

# MEMORANDUM

**State of Alaska**  
**Department of Administration**  
**Division of Personnel**

**To:** Dianne Corso  
Director

**Date:** March 31, 2004

**Thru:** Lee Powelson  
Classification Manager

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**Subject:** Process Coordinator, Regulatory Commission of Alaska (P7103)

On October 16, 2003, the Department of Community and Economic Development submitted a study request for the Regulatory Commission Alaska (RCA) Process Coordinator job class. The department asked for a change in salary range based on changes to the duties and responsibilities of the class brought about by statutory deadlines, established July 1, 2002, for dockets before the Regulatory Commission of Alaska. The department's request included an updated position description for the single position in the class, a departmental Classification Request Questionnaire, and a draft class specification.

**History:**

Regulatory Commission Alaska (RCA) Process Coordinator (P7103) was created on November 5, 2001, as a result of the Department of Community and Economic Development's request to establish a new level in the Paralegal series. The class defined a position responsible for supervising paraprofessional and clerical staff performing legal research, investigation, and preparation of legal documents and coordinating the preparation of formal RCA decisions. The class was assigned salary range 18 based on internal alignment with similar classes in the Legal job family (71XX) in the Legal, Judicial, and Law Enforcement group.

**Scope:**

This study covers the single position in the RCA Process Coordinator job class (PCN 086060). The class, by definition, is reserved to the Regulatory Commission of Alaska in the Department of Community and Economic Development.

**Method:**

The department provided an updated Position Description for PCN 086060, a departmental Classification Request Questionnaire describing the changes in the position's duties and responsibilities, a draft class specification, and a copy of HB 3001 which established time limits for cases before the Commission and provided for automatic approval and implementation of filings when the Commission does not issue a final order or extension within the established timelines.

Information on the scope and level of duties assigned PCN 086060 and the changes in responsibilities resulting from the statutory requirements was gathered in interviews with the incumbent, Rosalie Nizich, and with Dawn Bishop-Kleweno, Special Staff Assistant, Department of Community and Economic Development. Additional information on the responsibilities of the Regulatory Commission of Alaska was gathered from Alaska Statutes and publications issued by the Commission.

The class specification was revised to reflect the information gathered and the draft provided to the department for review and comment. After the comments were received and the class specification finalized, the internal alignment was analyzed and the appropriate salary range determined.

**Analysis:**

The Regulatory Commission of Alaska was established by AS 42.04 to regulate public utilities, certify qualified providers of public utility and pipeline services, and ensure the provision of safe and adequate services and facilities at just and reasonable rates, terms, and conditions. The Commission consists of five Commissioners with professional, paraprofessional, and clerical support staff. In addition to issuing certificates of public convenience, the Commission is responsible for investigating and authorizing all amendments to, or transfers of, certificates, as well as acquisition of controlling interest in certificate holders. Regulated utilities and pipeline carriers must submit to the Commission for approval any proposed changes to their tariffs, which are the written terms, conditions, rules, and rates governing a utility's provision of service. The Commission institutes formal proceedings to consider rate changes, rule changes, special contracts, complaints against utilities and pipeline carriers, investigations of service quality or management practices, and regulations.

HB 3001 did not change the procedural requirements of the various filings received by the Commission. The bill's passage added sections to AS 42.04 establishing time limits for issuing final orders of six, nine, twelve, fifteen, or twenty-four months, dependent on the type of filing. Should the Commission fail to issue a final order within the allotted time, the application or suspended tariff is considered approved and immediately goes into effect.

The defining and distinguishing duties of the job class established in November, 2001, consisted of the supervision and performance of legal research and preparation of legal documents including Commission orders and rulings. The responsibility for overseeing the status of dockets and serving as liaison between commissioners, hearing officers, and professional staff was an important responsibility but not a major portion of the duties of PCN 086060.

With the establishment of strict timelines for issuing decisions on filings, the duties assigned PCN 086060 changed. The duties now predominant include: assigning the appropriate timeline to each filing; ensuring the required procedural stages are scheduled, including public notices, meetings and comment periods; revising schedules as required by changes in the filings or in the parties involved; and working with the Commissioners and senior professional staff to ensure required steps are taken, necessary extensions made, and legislative reports issued. The position continues to supervise paralegal and clerical staff; guide and perform legal research and investigation; and draft and review regulations, orders, decisions, and other legal documents

issued by the Commission, but this is no longer the primary purpose or the majority of duties.

The class specification has been revised to clearly describe the scope and level of responsibilities characteristic of the class; provide minimum qualifications that relate to the required knowledge, skills, and abilities without creating an artificial bar to employment; and address current formatting practices. The class title has been changed to Process Coordinator, Regulatory Commission of Alaska (hereinafter Process Coordinator), to follow current practice and provide a title that is descriptive of the nature and level of work assigned the job class.

**Class Concepts:**

**Definition:** Under direction, the Process Coordinator, schedules, monitors, and coordinates filings before the Commission to ensure procedural requirements and statutory deadlines are met.

