

Classification Appeal Decision
Under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [appellant]

Agency classification: Human Resources Specialist
GS-201-11

Organization: Human Resources Management
Service
[facility name]
Department of Veterans Affairs
[city and state]

OPM decision: Human Resources Specialist
GS-201-11

OPM decision number: C-0201-11-05

/s/ Robert D. Hendler

Robert D. Hendler
Classification and Pay Claims
Program Manager
Center for Merit System Accountability

February 29, 2008

Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), this decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the Government. The agency is responsible for reviewing its classification decisions for identical, similar, or related positions to ensure consistency with this decision. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions and time limits specified in the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*, appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

Decision sent to:

[appellant's name and address]

[name]

[servicing HR office address]

Team Leader for Classification
Office of Human Resources Management
and Labor Relations
Compensation and Classification Service (055), Room 240
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20420

Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Human Resources Management (05)
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Room 206
Washington, DC 20420

Introduction

The Dallas Field Services Group (now the Dallas Oversight and Accountability Group) of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a classification appeal from [appellant's name] on September 11, 2007. She is appealing the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) decision on her classification appeal which found her position correctly classified as Human Resources (HR) Specialist, GS-201-11. The appellant believes her position should be classified at the GS-12 grade level. The position is assigned to the Human Resources Management Service (HRMS) of the [facility name], located in [city and state]. We received the appeal which was forwarded through the agency on September 7, 2007, and the additional information needed to complete the agency administrative report (AAR) on October 9, 2007. We have accepted and decided this appeal under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

Background

The appellant is assigned to position description (PD) # [number] which she and eight other coworkers occupy as identical additional (IA) positions. A revised position description was submitted in April 2006 to Veterans Integrated System Network (VISN) [number] Consolidated Classification Team, which retains classification authority for [facility], for review. The recommended classification was HR Specialist, GS-201, with no grade level specified. The VISN found the position remained properly classified as HR Specialist, GS-201-11. The [facility] HR Officer asked the VISN team supervisor to re-evaluate the position in August 2006 for possible upgrade to the GS-12 level. It was agreed to review all IA positions. The position occupants completed questionnaires, and desk audits were conducted. The decision sustained the current classification. The appellant subsequently filed an appeal with the VA Compensation and Classification Service. VA's June 4, 2007, decision found the position properly classified as HR Specialist, GS-201-11.

General issues

The appellant believes the grade levels for Specialists at VA facilities within VISN [number] and across VA are not consistent. By law, we must classify positions solely by comparing their current duties and responsibilities to OPM standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). Since comparison to standards is the exclusive method for classifying positions, we cannot compare the appellant's position to others which may or may not have been properly classified as a basis for deciding her appeal.

Like OPM, the appellant's agency must classify positions based on comparison to OPM standards and guidelines. However, the agency also has primary responsibility for ensuring its positions are classified consistently with OPM appeal decisions. If the appellant considers her position so similar to others that they all warrant the same classification, she may pursue the matter in writing with her headquarters HR office. In doing so, she should specify the precise organizational location, classification, duties, and responsibilities of the positions in question. If the positions are found to be basically the same as hers, the agency must correct its classification to be consistent with this appeal decision. Otherwise, the agency should explain to her the differences between her position and the others.

The appellant primarily disagrees with the agency's evaluation of Factors 2, 3, 4, and 5, and found it "bothersome" the VISN Classification Team questioned the validity of the PD which [facility] sent to be classified.

A PD is the official record of the major duties and responsibilities assigned to a position by a responsible management official; i.e., a person with authority to assign work to a position. A position represents the duties and responsibilities that make up the work performed by an employee. Classification appeal regulations permit OPM to investigate or audit a position and decide an appeal on the basis of the duties assigned by management and performed by the employee. We classify a real operating position and not simply the PD and may direct that it be corrected if we find it is not accurate. Therefore, this decision is based on the actual duties assigned by management and performed by the appellant.

Position information

[facility] is a large, complex organization comprised of two health care facilities; i.e., [name] Memorial Veterans Hospital in [one city] and [second name] Healthcare Center in [second city], and four community-based clinics located in [names of four other cities]. [facility] also includes a home-based primary care center in [a previously named city] and a drop-in treatment center for homeless veterans in downtown [primary location city]. [facility] is affiliated with the University of [state] for Medical Sciences, including the Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Health-Related Professions, and has more than 90 additional educational affiliations. The facilities employ approximately 3,200 people.

