

STATE OF WISCONSIN

PERSONNEL COMMISSION

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BERNICE E. BUCHEN,
Appellant,

v.

Administrator, DIVISION OF
PERSONNEL,
Respondent.

Case No. 82-151-PC

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DECISION
AND
ORDER

This matter is an appeal of a denial of a request for reclassification.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The appellant, Bernice E. Buchen, began work with the Department of Transportation in 1972. She currently works in the Division of Planning and Budget and has held her present classified civil service classification, a Program Assistant 4 since 1977.

2. In September, 1981, a formal request was made to the Bureau of Personnel Management, Department of Transportation (DOT) for the reclassification of appellant's position from Program Assistant 4 - Confidential to Administrative Assistant 3 - Confidential. Subsequently, a position classification review was conducted by the personnel bureau. On January 28, 1982, appellant's reclassification request was denied. After the initial denial, there was discussion about the reclassification denial between the appellant and the personnel bureau, but the decision remained unchanged.

3. On February 16, 1982, the appellant made a written appeal from the DOT reclassification request denial to the respondent administrator, Division of Personnel (DP), Department of Employment Relations (DER). The reclassification decision of appellant's agency (DOT) was reviewed by DP and affirmed, June 9, 1982. On July 2, 1982, the appellant appealed the reclassification decision of DP to the Personnel Commission.

4. Ms. Buchen's position is in the special services unit of the administrative and management services section. She functions at the division level, reporting to the section chief, who reports to the division head.

5. Appellant's position is the sole position in the unit.

A summary of appellant's duties is as follows:

- 20% A. Coordinate and implement independently the administrative and procedural functions relating to the Purchasing Program for the Division of Planning & Budget. The program includes responsibility for office equipment, office supplies, contract services, court reporters, DOT Stores stocked items, permanent property, equipment for Travel Survey Shop, Travel Survey Shop parts inventory and safety equipment.
- A1. Contact vendors for cost comparisons and demonstrations.
 - A2. Ascertain funding availability and validate project ID codes.
 - A3. Coordinate relationships in purchasing process with, but not limited to, Division of Planning & Budget Administrator and/or Bureau Directors, DOT Bureau Director of Business Management, DOT Chief of Central Purchasing, DER Division of Personnel and DOA.
 - A4. Determine if actual need exists in requesting Bureau/Division by coordination with Bureau Directors and/or Division Administrator.
 - A5. In the absence of the Chief of Administrative Services (AA-5), to expedite the purchase request, sign his name to the AS-1 Purchase Requisition. This initiates the Purchase Order.
 - A6. Follow up on delivery of purchase regarding quality, satisfaction, quantity, etc.
 - A7. Check for service contract compliance.
 - A8. Complete final administrative process through Chief of Central Purchasing, Division of Business Management and/or BAA.

In absence of Chief of Administrative Services (AA-5), sign receiving copy of Purchase Order for him. This initiates the payment of the order.

- A9. Coordinate purchase with inventory control.
- A10. Responsible for maintenance of records for internal audit, federal audit where federal dollars are utilized, warranty purposes and all other management support processes.

20% B. Implement independently the program of administrative procedures to effect payment for any and all invoices received by the Division of Planning & Budget. Responsible for payment process for, but not limited to, Regional Planning Commission invoices, in-state/out-of-state travel, conference/conventions, training invoices, blanket purchase orders, contractual services, petty cash invoices, media personnel recruitment, office machine repairs, etc.

- B1. Coordinate with Bureaus regarding audit of invoices or, depending on the goods and/or services, receive invoices directly.
- B2. Upon receipt of invoice, verify receipt of goods and/or services or any portion thereof.
- B3. Determine project code, audit for budget constraints.
- B4. Process AS-2 as necessary. In absence of AA-5 sign AS-2 in his name and initial to expedite process.
- B5. Audit intra-Division and inter Division to verify accuracy of invoice.
- B6. Coordinate with BAA for check disbursement by BAA or myself.
- B7. Follow up each payment to clear account and/or purchase order.
- B8. Coordinate with vendor and/or Division of Business Management on maintenance of office machines.
- B9. Initiate arrangements with vendors for loaner machines while Division machines are in repair. Sign for loaner machines in my name and authority.
- B10. Maintain file on each machine to determine timeliness of replacement.
- B11. Receive and process invoices for office machines maintenance.

15% C. Provide direct administrative assistance to the Chief of Administrative and Management Services and in his absence, attend meetings for him, sign papers and documents for him and carry out any other duties that cannot await his return.

