

**BEFORE THE PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD
STATE OF WASHINGTON**

LORAIN WISNER, MINDY CAREY,
SARAH CLARK, AND CELESTE
HARDY,

Appellants,

vs.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS,

Respondent.

CASE NOS. R-ALLO-09-023,
R-ALLO-09- 025,
R-ALLO-09-026, and
R-ALLO-09-027

ORDER OF THE BOARD
FOLLOWING HEARING ON
EXCEPTIONS TO THE
DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

Hearing on Exceptions. This appeal came before the Personnel Resources Board, LAURA ANDERSON, Vice Chair, and DJ MARK, Member, for hearing on Appellants' exceptions to the director's determination dated June 19, 2009. The hearing was held at the office of the Personnel Resources Board in Olympia, Washington, on November 18, 2009.

Appearances. Appellants Loraine Wisner, Mindy Carey, Sarah Clark, and Celeste Hardy were present and appeared *pro se*. Respondent Department of Corrections (DOC) was represented by Joanne Harmon, Human Resource Consultant.

Background. Appellants' positions were allocated to the Fiscal Technician 2 classification. Appellant's supervisor requested that the positions be reallocated. By letters dated November 10, 2008, DOC denied reallocation of Appellants' positions.

On November 19, 2009, Appellants filed requests for a director's review of DOC's allocation determination. By letters dated June 19, 2009, the director's designee determined that Appellants' positions were properly allocated to the Fiscal Technician 2 classification.

1 Appellants filed timely exceptions to the director's determinations. Appellants' exceptions are the
2 subject of this proceeding. In their exceptions, Appellants asked that their positions be reallocated to
3 the Fiscal Analyst 2 classification.

4
5 Appellants work in the Medical Disbursement Unit (MDU) of DOC. The MDU is part of the
6 Administrative Services Division. Appellants handle medical invoices for off-site medical services
7 and treatments for offenders. They receive the invoices, check records to verify that the offender
8 was in custody, review the off-site trip log to confirm the offender was away from the correctional
9 facility on the day for which services were billed, and review the Healthcare Review Committee's
10 information to ensure the procedure was approved by DOC medical staff. They review the
11 information on the invoice to confirm that it is not a duplicate billing, that the procedure was
12 authorized and completed, and that no additional unapproved procedures are included on the
13 invoice. They also verify the medical codes, the applicable contract, and calculate payments based
14 on contractual rates, flat fees and discounts. Appellants determine whether to approve or deny
15 payment of an invoice. When invoices are ready to process, the invoice payments are uploaded for
16 payment in batches to AFRS (OFM payment system). Appellants must be aware of numerous
17 provider contacts, various medical procedures, medical coding, fee schedules, and custody issues
18 which increase the complexity of their work.

19
20 **Summary of Appellants' Argument.** Appellants argue that in making their allocation
21 determination, Respondent failed to consider the information found during the desk audit of their
22 position. Appellants contend that the desk audit notes verify that they spend most of their time
23 reading contracts and analyzing how payments should be made. Appellants assert that they handle
24 specialized payments, interpret contracts, research and resolve discrepancies, apply contract rates to
25 invoices, and approve or deny payments. Appellants contend that their work is unique and complex
26 and that components of their work are found in the Medical Treatment Adjudicator class and in the
27 Fiscal Analyst class.

1 **Summary of Respondent's Argument.** Respondent argues that Appellants work independently,
2 exercise attention to detail, and provide fiscal support functions in verifying and reviewing the
3 accuracy of data and completing fiscal tasks. Respondent asserts that these duties do not rise to the
4 level of duties and responsibilities found in the Fiscal Analyst series. Respondent contends that
5 Appellants provide assistance to higher level personnel, enter data, compare date in the log with the
6 invoice, prepare invoices for payments, and enter information into AFRS for payment. Respondent
7 acknowledges that Appellants must have a level of understanding of medical procedures and various
8 contracts to verify information and indentify anomalies and agrees that they contact the facility or the
9 vendor for clarification when needed. However, Respondent asserts that when issues arise,
10 Appellants provide the information to their supervisor for appropriate action. Respondent further
11 asserts that Fiscal Analysts conduct the final review of Appellants work and authorize the payments
12 to be made. Respondent argues that the activities performed by Appellants have a specialized focus
13 but they are not a specialized function as found in the Fiscal Technician 3 class. Respondent asserts
14 that Appellants' duties are not unique to the Medical Disbursement Unit. Rather, Respondent
15 contends that Appellants' positions are similar to other Fiscal Technician 2 positions that perform
16 accounts payable duties, review at contracts, and assure billings are coded correctly.

17
18 **Primary Issue.** Whether the director's determination that Appellants' positions are properly
19 allocated to the Fiscal Technician 2 classification should be affirmed.

20
21 **Relevant Classifications.** Fiscal Technician class series including Fiscal Technician 2 (class code
22 148M) and 3 (class code 148N); Fiscal Analyst class series.

23
24 **Decision of the Board.** The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best
25 describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a
26 measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that
27 work is performed. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a
28 particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a

determination of the class that best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position.
See Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

The following standards are primary considerations in allocating positions:

- Class series concept (if one exists).
- Definition or basic function of the class.
- Distinguishing characteristics of a class.
- Class series concept, definition/basic function, and distinguishing characteristics of other classes in the series in question.