HRMS consists of four sections which provide its primary services. Recruitment/Position Management/Pay Administration is the largest. It serves as the primary staffing section responsible for the majority of the hybrid title 38 and title 5 positions. It has a staff of nine HR Specialists, GS-201 (1 GS-12, 7 GS-11s, and 1 GS-9); one HR Assistant, GS-203-7; and two GS-303-5, Program Support Assistants. This section coordinates with the Delegated Examining Unit supported by and serving VISN 16. The Employee Relations Section deals with retirements, the performance management and awards programs, Workers' Compensation, and includes the Employee Health Unit. That staff includes two VN-610 Nurses, three health unit program support staff, and five HR specialists (one GS-12 Supervisor, and five GS-11s).

The appellant is assigned to one of two Service Support Sections which provide HR advice and assistance to the various organizations within [facility]. These organizations (designated as services) are assigned to the support sections based on the predominance of title 38 or title 5 positions within the organization. However, staff in both sections handle title 5, title 38, and hybrid title 38 positions. The appellant's section, "Service Support – Title 5," includes a Supervisor (GS-201-12), four GS-201-11, HR Specialists (one designated as HR Specialist (Information Systems), four GS-203, HR Assistants (one GS-7 and three GS-6s), and a part-time Office Automation Clerk.

The appellant's PD number [number] describes responsibility for providing technical and human resources management (HRM) advice and guidance to an assigned block of services. It

discusses HR specialties including retention, recruitment, and placement; position management and pay administration; employee training and development; employee relations; and labor relations. The PD also describes assisting in conducting HRM evaluation reviews within the assigned organizations, serving as coordinator for one or more special programs, and having responsibility for coordination of a hospital-wide program in a single HR specialization. The appellant and HR Chief have certified as to the accuracy of the PD. Our fact-finding confirmed the PD of record contains the major duties and responsibilities, assigned by management and performed by the appellant, is adequate for classification purposes; and we incorporate it by reference into this decision.

The appellant indicated she is currently assigned to provide advice and assistance to seven services: Mental Health, Primary Care, Social Work, the Center's Business Office, Dental, the VISN's Mental Health office, and Physical and Rehabilitative Medicine. The largest is Mental Health with approximately 349 employees including title 38, hybrid title 38, and title 5 employees such as psychologists, psychiatrists, technicians, nurses, vocational rehabilitation counselors and specialists, and support staff. The Center's Business Office consists of 162 employees in a variety of occupations, including hybrid title 38 Medical Records Technicians and Administrators, has responsibilities for the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts, and provides general administrative support. Other services include both registered and vocational nursing positions, dentists and dental technicians, physicians, occupational and physical therapists and technicians, social workers and technicians, as well as general administrative support staff. The appellant's units do not include Federal Wage System employees. In total, these services employ approximately 774 people.

The appellant currently recruits primarily for title 38 positions, placing notices in newspapers and seeking the appropriate journals to target the occupations which are generally hard-to-fill. She prepares information for the professional review boards, and prepares letters of intent to hire, verifies currency of credentials and licenses, and processes the required paperwork. When services request new positions be filled, she must verify the full-time equivalency ceiling and budget for the service, ensure the PD is current and functional statements are provided, and forward the request to the Resource Executive Committee for approval. The Mental Health Service employs a large number of students in various teaching programs within the Center. She may attend recruitment fairs, representing the VA, in efforts to recruit these students. She is responsible for explaining to her services the workload and financial implications of their personnel requests, e.g., replacing a program assistant position with a nursing position within the allocated ceiling. While the appellant may recommend a classification action, she does not write classification evaluation reports since the authority to classify positions resides with the VISN [number] Consolidated Classification Team.

The appellant responds to questions from employees in her serviced organizations concerning leave, life and health insurance, etc. She advises and assists supervisors in dealing with conduct issues, disciplinary actions, etc., and serves as a technical representative to the service chief in step 3 grievances. She also serves as a technical representative in third-party cases; i.e., Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Merit System Protection Board (MSPB), and arbitration cases, assisting attorneys who function as the formal VA representatives.

The appellant identifies needs for training in HR subjects for supervisors, managers, and employees within her services and provides information, training, and assistance as appropriate. She also makes her serviced staff aware of developmental opportunities within the agency and provides advice and assistance. She participates in presenting new employee orientation which is conducted every other week, rotating with other HR specialists in making presentations on such things as leave, ethics, etc.