- C1. Accomplish other tasks as assigned to Administrative Services in addition to programs listed in this P.D. on an as needed basis.
- C2. Coordinate and/or assist Division participation in special programs i.e. Bloodmobile, United Way, etc.
- C3. Draft and type correspondence for Chief of Administrative Services.

- C4. Maintain general Administrative Services files plus special files which include, but are not limited to contract files, grant files, vendor files, etc.
 - C5. Maintain Administrative Service manuals which include but are limited to: BAA Manual, TAM Manual, SAPS Manual, Personnel Manual, Informational Bulletin Manual and Administrative Practices Manual.
 - C6. Process STS telephone listings for review by Bureau Directors.
 - C7. Maintain knowledge of labor agreements, interpretations and employment relations material to stay in conformance with those contracts in administering all other listed programs.
- 13% D. Coordinate all Training Program requests in the Division of Planning and Budget.
- D1. Post and distribute announcements of training opportunities to Division personnel.
 - D2. Instruct employes and management in program procedure for submitting request and supply appropriate forms.
 - D3. Register personnel for courses via computer video.
 - D4. Record course attendance in employe computer file.
 - D5. Make necessary cancellations via computer.
 - D6. Manually register training conducted by U.W., U.W. Extension or any other outside training course vendor.
 - D7. Contact vendor for registration and process invoice for the course(s).
 - D8. Maintain training file for each Division employe.
 - D9. Administer training processes in conformance to DOT policies and the various Labor Agreements.
- 10% E. Coordinate independently Division Records Management Program with Departmental Program, State Program and State Historical Society.
- E1. Coordinate inventory, storage, disposal and retrieval of Division of Records with Division Bureaus, Division of Business Management Records Management, Supervisor of State Records Center, members of State Historical Society and Federal Highway Administration.
 - E2. Sign, as signatory authority, for storage, disposal and retrieval of Division records.
- 10% F. Coordinate Publications Program for Division of Planning & Budget.
- F1. Coordinate with Public Information on publications approved by Publications Committee.
 - F2. Prepare Printing Service Request on how publication is to be printed.
 - F3. Coordinate actual printing with DOT Printing Services.

- F4. Receive returned publication to review quality and quantity.
 - F5. Authorize payment for publications and/or inform Printing Services of any product problem. If problems exist, work with vendor and DOT Printing Services to correct problem.
- 5% G. Coordinate independently Forms Management Program for Division of Planning & Budget for all administrative processes in the program.
- G1. Maintain file of each Divisional form.
 - G2. Maintain card for each form for which Bureau is responsible, to describe project responsibility, revisions, order dates, order quantities, order receipt and order cost.
 - G3. Coordinate with Chief of Printing Services, Section Chiefs in BS&DP and any other DOT entity involved in the process.
 - G4. Implement administrative process for survey forms which have been approved by Publication Committee, authorize the printing, send to Printing Services and have forms returned to me for my review of quality and quantity.
 - G5. Sign as signatory authority for authorization to pay for regular forms if they are done to my satisfaction.
- 5% H. Coordinate all space and facilities program(s) for the Division of Planning & Budget.
- H1. Meet with Business Management Bureau Director, Chief and Supervisor of Space Safety & Risk Management on all floor plans drafted by Business Management, myself and other Division of Planning & Budget to confirm approval.
 - H2. Process and implement any physical moves of people/equipment.
 - H3. Coordinate precise location of furniture, equipment, electrical and telephone outlets.
 - H4. Accomplish moves by direct contact with DOT Business Management, Space Facilities Section and DOA Building Services.
 - H5. Initiate telephone service change/installation with Division of Business Management and Wisconsin Telephone Company.
 - H6. Initiate orders for electrical installations.
 - H7. Contact DOA-Building Services on lighting, temperature, safety and electrical repairs.
 - H8. Responsible as contact person for all Division Space Management work/needs.

- 2% I. Coordinate Reprographic and Photo Lab Program Services for the entire Division.
11. Delegate Reprographic and Pho Lab requests for completion.
12. Resolve any problems in question in the program.
6. The Program Assistant 4 position is described in the state classified civil service position standards as follows:

This is paraprofessional staff support work of considerable difficulty as an assistant to the head of major function or organization activity. Positions allocated to this class are coordinative and administrative in nature. Positions typically exercise a significant degree of independence and latitude for decision making and may also function as leadworkers. Positions at this level are differentiated from lower-level Program Assistants on the basis of the size and scope of the program involved, the independence of action, degree of involvement and impact of decisions and judgment required by the position. Work is performed under direction.

The following work examples are ascribed to this position:

Plans, assigns and guides the activities of a unit engaged in current projects or programs.