The class series concept for the Fiscal Analyst series states, in part:

Positions in this occupational group conduct a variety of financial reviews and analysis of fiscal, grants, contracts or other financial data in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principals (*sic*) (GAAP).

These are professional positions which analyze and interpret what the fiscal information means to draw conclusions and trends based upon that data. Positions determine what is the relationship between fiscal variables by generating items, choosing analysis, translating, or explaining their results and taking appropriate action based upon the analysis and interpretation of the financial data.

The majority of work assigned to professional positions does not involve verifying the accuracy of the fiscal data or the routine collection, reviewing and posting of fiscal record keeping tasks according to established procedures as contained in the office, fiscal or budget support group.

Positions throughout this occupational group often lead or supervise office, fiscal or budget support staff. . . .

Appellant's positions do not conduct the scope and depth of financial reviews and analysis encompassed in the Fiscal Analyst series. For example, Appellants analyze individual invoices and contracts to determine proper billing information; they do not analyze fiscal information to draw conclusions and trends. The majority of work Appellants perform involves verifying the accuracy of the invoices from medical providers. Appellants perform these tasks within established parameters. We agree with the director's designee that the majority of Appellants' work does not fit within the Fiscal Analyst series.

1 The class series concept for the Fiscal Technician series states, in part:

2 Positions perform ongoing, routine and repetitive fiscal tasks in a manual or
3 automated system. Duties can be assigned in Accounts Receivables, Accounts
4 Payable, Purchasing, Payroll, Grants and Contracts, Student Aid, Fixed Assets,
5 Revenue, or General Accounting.

6 Positions prepare, review, verify, and process fiscal, accounting, budget, book or
7 record keeping documents. Performs computing, calculating financial, statistical
8 and numerical data to maintain accounting, budgeting, purchasing, payroll records
9 and reports. Records details of fiscal or business transactions in an increasing
10 automated fiscal computer enhanced environment.

11 This series is not responsible for in-depth analyzing or interpreting fiscal or
12 budgetary data, rules or regulations, or designing automated fiscal systems. This
13 series provides fiscal support to a variety of professional classes found in the fiscal
14 analyst occupational category.

15 Appellants' positions fit within the class series concept of the Fiscal Technician series.

16 The definition for the Fiscal Technician 2 class states:

17 This is the journey, occupational or working level of the series. Incumbents work
18 independently or under general supervision and often perform one or more fiscal
19 support functions. Positions provide support in the area of fiscal, budget, or
20 financial business areas. Apply principles of established procedures in recording,
21 summarizing, and reporting fiscal activities in a variety of work areas such as;
22 recordkeeping, auditing, analysis, budgeting, payroll, travel, purchasing, and other
23 types of fiscal operations. Prepare and maintain fiscal records while compiling and
24 ensuring the accuracy of reports. Positions may lead or supervise level 1 staff.

25 Appellants work independently and record and report fiscal activities for medical disbursements.
26 They review invoices, assure the accuracy of information and approve or deny payments. Due to the
27 numerous provider contacts, various medical procedures, medical coding, and fee schedules that
28 Appellants must interpret and apply, we find that Appellants' work is complex in nature. While
29 some of Appellants' work fits within the Fiscal Technician 2, this level does not encompass the
complexity of Appellants' work, scope of responsibility assigned to Appellants' positions, or
provide the best fit overall for their positions.

1 When determining the appropriate classification for a specific position, the duties and
2 responsibilities of that position must be considered in their entirety and the position must be
3 allocated to the classification that provides the best fit overall for the majority of the position's duties
4 and responsibilities. Dudley v. Dept. of Labor and Industries, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-07-007
5 (2007).

6
7 The definition for the Fiscal Technician 3 class states: “[p]rovide fiscal support using independent
8 judgment in the interpretation and application of a variety of rules and procedures in specialized
9 fiscal functions, such as internal control, revolving fund maintenance control, and providing
10 resource data for reports.”

11
12 Appellants use independent judgment in the interpretation and application of a variety complex
13 source documents such as contracts, medical coding information, offender medical plan guidance,
14 fee schedules and rates, as well as other information. Appellants’ work is specialized in the area of
15 medical disbursements. Appellants’ positions meet the intent of the Fiscal Technician 3 definition.

16
17 The distinguishing characteristics for the Fiscal Technician 3 class state: “[p]erform detailed fiscal
18 work where independent judgment is exercised to make fiscal determinations and to solve
19 problems that arise within work assignments.”

20
21 Appellants independently perform detailed reviews of invoices, source data, and other information
22 and they use independent judgment to verify information, identify discrepancies, and approve or
23 deny payments. They resolve problems or if unable to do so, refer the matter to their supervisor.
24 Appellants’ duties and responsibilities fit within the distinguishing characteristics of the Fiscal
25 Technician 3 class.

1 In a hearing on exceptions, the appellant has the burden of proof. WAC 357-52-110. Appellants
2 have met their burden of proof. On a best fit basis, Appellants positions should be reallocated to the
3 Fiscal Technician 3 classification.

4
5 **ORDER**

6 NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeals on exceptions by Loraine
7 Wisner, Mindy Carey, Sarah Clark, and Celeste Hardy are granted and their positrons are
8 reallocated to the Fiscal Technician 3 classification.

9
10 DATED this _____ day of _____, 2009.

11 WASHINGTON PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD

12
13 _____
14 LAURA ANDERSON, Vice Chair

15
16 _____
17 DJ MARK, Member