The appellant may survey her organizations to determine their satisfaction with HR services provided. She has assisted the HRO in preparing for a review of [facility] rehabilitation facilities by the Committee on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). She has also been tasked with tracking issues raised by new mental health staffing initiatives, e.g., having staff available on call at all times.

The appellant's supervisor estimated approximately 50 percent of the appellant's time involves labor and employee relations issues, 40 percent recruitment and position management issues, and approximately 10 percent is training related.

To help decide this appeal, we conducted a telephone audit with the employee on December 14, 2007, and a telephone interview with her first-level supervisor on December 27, 2007, with a follow-up on January 8, 2008. We also interviewed the second level supervisor, the Assistant HRO who has primary responsibility for Labor Relations on January 18, 2008. This decision is based on the written record, information provided by both the agency and the appellant, as well as the information obtained during the interviews.

Series, title, and standard determination

The GS-201, Human Resources Management Series, covers two-grade interval administrative positions that manage, supervise, administer, advise on, or deliver HRM products or services. The agency has classified the appellant's position to this series, titled it HR Specialist, and used the Job Family Standard (JFS) for Administrative Work in the Human Resources Management Group, GS-0200, (PCS) for grade-level determination. The appellant does not disagree and, based on careful review of the record, we concur.

Grade determination

The GS-200 JFS is written in the Factor Evaluation System (FES) format, under which factor levels and accompanying point values are assigned for each of nine factors. The total is converted to a grade level by use of the grade-conversion table provided in the PCS. Under the FES, each factor-level description in a PCS describes the minimum characteristics needed to receive credit for the described level. Therefore, if a position fails to meet the criteria in a factor-level description in any significant aspect, it must be credited at a lower level. Our decision will address all nine factors.

The VISN [number] evaluation of the position credited Levels 1-7, 2-4, 3-3, 4-4, 5-3, 6/7 3C, 8-1, and 9-1. The VA Compensation and Classification Service appeal decision credited Levels 1-7, 2-4, 3-3, 4-4, 5-3, 6/7 2B, 8-1, and 9-1. The appellant believes her position should be credited

with Levels 2-5, 3-4, 4-5, and 5-4, but did not contest or address any other factors. Based on careful review of the record, we concur with the crediting of Levels 8-1 and 9-1, and will address all remaining factors in greater detail.

Factor 1, Knowledge Required by the Position

This factor measures the nature and extent of information or facts that the employee must understand to do acceptable work. To be selected, a knowledge must be required and applied.

Level 1-7 requires knowledge and skill in applying a wide range of HRM concepts, laws, policies, practices, analytical, and diagnostic methods and techniques sufficient to solve a wide range of complex, interrelated HRM problems and issues. It requires knowledge and skill in applying a wide range of HR concepts, practices, laws, policies, and precedents to provide comprehensive HRM advisory and technical services on substantive organizational functions and work practices; analytical techniques to identify, evaluate, and recommend to management appropriate HR interventions to resolve complex interrelated HR problems and issues; techniques for developing new or modified HR work methods, approaches, or procedures for delivering effective HR services to clients; consensus building, negotiating, coalition building, and conflict resolution techniques to interact in highly charged emotional situations; and written and oral communication techniques to develop and deliver briefings, project papers, status/staff reports, and correspondence to managers to promote understanding and acceptance of findings and recommendations.

Level 1-8 requires a mastery of advanced HRM principles, concepts, regulations, and practices, analytical methods and techniques, and seasoned consultative skill sufficient to resolve HRM problems not susceptible to treatment by standard methods.

The duties and responsibilities performed by the appellant meet Level 1-7. Like examples at that level, the appellant operates as a generalist, serving as the primary point of contact for her organizations to assist with their range of HR problems, e.g., filling their positions, resolving disciplinary problems, answering questions on leave, pay, benefits, etc. She serves as liaison and refers their staffing requests to the staffing unit or delegated examining unit, as appropriate, or prepares advertisements for title 38 positions, announcements and documents needed for hiring under other appointing authorities, such as student, fee basis, transfers, promotions, etc. Many of those positions are considered hard to fill. She advises supervisors and managers on resolving a range of conflicts using alternative dispute resolution techniques, and assists them in determining appropriate disciplinary/adverse actions, using the table of offenses, collecting evidence files, preparing initial charges, and advising managers on possible consequences. These duties are comparable to those described in illustrative assignments at Level 1-7.

