

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
DIVISION OF PERSONNEL & LABOR RELATIONS
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Classification
DOPLR-07

II. Data Collection and Job Analysis

A. Purpose

The purpose of this SOP is to provide guidelines and direction for collecting and documenting information when performing job analysis.

B. Scope

This SOP provides information on data collection and analysis. The Position Description (PD), desk audit, specialized questionnaire, interview and other methods of collecting data are addressed. These methods are applicable to individual position classification as well as to development of class specifications.

C. Authority

- AS 39.25.150(1) - Scope of Rules
- AAC 7.020 - Allocation of positions
- AAC 7.030 - Review of allocations

D. Overview

Job analysis is the systematic process of collecting and making certain judgments about the important information relating to the nature of a specific job. Job analysis is concerned with a position's duties and responsibilities, reporting relationships, skill requirements, and other elements that govern its allocation to a particular class. It involves the collection and comparative analysis of facts about a position to identify the principal characteristics. When these meet existing classification standards, a position is allocated to an established class in the classification plan. When a position does not fit an established class, a new class may be created.

The basic purpose of gathering the information is to determine the tasks employees actually perform, how they perform them, why they perform them, how frequently they perform them, and which tasks are the most critical for successful job performance. This information is used to determine what knowledge, skills, abilities, and work behaviors (a pattern of actions and interactions that directly or indirectly affect effectiveness), are needed to perform the duties, and to establish minimum qualifications for entry into the job class.

E. Formal Job Analysis Procedures

Formal job analysis procedures may include a combination of techniques including interviews, questionnaires, and occupational consultants. The commonality among all formal job analysis models is that the results clearly demonstrate the job relatedness of the minimum qualifications in that they:

1. Systematically document job tasks.

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2. Determine the frequency that a task is performed, assess the relative importance of tasks, and evaluate how critical each task is to successful job performance.
3. Identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) needed to perform the work and demonstrate their relationship to the tasks.
4. Distinguish between KSAs required at entry and KSAs required for full performance of the job.
5. Establish the relative importance of specific work in the performance of the job as a whole.
6. Document a logical relationship between the KSAs and the minimum qualifications.

F. Data Collection Methods

In selecting a data collection method, consider the purpose for collecting the information. The purpose may be to gather information about a job procedure or clarify work relationships in order to classify a single position, to learn general information about a group of positions in order to begin a classification study, or to develop, revise or update minimum qualifications. The following are several data collection methods used by the State of Alaska, along with specific suggestions to ensure that critical information is obtained:

1. Position Description (PD)

- a. The PD and staffing chart (and a job specific questionnaire when appropriate) are the most common devices used to collect job information. The PD is the form on which the duties and responsibilities assigned to a position and the reporting relationships are described. It is the basic source of information for classifying a position to a job class or for performing a classification study. It is a starting place for any job analysis, since a major portion is devoted to duty and task statements.
- b. The PD contains a variety of interrelated data about the duties and characteristics of a position. Like any data source, its accuracy (and thus its usefulness) is directly related to the clarity and consistency of the collection method. PDs are prepared by thousands of different individuals, most of whom have had no formal training in the preparation of the form. Errors and internal inconsistencies occur. The review process requires analysis of the PD and other available information in its entirety to resolve conflicts and to develop an accurate understanding of the job position.
- c. The manager or supervisor of the position is responsible for accurate completion of the PD with input by the incumbent of the position. Because the employee usually is more familiar with the details of how the work of the position is accomplished, he or she may have input in describing the job, including preparation of a draft PD. The incumbent's involvement in no way diminishes management's right to assign and describe the work.

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2. Position Audit (aka desk audits or incumbent interviews)

A common method of collecting job information is the position audit. This is an opportunity for the employee to explain the job directly to the classifier and for the classifier to gain first-hand knowledge of the job and of the organization in which the position is located. Make appropriate use of the available communication technologies; position audits can be conducted in person at the job site, by telephone, or through video conference. An in-person audit is highly recommended.

3. Supervisory Interviews

A supervisor may be the only source of position information regarding new or vacant positions, or when reorganization is being implemented. In general, a supervisor is best at providing occupational and organizational information, providing an overview of the position, placing the position into context within the section and agency, and verification of assigned duties. Ask about the roles of other positions with which the position interacts.