**Distinguishing Characteristics:** Process Coordinator, is a single position job class responsible for determining and monitoring the statutory deadline of each case before the Commission. The incumbent in this class works with Commissioners and section heads to schedule cases, provides guidance on procedure and timeframe requirements, and coordinates the processing of cases to ensure deadlines are met. The required procedures are established by statute and regulation based on the nature of the filing; the parties involved; and the requirements for public notices, meetings, comment periods, and hearings. Contacts are primarily with the Attorney General's office to review pros and cons of possible orders and ensure legal opinions are included in appropriate cases; with professional staff in the engineering, finance, tariff, consumer protection, common carrier, and investigations sections to coordinate inclusion of their analyses and findings; and with other state and federal regulatory commissions to research trends, procedures, regulations, and the basis of decisions.

The nature of the work assigned the Process Coordinator and the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for entry into the job class indicate the class is appropriately placed in the Legal job family (71XX). This family includes classes that advise on, administer, supervise, or perform professional or paraprofessional legal work. The class code P7103 remains appropriate.

**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 job group and family or related job families.

In analyzing the internal alignment of the Process Coordinator, comparisons were first made with classes in the Legal (71XX) job family. The classes with similar requirements for knowledge of legal practices and procedures, drafting sound legal documents, and coordinating legal cases include: Paralegal II (P7106-16), Associate Attorney I (P7110-17), Attorney I (P7142-18), Associate Attorney II (P7111-19), and Attorney II (P7143-20).

The legal knowledge required and scope of responsibility assigned the Process Coordinator is greater than that of Paralegals but less than what is required of Attorneys. The scope and variety

of work, level of independent responsibility for drafting documents, and sensitivity and controversy of cases exhibits characteristics found in both the Associate Attorney I and Associate Attorney II classes, but not fully at the level of the higher class. This indicates the Process Coordinator would properly be placed at a range between the Associate Attorney levels. The state's standard practice of providing a two-range interval between a supervisory class and the highest class supervised (in this case Paralegal II) would provide the same range.

In the Legal, Judicial, and Law Enforcement Group classes with similar coordination and supervision responsibilities are found in the Document Examination (75XX) job family. Comparisons were made with Law Office Manager II (P7506-16), Recorder Manager (P7524-17), Motor Vehicle Office Manager II (P7562-17), and Motor Vehicle Office Manager III (P7563-20). These classes manage clerical processes and staff. The difficulty and originality of work and range of skills required to manage paraprofessional processes and staff is greater than is characteristic of these classes. However, the responsibilities of the Motor Vehicle Office Manager III for supervising a variety of operations in the state's largest urban office through subordinate supervisors, and managing certain statewide programs, indicates the class is assigned greater responsibility and complexities than are found in the Process Coordinator. This indicates the Process Coordinator would properly be placed at a range lower than the Motor Vehicle Office Manager III, but higher than the other classes considered.

To ensure full evaluation of the scope and level of duties additional comparisons were made with classes in other groups assigned similar responsibilities for process administration, coordination, and planning: Project Assistant (P4229-16), Vessel Scheduling Coordinator (P2140-17), Executive Administrator, State Board of Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors (P2328-18), Associate Coordinator (P4230-18), Project Coordinator (P4677-18), Executive Administrator, Real Estate Commission (P2327-19), Claims Administrator (P2390-19), Social Services Program Coordinator (P4135-20), Program Coordinator (P4678-20), Criminal Justice Planner (P2221-21), and Executive Administrator, Board of Nursing (P5130-21).

The specialized knowledge required, level of controversy of cases, and statewide programmatic responsibilities indicate the Process Coordinator should be placed at a range higher than the Project Assistant or Vessel Scheduling Coordinator. Evaluation of the decision-making authority reserved to the Commission and the level of authority for making and implementing decisions assigned the Process Coordinator; the difficulties and controversy of cases; the consequence of error; and the purpose and nature of person-to-person contacts indicates the Process Coordinator should be placed at a lower range than the Claims Administrator, Social Services Program Coordinator, Program Coordinator, or Criminal Justice Planner. The Process Coordinator is not assigned the full scope and range of duties characteristic of Executive Administrators of boards or commissions. These duties are divided between the Process Coordinator and the Special Staff Assistant. The Process Coordinator and Executive Administrator classes are responsible for similar levels of interaction with board members or commissioners and various professionals. The requirement for application of specialized knowledge in a specific field is comparable to the Executive Administrators of the Board of Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors and the Real Estate Commission, but lower than the Executive Administrator, Board of Nursing, which requires advanced education and licensing in nursing. This indicates the Process Coordinator is properly placed at a lower range than the Executive Administrator, Board of Nursing, although the similarities indicate the range should be very close to that assigned the Executive

Administrators of the Board of Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors and the Real Estate Commission.

Internal alignment analysis within the Legal job family indicates the Process Coordinator is properly assigned salary range 18. Expanding the evaluation to similar classes in other families and groups corroborates the internal consistency of the comparison in the Legal job family.

**Conclusion:**

Process Coordinator, Regulatory Commission of Alaska has been revised to address the current duties and responsibilities assigned the job class. The class remains in the Legal job family and assigned class code P7103. The class is appropriately assigned salary range 18. The revised class specification is effective April 1, 2004.

PCN 086060 is assigned duties and responsibilities that define and distinguish the Process Coordinator, Regulatory Commission of Alaska, job class. The position is allocated to the revised class effective April 1, 2004. The position remains in the Supervisory Bargaining Unit. The position meets the Executive and Administrative criteria for exemption under the Fair Labor Standards Act and is not eligible for overtime.

Attachment

cc: Tom Lawson, Director  
Division of Administrative Services  
Department of Community and Economic Development

Management Services – General Group

Technical Services – General Group