The work does not meet Level 1-8 which describes using the mastery of HRM knowledge to perform such assignments as: design and conduct comprehensive HR studies with extremely broad boundaries, develop recommendations for legislation that would modify the way agencies conduct programs, evaluate new or modified legislation for projected impact on existing programs, provide authoritative advisory service and/or develop authoritative policy interpretations. Another example at Level 1-8 describes providing staff-level advice to major

agency components and/or equivalent operating HR offices in development of solutions to especially complex problems or program improvements in one or more HR specialties. In contrast, the appellant provides advice and assistance to a block of services within a large VA Medical Center complex. There are supervisors and higher graded staff members to serve as subject-matter experts at [facility] and within the VISN for problems involving especially difficult matters. For example, while the appellant works independently with the service's supervisors to assist in resolving step 1 grievances, steps 2 and 3 have more HR supervisory participation and review. At step 3, there is participation by the first- and second-level supervisors in review of proposed decisions and joint meetings with the Center Director, Service Chief, union officials, etc. For significant situations involving third parties; i.e., EEOC, MSPB, arbitrations, etc., the appellant serves as technical representative, working to schedule interviews, arrange locations, arrange for court reporters, etc., supporting the official agency representative. The second-level supervisor serves as the technical advisor, responsible for reviewing overall contract provisions, case law, consistency issues with past cases, etc.

Level 1-7 is credited for 1250 points.

Factor 2, Supervisory Controls

This factor covers the nature and extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, the employee's responsibility, and the review of completed work.

The appellant states her work meets Level 2-5 because of the significance of her labor and employee relations work, third-party hearing and related work, responsibility for researching policies and regulations, and her independence. The significance of work is covered under Factor 5, Scope and Effect, and we will address it in our evaluation of this factor.

At Level 2-4, the supervisor outlines overall objectives and available resources. The employee and supervisor, in consultation, discuss timeframes, scope of the assignment including possible stages and possible approaches. The employee determines the appropriate practices and methods, frequently interprets regulations on own initiative, applies new methods to resolve complex or intricate controversial or unprecedented issues, and keeps the supervisor informed of progress and potentially controversial matters. Completed work is reviewed for soundness of approach, effectiveness in meeting requirements, or producing expected results. The supervisor does not usually review the methods used.

At Level 2-5, the supervisor provides administrative and policy direction in terms of broadly defined missions or functions. The employee is responsible for a significant program or function, defines objectives, interprets policies published by authorities senior to the immediate supervisor and determines their effect on program needs, independently plans and carries out the work, and is a technical authority. The work is reviewed for potential impact on broad agency policy objectives and program goals, is normally accepted as technically authoritative, and is normally accepted without significant change.

This position meets Level 2-4. The appellant is supervised by a GS-201-12 Section Chief, who reports to the Assistant HRO. Like Level 2-4, the appellant is responsible for planning and

responding to questions, problems, and needs of the assigned organizations. Her assignments are completed independently within the objectives, priorities, and resources available. Supervisory assistance is available for difficult assignments and the record indicates the appellant is expected to call attention to significant technical or other problems and situations which require supervisory review.

Unlike Level 2-5, the appellant functions under technical supervision. The instructions received from the supervisor/agency are more detailed and specific than the administrative and policy direction described at Level 2-5. Technical experts are available in HRMS for assistance. As discussed previously, the appellant is expected to advise the supervisor where problems may require review. The supervisor reviews the appellant's proposed letters in cases of disciplinary and adverse actions. In cases where more complex or multiple issues are involved, the supervisor assists the service chief and the hospital management staff.

Level 2-4 is credited for 450 points.

Factor 3, Guidelines

This factor covers the nature of guidelines used in doing the work and the judgment needed to apply them. The appellant states Level 3-4 should be credited because there is little guidance in the labor and employee relations arena, specialists must keep abreast of case law, thus requiring her to deviate from previously used methods or suggest a different approach in presenting a case or taking a disciplinary action

At Level 3-3, the employee uses a wide variety of reference materials and manuals. However, they are not always directly applicable or have gaps in specificity. Precedents are available outlining the preferred approach to more general problems or issues. The employee uses judgment in researching, choosing, interpreting, modifying, and applying available guidelines for adaptation to specific problems or issues.