4. Group Interviews

During a classification study, a group audit may be a more efficient way to gather information about similar positions. For example, a group meeting could yield a comprehensive list of tasks for a particular job. A group interview must be planned carefully with key questions to encourage group discussion. Managers and supervisors can identify benchmark positions that represent the full range of proficiency and expertise within a series or group of positions.

5. Statutes and Manuals

Review statutes, regulations, training manuals, SOPs and departmental policies and procedures that govern the work performed by the position. Departmental web sites often provide links to the statutory and regulatory authority under which programs operate. These and other sources may provide information about relevant classification factors such as authority exercised and the knowledge and training required. Reference them in the analysis and, if necessary, obtain copies for the file.

6. Specialized Questionnaires

A tailored questionnaire may be helpful when studying a class series that has many positions. The questionnaire allows the classifier to gather information from a larger sample of incumbents than would not otherwise be possible through desk audits.

7. Occupational Consultants (OC) – aka subject matter experts.

Interviews with managers, supervisors and experienced employees are helpful to understand and to describe the work; define levels of complexity; identify critical tasks; identify knowledge, skills, abilities and work behaviors required for a job; and critique drafts of class

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specifications.

8. Other sources, such as reputable websites and professional publications may also be useful.

G: Data Collection Guidelines

1. Review of the Position Description

The position description (PD) contains important information that is pertinent to the position and the incumbent. Use the following information as a guide in reviewing the PD through the Online Position Description (OPD):

- a. Submission Management Page

- Priority Level
- Reason for the request

- b. Position Control Information Page:

- Requested Changes. Will only display fields when a change has been requested. This does not mean they are the only changes or necessarily accurate. NOTE: Sometimes supervisors/managers may inadvertently check a box that will cause an error such as *Commercial Driver's License* checked as "No" when they should be "Yes."

- c. Duties (Section 2).

This section provides a detailed list of duties and job functions that are the basis for accurate classification. These descriptions must be read in conjunction with the rest of the PD and any other relevant information to determine how the various tasks and duties fit together into a coherent job.

- a) (Section 2.1.) Main purpose of the position. This should describe the primary reason the position exists.
- b) (Section 2.2.) Duties and essential functions. The most important duty or most frequent task should be listed first. To be evaluated properly, the individual statements must be viewed as part of a total functioning job. The duties should exemplify or at least be consistent with information provided elsewhere in the PD.
- c) The importance rating is a relative rating scale. There should normally be at least one "E" (essential duty), and one "M" (marginal duty). Note: In most cases it is **not** appropriate to list all duties as "E".

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- d) The percent of time indicated must total 100%.
 - e) Ensure ADA is considered concerning the essential vs. non-essential functions of the work. Example: The employee is required to work shift work.
- d. Other Work Details (Section 3). This section provides a list of other work elements to accomplish the job.
- (Section 3.1.) This block documents the computer software and hardware used to perform the duties described.
 - (Section 3.2.) This block documents the equipment and materials used to perform the duties described, including machinery, tools, instruments, vehicles, etc.
 - (Section 3.3.) This block documents the guides and references regularly used to perform the duties described. Examples include federal and state laws and regulations, professional standards, building codes, trade practices, contracts, and policy and procedure manuals.
 - (Section 3.4.) This block documents the level of authority and independence the incumbent of the position exercises. It lists the actions the incumbent takes or the decisions the incumbent makes on a regular basis without obtaining prior approval from a higher-level employee.
 - (Section 3.5.) This block documents the nature of the contacts the incumbent has with other people in order to perform the duties described.
 - (Section 3.6.) This block documents the consequence of an error made by a prudent employee in the performance of the essential functions assigned to the position.
 - (Section 3.7.) This block documents the critical requirements of the position not previously described (e.g., skills in keyboarding, writing, negotiating, communications, etc.).
 - (Section 3.8.) This block documents the licenses, certifications, registrations, physical or other standards required by state or federal law or regulation to perform the duties described such as background checks, shift work, etc...
- e. Work Demands (Section 4).
- a) (Section 4.1.) This section identifies the physical and mental demands, and potential hazards typically encountered by the position. The information is used to help place returning injured workers into jobs, for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and for evaluating reasonable accommodation

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requests. For example, a job cannot identify sitting, walking, standing, and running **altogether** as frequent and essential.

