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MAXINE BILLINGSLEY, ET AL.,

Appellants,

v.

Administrator, DIVISION OF  
PERSONNEL,

Respondent.

Case Nos. 79-PC-CS-62, 63,  
294, 592, 665, & 941\*

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PATRICIA WILLIAMS, ET AL.,

Appellants,

v.

Administrator, DIVISION OF  
PERSONNEL,

Respondent.

Case Nos. 79-PC-CS-263, 534,  
581, 627, 889, &  
923

\* \* \* \* \*

DECISION  
AND  
ORDER

NATURE OF THE CASES

These are appeals from the decisions of the Administrator, Division of Personnel, to reallocate appellant's positions as part of the statewide survey of clerical positions in 1979. A consolidated hearing on the merits of the two joint appeals was held by Commissioner Gordon H. Brehm on August 11, 1981.

FINDINGS OF FACT

(Case Nos. 79-PC-CS-62, 63, 294, 592, 665, & 941)

1. These appellants are employees in the state classified civil service, and at all times relevant to these appeals were employed as ward clerks at the Mendota Mental Health Institute, Madison, Wisconsin.

2. As part of the statewide clerical survey, the appellants' positions were reallocated from Clerk III to Clerical Assistant II, effective August 26, 1979.

3. The issue agreed to by the parties is as follows:

"Whether or not the decisions of the administrator in reallocating appellants' positions from Clerk III (PR 2-05) to Clerical Assistant II (PR 2-05) was correct. If not, should the appellants' positions have been reallocated to Program Assistant I (PR 2-06)?

4. The relevant class descriptions from the Position Standards for the two classifications involved are as follows:

"CLERICAL ASSISTANT 2

This is lead/or advanced clerical work of moderate difficulty in completing a variety of assigned clerical tasks consistent with established policies and procedures. Positions allocated to this level have some freedom of selection or choice among learned things, which generally follow a well-defined pattern. However, positions at this level are distinguished from the Program Assistant 1 level by the limited degree of personal or procedural control over the nature and scope of the tasks which they perform. The variety and complexity of decisions made at this level are limited. Positions may function as lead workers, directing lower-level positions as well as performing a variety of the more complex clerical operations. Receptionist positions which serve in an informative capacity as the primary or sole public contact for a state facility are allocated to this level. A variety of secretarial functions may be incidentally performed for the professional staff for a small percentage of the time. Work is performed under general supervision.

PROGRAM ASSISTANT 1

This is work of moderate difficulty providing support assistance to supervisory, professional, or administrative staff. Positions allocated to this level serve as the principal support staff within a specific defined program or a significant segment of a program. Positions at this level are distinguished from the Clerical Assistant 2 level by their identified accountability for the implementation and consequences of program activities over which they have decision-making control.

Therefore, although the actual tasks performed at this level may in many respects be similar to those performed at the Clerical Assistant 2 level, the greater variety, scope, and complexity of the problem-solving, the greater independence of action, and the greater degree of personal or procedural control over the program activities differentiates the Program Assistant functions. The degree of programmatic accountability and involvement is measured on the basis of the size and scope of the area impacted by the decision and the consequence of error in making such decisions, which increases with each successive level in the Program Assistant series. Work is performed under general supervision." (Appellants Exhibits 9,10)

5. More than 50% of the appellants' duties consist of maintenance of medical records of the patients on their respective wards and in serving as time-keeper for the ward staff.

6. Appellants also perform a wide variety of other duties, including receptionist and secretarial duties, maintenance of supplies and equipment for their wards, assisting in admitting and discharging patients, operating office machines, receiving and disbursing mail to patients, and receiving and disbursing patients' money.

7. The appellants work under general supervision.

8. The duties and responsibilities of the appellants' positions are best described by the Position Standards for Clerical Assistant 2.

9. The appellants' positions are not properly defined as Program Assistant 1 because of the lack of sufficient independence and program related decision-making in the jobs.

(Case Nos. 79-PC-CS-263, 534, 581, 627, 889, & 923)

1. These appellants are employed in the state classified civil service and at all times relevant to these appeals were employed as typists at the Northern Wisconsin Center for the Developmentally Disabled at Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin.

2. As part of the statewide clerical survey, the appellants' positions were reallocated from Typist 3 to Typist, effective August 26, 1979.

3. The issue agreed to by the parties is as follows:

"Whether or not the decisions of the administrator in reallocating appellants' positions from Typist 3 (PR 2-05) to Typist (PR 2-05) was correct. If not, should the appellant's positions have been re-allocated to Program Assistant 1 (PR 2-06)?"

4. The relevant class descriptions from the Position Standards for two classifications involved are as follows:

"Typist

This is full performance level clerical work of moderate difficulty in completing a variety of assigned clerical and typing tasks. Positions allocated to this class perform typing duties requiring typing proficiency at least 25% of the time. Typing projects require independent consideration of format, grammar, spelling, and use of unique or specialized terminology. Positions performing stenographic duties are also identified at this level. Work is performed under general supervision.

PROGRAM ASSISTANT 1

This is work of moderate difficulty providing support assistance to supervisory, professional, or administrative staff. Positions allocated to this level serve as the principal support staff within a specific defined program or a significant segment of a program. Positions at this level are distinguished from the Clerical Assistant 2 level by their identified accountability for the implementation and consequences of program activities over which they have decision-making control. Therefore, although the actual tasks performed at this level may in many respects be similar to those performed at the Clerical Assistant 2 level, the greater variety, scope, and complexity of the problem-solving, the greater independence of action, and the greater degree of personal or procedural control over the program activities differentiates the Program Assistant functions. The degree of programmatic accountability is measured on the basis of the size and scope of the area impacted by the decision and the consequence of error in making such decisions, which increases with each successive level in the Program Assistant series. Work is performed under general supervision. (Appellants Exhibits 8,9)

5. The primary duties and responsibilities of these appellants are to perform clerical, secretarial, and receptionist duties and maintain the records of the patients residing in the units to which they are assigned.

6. The appellants also function as timekeepers for the staff of the unit and are responsible for ordering and keeping an inventory of all supplies and materials.

7. The appellants work under general supervision.

8. The duties and responsibilities of the appellants are better described by the Position Standards for Typist.

9. The appellants' positions are not properly defined as Program Assistant 1 because of the lack of sufficient independence and program related decision-making in the jobs.

#### OPINION

There is no question that the duties performed by the appellants in these appeals are highly responsible and demanding. There also can be no dispute that the appellants who testified are extremely competent, capable employees.

Staffing a medical facility, seven days a week, 24 hours a day, requires employees with a willingness to serve and a strong sense of dedication to their jobs. These appellants measure up to these strict standards.

Unfortunately, as indicated by the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing, their positions have not been given "identified accountability for the implementation and consequences of program activities over which they have decision-making control" as required by the Position Standards for Program Assistant 1.

The Commission does not feel that these positions are properly classified as either Clerical Assistant 2 or Typist. The Position Standards for these classifications were clearly not intended to cover clerical jobs in the medical field.

In this situation, where management cannot reasonably assign decision-making responsibilities to non-professionals in the medical field, perhaps the answer lies in establishing a separate classification for these types of clerical positions. Then, these employes could be properly rewarded for their diligence and dedication to their difficult jobs.

ORDER

The decisions of the administrator in reallocating the appellants positions to Clerical Assistant 2 and Typist are affirmed and these appeals are hereby dismissed.

Dated: October 2, 1981

STATE PERSONNEL COMMISSION

GHB:nwb

Parties

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