security Specialist IB staff will be trained in the future so more than one employee is capable of performing these specialized duties.

Evaluation of the Unemployment Insurance Specialist III indicated the position was performing a wide variety of functional assignments necessary to the delivery of Unemployment Insurance programs including unemployment insurance benefits payments. Current responsibilities assigned align with the scope, definition, and distinguishing characteristics of the Employment Security Specialist job class series. The duties portion of the current position description is largely the same as the position description of record from 6/1/2001. Discussions with the supervisor confirmed these duties are still accurate. The position is responsible for performing Employment Service/Unemployment Insurance work requiring specialized knowledge to include leading the Unemployment Insurance process. The incumbent functions as a coach/mentor and working leader and monitors training progress of employees, assists team members in mastering Unemployment Insurance overpayment fundamentals, and interprets and explains the application of rules, regulations, and program guidelines. The position reviews work products for completeness and correctness, completes technically complex overpayment issues, and provides the team's supervisor with individual and team-wide training progress and needs. In addition, performs a full spectrum of Unemployment Insurance services including all aspects of claims auditing and overpayment recovery.

Due to being a Lead at the Unemployment Insurance Benefit Payment Control Unit, the incumbent has received additional training and exposure to the State of Alaska hiring process, special projects, and senior staff meetings. Some of these duties were inherited when the Unemployment Insurance Specialist IV was abolished and some of these duties were temporary in nature, intended by the

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supervisor for professional training and development rather than an eventual reclassification up to the Employment Security Specialist III job class.

An examination of Employment Security Specialist job classes was conducted and it was determined the study positions could be allocated to the series.

Conclusions:

The Unemployment Insurance Specialist II (075884) is appropriately reclassified to the Employment Security Specialist IB job class. The salary range (14) and eligibility for overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act remain the same.

The Unemployment Insurance Specialist III (075861) is appropriately reclassified to the Employment Security Specialist II job class. The salary range (15) and eligibility for overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act remain the same.

Correspondence on the allocation of this study position is being distributed through the Online Position Description (OPD) system.

The reclassifications and position allocations are effective October 16, 2013.

With the reallocations of these positions there are no remaining positions in the Unemployment Insurance Specialist series. The Unemployment Insurance Specialist II and III will be abolished following the reallocations.

cc: James Harvey, Acting Director
Division of Employment Security
Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Paloma Harbour, Director
Division of Administrative Services
Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Gerald Pierce, Human Resource Consultant IV
Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Jim Duncan, Business Manager
Alaska State Employees Association