- b) (Section 4.2.) This section identifies the work environment of the position. This section should be checked for internal consistency. The selections must also be consistent with duty statements in Section 2 and equipment requirements in Section 3.2. Clarification of the reasonably anticipated physical demands and work environment inherent in the normal and customary performance of the essential functions may be necessary and should be recorded in Section 4.3, Other Work Demands, and/or Section 4.4, Special Physical, Mental, or Behavioral Requirements.

- f. Supervisory Authority (Section 5). This section identifies the control of the work and employees on the team. The supervisor typical performs different work than the team and acts on behalf of the employer in the employment relations. (A team consists of two or more employees, including the supervisor).
 - The supervisor completes Section 5 if the position is assigned supervisory or lead-level authority (this includes Labor, Trades and Crafts foreman positions).
 - Section 5 contains information from which bargaining unit determinations are made. 8 AAC 97.990(a)(5) defines a supervisory employee to mean:

“ ... an individual, regardless of job description or title, who has the authority to act or effectively recommend action in the interest of the public employer in any one of the following supervisory functions, if the exercise of that authority is not merely routine but also requires the exercise of independent judgment:”

 - 1) Employing, including hiring, transferring, laying off, or recalling;
 - 2) Discipline, including suspending, discharging, demoting, or issuing written warning; or
 - 3) Grievance adjudication, including responding to a first level grievance under a collective bargaining unit agreement.”

- c) Placement into the Supervisory BU is based upon the provisions within 8 AAC 97.990(a)(5). Supervisors must supervise at least one employee per year for a period of at least six (6) months. Positions supervising a subordinate less than six months are handled on a case-by-case basis. In these instances, interview the incumbent to see if they have performed any supervisory duties under 8 AAC 97.990(a)(5) during the last 12-months. The decision will be based upon the level of authority and responsibility assigned over the subordinate(s).

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e. Lead-Level Authority (Section 5). This section identifies the authority for controlling and performing the work of the team (A team consists of two or more employees, including the Lead).

Lead level is having continuous responsibility over other employees while performing the same or comparable work of subordinates. Lead responsibilities include instructing and training staff, assigning and checking quality of work, setting task priorities, and evaluating performance. Lead workers may also assist in the hiring process.

f. Attachments:

- An approved current staffing chart.
- A flexible training plan and flex criteria if the position has been approved for flexible-staffing recruitment or if flexible staffing has been requested.
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) overtime exemption worksheet, if the position is overtime ineligible.
- New positions require Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval memoranda authorizing the creation of the new position.
- Reclassifications up more than two ranges, position location transfers, and position type changes include Department/OMB approval memoranda authorizing the change to the position in accordance with the OMB Revised Program Manual.

2. Conducting Position Audits:

- a. Keep the purpose of the position audit in mind as you plan and conduct the interview. A significant portion of a typical audit is devoted to finding out how a position's duties fit into the organization's work processes.
- b. Review available background material prior to the audit; specifically, review:
 - 1) The new PD and prior PDs.
 - 2) The class specification(s) for current, requested, and related job classes.
 - 3) The staffing chart for the work unit and division.
 - 4) PDs of other positions in the organizational unit and comparable positions within the agency or other agencies.
 - 5) General information about the occupation.

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- 6) The department, division, or work unit web site.
- 7) Any readily identified and relevant statutes, guides, SOPs, etc.

In preparation also:

- 8) Make notes of particular issues to be covered during the audit.
- 9) Prepare a list of questions that will clarify the nature and duties.
- 10) Plan to obtain clarification of words, jargon, acronyms and general phrases such as assist, coordinate, handle, maintain, responsible for, participate, and process.
- 11) Review the Classification factors. These factors are the basis for the final classification action; ask questions related to the controlling factors.

c. Schedule the audit:

- 1) Contact the position's supervisor or manager to discuss and explain the reason for the position audit and identify scheduling issues.
- 2) If the position is filled, contact the incumbent to schedule the audit and explain the purpose of the audit. If you want to obtain examples of work, mention it at this time.
- 3) Arrange a quiet place to conduct the interview.
- 4) Allow adequate time, usually about 60 - 90 minutes, to interview the incumbent.
- 5) Be prepared to write a lot (have plenty of paper/pens/pencils) or type the answers the incumbent provides. **NOTE:** Typing concurrently during the desk audit is discouraged if the incumbent is completely uncomfortable with it or your typing speed is not above average. Also ensure you still have notepad/pens/pencils as a backup in case of a computer malfunction
- 6) Allow adequate time to verify information with the supervisor after the incumbent interview.

d. During the interview, be sure to:

- 1) Maintain a friendly and open manner.
- 2) Explain the purpose of the interview (to clarify duties and responsibilities of the position in order to . . .). Ensure you explain it's not a performance evaluation, but just how the work is done.