Researches and produces, as recommended by federal regulations and through the direction of an immediate supervisor, necessary data and information to prepare grant applications based on federal, state and local funding regulations.

Interprets rules, regulations, policies and procedures for faculty, other employers and the public.

Prepares various information, factual and statistical reports.

Assists in the development and revision of policies, laws, rules, and procedures affecting the entire program or operation.

Coordinates units within the department, between departments, or with the general public, in an informative capacity for a variety of complex matters.

Conducts special projects; analyzes, assembles or obtains information.

Prepares equipment and material specifications, receives bids and authorizes the purchase of an operating department's equipment, material and supplies.

Analyzes, interprets and prepares various reports.

Administers and scores admission and placement tests; administers nationally scheduled examinations; confers with applicants regarding interpretations.

7. In comparison, the state classified civil service position standards describe and impute the following examples of work for the Administrative Assistant 3 position:

Definition:

Under general direction to do administrative work of more than ordinary difficulty and responsibility requiring the exercise of a considerable amount of individual initiative and independent judgment in directing the business management of a division engaged in a comprehensive non-professional program or activity; and to perform related work as required.

Examples of Work Performed:

Supervises record and account keeping; approves disbursements; maintains budget records.

Interviews, appoints and assigns personnel.

Acts as liaison officer between departments, employes, and the director.

Develops and installs operating procedures and makes recommendations concerning policies, rules and proposed legislation.

Supervises special surveys and studies; drafts orders; reviews and analyzes reports of assistants or field staff.

Develops training programs; interprets department policies and regulations; keeps director and assistants advised of legislation, legal opinions, court decisions and precedence.

Conducts hearings; occasionally acts as technical consultant in a specialized field.

Keeps records and makes reports.

8. While appellant's position is at the division level, it compares favorably to bureau level AA 3 positions - Office Supervisors - in the Transportation Districts. Similar to transportation district supervisors, the appellant has a variety of duties and reports to a supervisor who is an Administrative Assistant 5.

9. The appellant's position is more appropriately classified at the Administrative Assistant 3 level.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. This appeal is properly before the Commission pursuant to sec. 230.44(a)(a), Stats.
2. The appellant has the burden of proof.
3. The appellant has satisfied her burden of proof.
4. The respondent's decision to deny reclassification of appellant's position from Program Assistant 4 to Administrative Assistant 3 was incorrect.
5. The position held by the appellant is more appropriately classified as the Administrative Assistant 3 level.

OPINION

As testified, the position specification for Program Assistant 4 and Administrative Assistant 3 are difficult to interpret in the abstract. In addition, the specifications for AA 3 positions were published in 1968 as compared with the Program Assistant series which was promulgated in 1979. Also, much of the language in both specifications is of a non-specific nature, covering a broad spectrum of duties and positions. Administrative Assistant specifications are used to classify positions which do not fit in other more specific classifications. Consequently, to some extent, these anomalies made it necessary to give greater weight to comparisons between appellant's position and other positions with similar duties and responsibilities.

The respondent argues that appellant's position does not compare favorably with the Administrative Assistant 3 positions in Transportation District Number 6 and the Bureau of Systems Data Processing. The Commission disagrees. Based upon the evidence given as reason or proof, we make the following observations. The appellant's position is at a higher

organizational level than the AA 3 positions in transportation districts and the Bureau of System and Data Processing. The scope of impact of appellant's position is as great or greater than the other AA 3 positions used as comparisons. Appellant, similar to the AA 3 positions in the transportation districts, reports to an AA 5 and is under general direction. Again, similar to other AA 3 positions, appellant's position consists of a wide variety of duties and includes independent decision-making authority. Finally, appellant's position has a mixture of duties and responsibilities illustrative of other AA 3 positions, which otherwise would be in more specific classifications.

Respondent's classification specific analysis argument regarding appellant's position was persuasive, but the evidence was incomplete. A similar analysis was not done on the AA 3 positions used for comparisons. While it is apparent from the limited evidence presented, that classification specifications or cost analysis of a particular function will vary measurably when qualified by other elements such as responsibility, impact, organizational level and independent authority, it was inconclusive because it did not include a similar analysis of comparable positions.

For the reasons expressed and based upon the entire record, the Commission must conclude that appellant's position fits better in the Administrative Assistant series and is more appropriately classified as an Administrative Assistant 3.

ORDER

Respondent's reclassification decision is rejected and this matter is remanded to the respondent for action in accordance with this decision.

Dated: August 17, 1983 STATE PERSONNEL COMMISSION


DONALD R. MURPHY, Chairperson

DRM:jmf


DENNIS P. MCGILLIGAN, Commissioner

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