

STATE OF WISCONSIN

PERSONNEL COMMISSION

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WILLIAMSON et al,
 Appellant,

 v.
 Administrator, DIVISION OF
 PERSONNEL,
 Respondent.

 Case Nos. 79-PC-CS-888,669,
 and 670

* * * * *

020480
 DECISION
 AND
 ORDER

NATURE OF THE CASE

This case involves the appeal of the reallocation of appellants' positions in August, 1979, following the statewide clerical survey, from Typist 3 (PR02-05) to Word Processing Operator 1 (PR02-05). The issue noticed for hearing was whether or not the decision of the Administrator reallocating appellants' positions as Word Processing Operator 1 (WPO1) was correct, with the sub-issue of whether the position should be classified as WPO 1 or WPO 2 (PR02-06).

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. At the time of the reallocation of their positions, the appellants Curley Williamson, Pauline Plautz, and Dorothy Pietila were employed as Typists III in the Bureau of Community Corrections, Division of Corrections of the Department of Health and Social Services, working in the Milwaukee area office.

2. There were no designated lead workers; and their supervisor, an Administrative Secretary I, had no knowledge of word processing.

3. The positions of entry level typists were also reallocated to WPO 1.

4. Using IBM Memory Typewriters, appellants type narrative entries on an 8 x 11 running-record, reports of probation and parole agents, and financial reports in chart form. Each is assigned the work of specified agents.

5. About 20-30% of appellants' time is spent typing complex legal materials. Court memos and presentencing reports are the most difficult work, both in setting up the machine and in the difficulty of typing.

6. Some of the typing is done from copy, usually long-hand, some from agents' notes, and some from tapes. The latter two require that the WPO have a command of the operation.

7. From 25-35% of appellants' work is typed in chart form, including financial reports (Comm. Exh. 5) and most agents' reports.

8. The appellants, as experienced WPO's 1, train and assist the new WPO1, feeding work to the new WPO 1 as the operator develops, and reviewing the product. When appellants give a new WPO 1 a tape to process, it is standard procedure for the experienced operator to type from the same tape and check the new WPO's work.

9. It takes an entry level WPO 1 from six months to a year to attain full performance, acquire knowledge of legal terminology, and understand materials provided by the agents. New WPO's 1 are not given an agent until they have learned the job. Agents often ask an experienced WPO 1 who is not their designated typist to do work for them.

10. Appellants gather and organize material from case files and develop presentencing reports providing the background information they know the judges want, in addition to information dictated by agents.

11. Appellants use discretion in developing format for financial statements and other reports, based on their knowledge of the organization and the requirements of different judges. Some agents set the format; others just give the WPO the information.

12. The primary distinction between WPO 1 and WPO 2, as set forth in the position standards, is that positions allocated to the WPO 2 classification function the majority of the time either as lead worker for WPO's 1 or produce non-line copy.

13. The subject matter of the material typed (medical, legal, or scientific) can be considered in combination with the two factors listed in finding 12. (Testimony of Greg Samp, Personnel Specialist.)

14. In April, 1980, appellants' positions were re-reviewed, based on updated position descriptions. Appellants' requests for reclassification were denied based on a determination that there had been no changes in their duties and responsibilities.

15. The appellants' positions do not meet the criteria of the WPO 2 classification as established by the position standards.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Personnel Commission has jurisdiction over this appeal pursuant to s.230.44(1)(a), Stats.

2. The appellants have the burden of proving to a reasonable certainty by the greater weight of credible evidence that their positions should not have been reallocated to Word Processing Operator 1 and that their positions should have been reallocated to WPO 2.

Reinke v. Personnel Board, 53 Wis. 2d 123 (1971)

3. The appellants have failed to meet their burden.
4. The appellants' positions are more properly classified as WPO 1.

OPINION

These appeals reiterate the almost universal complaint of experienced clerical employes concerning the new clerical classifications adopted following the statewide survey of clerical positions. Appellants feel the quality of their work is diminished by lumping their positions with those of entry-level typists (formerly Typists 1, PR01-03) as Word Processing Operator 1; and they do not consider it fair to be compensated at the same rate of pay.

This points up the need clearly to identify differences in work performed and levels of responsibility so that the classification standards can be used constructively to recognize higher levels of performance and the resultant appropriate remuneration and status.

Respondent's Exhibit H, the position description of a WPO 2, illustrates this point. The incumbent's first-line supervisor, a Word Processing Supervisor 2, understands the complexity of this employe's work and has translated her understanding into a position description with specificity which is lacking in the position descriptions of the appellants.

It was undisputed that the appellants train less experienced WPO's 1, as well as review and guide their work; that their typing assignments involve complex legal terminology on a regular basis, as well as specialized format considerations; and that they develop special reports. (See p.5, Respondent's Exhibit D.) It was also undisputed that appellants process and type documents where comprehensive knowledge of the organization is required; that they

gather and organize information into summary reports, and that they exercise a considerable amount of discretion in developing formats for the work assigned, all identified as work examples for Program Assistant 1.

As the Personnel Board pointed out in Kailin v. Weaver and Wettengel, 73-124-PB (11/28/75):

"Personnel classifications is not an exact science. In appeals of reclassification denials, it is usually the case that the employe's duties and responsibilities overlap in some respects both of the class specifications in question. The employe is not entitled to reclassification because some aspects of his work fall within the higher class. Resolution of the question involves a weighing of the specifications and the actual work performed to determine which classification best fits the position. As exact fit is very rarely possible."

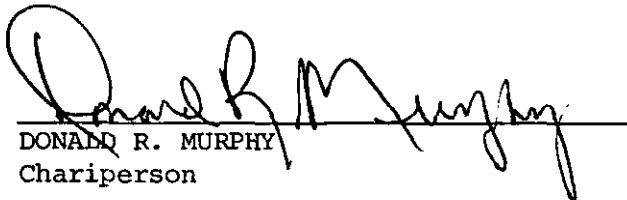
In the instant case, the definition sections of the classification standards clearly establish that the WPO 2 must either be designated a lead worker or must produce non-line copy materials 51% of the time. The appellants position descriptions do not qualify them for WPO 2, despite the fact that they perform most of the WPO 2 work examples.

Before a final decision is made regarding the appropriate classification for appellants' positions, the respondent should consider whether the appellants should have been designated as lead workers at the time of their reallocation, whether the position descriptions are reflective of their duties and responsibilities, and/or whether the Program Assistant 1 classification should have been considered.

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IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the respondent's action should be affirmed
and that these appeals be dismissed.

Dated: Dec. 3, 1981 STATE PERSONNEL COMMISSION


DONALD R. MURPHY
Chairperson

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Parties .

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