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- 3) State questions clearly and tactfully.
 - 4) Ask open-ended questions.
 - 5) Ask if there is any job information the incumbent would like to have considered in addition to the PD.
 - 6) Ask the incumbent to show you things mentioned in the PD that will clarify the duties, such as reports prepared, records maintained, or equipment operated.
 - 7) Ask the incumbent which is the most difficult and complex task and why. Ask the incumbent which is the most routine, repetitive task and why.
 - 8) Ask the incumbent to explain any task not clearly described in the PD.
 - 9) Ask the incumbent to describe work assignments, processes, etc., that will clarify the classification factors, such as examples of when approval or direction from the supervisor is necessary.
 - 10) Summarize your understanding of the information from time-to-time.
 - 11) Watch the employee perform work if possible.
 - 12) Close the audit by asking if there is anything else about the job the incumbent wants to discuss. Provide a telephone number and e-mail contact the incumbent can use to provide additional information. Indicate that you may contact the incumbent or supervisor with additional questions for more information.
 - 13) If possible, indicate when the results will be available, in what format, and from whom.
- e. Cautions during the audit:
- 1) Listen carefully, talk little.
 - 2) If the conversation strays, draw it back to the duties and responsibilities of the position.
 - 3) Be a neutral observer at this time. **Do not indicate any decision** or “**general**” **impression** as to the classification of the position, or agreement or disagreement with the incumbent or supervisor's statements. The recommendations you make will require careful analysis of the information from the audit and other sources, and the approval of the Classification Team Leader or other individual to whom classification authority is delegated.

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- 4) Take complete notes. Ask for full names and formal job titles of employees mentioned. Document in your notes the PCN, job title and agency of all those mentioned.
- f. Interview the supervisor: A significant portion of the discussion may be to determine how the incumbent's duties fit into the work processes of the organization.
 - 1) Verify critical information received from the incumbent and the PD.
 - 2) Clarify duties that remain unclear.
 - 3) Clarify reporting relationships, authority, and workflow.
 - 4) Determine when the supervisor expects the employee to come to the supervisor for approval or direction.

H. Documentation

Documentation should provide the rationale for, and analysis of, the final decision.

Ideally, the documentation will provide a step-by-step record of the position analysis or classification study to establish an audit trail that will show the factual basis for the conclusions drawn and procedures developed.

1. General guidelines:
 - a. Identify the data sources for each step of the process.
 - b. Record the reason for selecting those sources.
 - c. Summarize the significant factual findings.
 - d. Explain the way in which conclusions were derived from significant findings.
 - e. Attach a Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) overtime exemption worksheet, if the position is overtime ineligible.
2. Classifiers who write or revise class specifications may record additional information, such as:
 - a. The types of background material reviewed during the study and the jobs to which they apply.
 - b. A list of benchmark PDs that are good examples of typical positions or examples of unique kinds of work.

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- c. Dates and notes of critical events and meetings held to discuss class specification revision, creation, or deletion.
- d. The names and titles of HR staff, managers, supervisors, and employees who attended meetings and provided information.
- e. The number, level, and types of jobs discussed.
- f. Copies of any final documents produced.

I. Uses for Documentation

The job data gathered is available for use in classifying individual positions (see section V), writing class specifications (see Section III), or as a reference for training.

J. Staffing Chart Requirements

The DOPLR Classification Section is responsible for allocating new and existing positions. A position description must be submitted through OPD to the Classification Section for processing. In addition, an updated staffing chart, also known as an organizational chart, showing the relationship of the position to others in the section must be attached to the submitted position description (PD).

- a. The job class being requested is listed on the staffing chart. Things to include, at a minimum, when developing and submitting a staffing chart are (see diagram):
 - The position's control number (PCN) or "New" for a new position.
 - The position's subordinate positions **and** their subordinates.
 - The position's supervisor and the supervisor's PCN.
 - All the supervisor's subordinates and their PCNs.
 - Requested job class title. Agencies may send a staffing chart of the position's current allocation as well to show the restructure of an agency, but this is not mandatory unless specifically requested by Classification Services.
 - Location of the position.
 - Whether the position is flexibly staffed, coupled and/or multiple class. All job class titles for flexible, coupled, and multiple classes need to be listed, in addition to identifying the job class title the position is being allocated to. For example, if the position is being allocated from an Administrative Assistant I to a Retirement and Benefits Technician I (Flex I/II), the title of the position should be Retirement and Benefits Technician I (Flex I/II) to indicate it is also a flexibly staffed position.
- b. Additional preferred/recommended information to place on the staffing chart are:
 - Position status. An example is FT, PT, or FACL
 - For Seasonal positions, the number of months worked (usually denoted as "mm" for man-months)
 - Position job class pay range

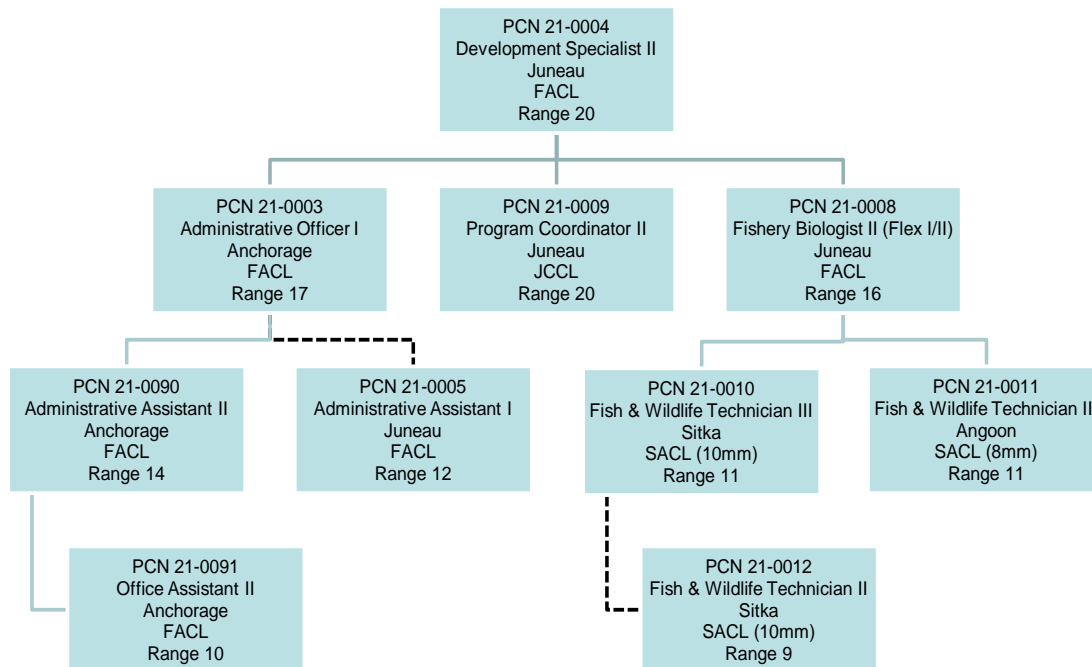
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- c. The designation line needs to show the correct relationships between positions. A solid line from one position to another, underneath, signifies a supervisory authority in accordance with 8 AAC 97.990(5), between the two positions. A dashed line signifies either a lead, indirect responsibility, or a correlation to a specific function of the position. Examples are listed below.
- d. On occasion, positions may be inter-relate, updated PDs must be submitted for other positions in the organizational unit if they are affected by the requested allocation. This will only be requested by the Classification Analyst.



This example staffing chart depicts: (1) Development Specialist II supervising 4 positions: the Administrative Officer I, Administrative Assistant I, Program Coordinator II, and the flexibly-staffed Fishery Biologist II. (2) The Administrative Officer I supervising the Administrative Assistant II and leading the Administrative Assistant I. (3) The Fishery Biologist II supervising the two seasonal Fish and Wildlife Technician IIIs and a Fish and Wildlife Technician II in Sitka. (4) The Fish and Wildlife Technician III in Sitka leading the Fish and Wildlife Technician II.

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