At Level 3-4, the employee uses guidelines and precedents that are very general regarding agency policy statements and objectives. Guidelines specific to assignments are often scarce, inapplicable or have gaps in specificity that require interpretation and/or adaptation for application. The employee uses judgment, initiative, and resourcefulness in deviating from established methods to modify, adapt, and/or refine guidelines to resolve complex or intricate issues and problems; treat specific issues or problems; research trends and patterns; develop new methods and criteria; and/or propose new policies and practices.

The position meets Level 3-3. The appellant has available guidance contained in title 5 and title 38 law and regulations; OPM guidance; VA policies and regulations issued at the departmental, health administration, VISN, and local levels; collective bargaining agreements; Federal Labor Relations Authority, MSPB, EEOC, and arbitration decisions; and precedent decisions from a variety of sources. Like at Level 3-3, she must use judgment to choose the appropriate guidance from among available sources and to interpret or adapt guides to fit the specific situations. Level 3-4 is not met as the appellant's guidelines are more specific than is typical at this level. While she may need to interpret guidance to fit her specific situations, she is not deviating from

established methods or developing new policies and practices as typical at Level 3-4. The involvement of first- and second-level supervisors in the more complex and sensitive issues and actual third-party representational authority and responsibility vested in other positions further preclude the crediting of Level 3-4

Level 3-3 is credited for 275 points.

Factor 4, Complexity

This factor covers the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of tasks steps, processes, or methods in the work performed; the difficulty in identifying what needs to be done; and the difficulty and originality involved in performing the work. The appellant states her work meets Level 4-5 because she provides consultative and technical services to program managers at a major level of the organization, including the Medical Center Director.

At Level 4-4, the work consists of resolving problems and issues often involving conflicting or incomplete information; applying analytical techniques that frequently require modification to accommodate a wide range of variables; and/or addressing substantive technical issues or problems characterized by complex, controversial, and/or sensitive matters.

At Level 4-5, the work consists of addressing issues that significantly affect long-range implementation of substantive operational and/or policy programs throughout an agency, bureau, service, or major military command with numerous subordinate offices; resolving unrelated problems and issues affecting long-range implementation and administration of substantive interrelated mission-oriented programs; conducting studies to develop responses to management on new requirements to program operations, legislation, or agency regulations; analyzing disputed interrelated information that must be reconstructed from circumstantial evidence requiring substantial analysis over a short period while affected organizations vigorously support their interest by challenging and disputing methods, etc.; and/or responding to unanticipated changes to judicial and/or administrative law and policy and the resultant conflicting goals and objectives.

The record shows the appellant provides a wide range of management advisory services to the assigned organizations in the areas of staffing and recruitment, position management, and employee and labor relations. She serves as liaison with the staffing and delegated examining operations, provides answers to questions on employee benefits such as pay, leave, insurance, and assists managers in addressing conduct, grievances, disciplinary matters, and adverse actions. She serves as a technical representative in third-party situations as the specialist most familiar with the specific case and the organizational segment. This is most comparable to Level 4-4 of the PCS and its illustrations such as handling a variety of employee conduct and performance-based actions, including developing case strategies based on case precedent, legal, regulatory, and contractual requirements; and providing technical advice and assistance in all areas of staffing and recruitment, including troubleshooting the most difficult and controversial internal and external staffing and placement problems. Work at Level 4-4 includes representing the organization in formal administrative proceedings such as the appellant does on unemployment matters. The position does not meet Level 4-5 which describes addressing major

issues of operations and/or policy at higher levels within an agency. While the appellant's facility may be large for a medical center, she is responsible for advising only a segment of the local organization, rather than the top management officials of higher levels within the agency (VA) as described in illustrations in the PCS at Level 4-5.

Level 4-4 is credited for 225 points.

Factor 5, Scope and Effect

This factor covers the relationship between the nature of the work; i.e., the purpose, breadth, and depth of the assignment, and the effect of work products or services both within and outside the organization. The appellant believes Level 5-4 should be credited because of the complex problems and issues dealt with on a daily basis; i.e., if any of these complex areas are "messed up," it will affect the mission, activity, performance measures, and other programs at the Medical Center in terms of monetary costs and negative reputation. The PCS notes only the scope and effect of properly performed work is to be considered. Contrary to the appellant's belief, the risk designation of a position has no bearing on the evaluation of this factor.

At Level 5-3, the scope of the work involves applying accepted criteria, principles, and standard methods to resolve a variety of conventional issues and/or portions of broader studies that require developing detailed procedures and guidelines to supplement existing guidance. The reports and recommendations influence decisions made by managers and other employees and affect customer perception of the overall quality and service of the HR program.

At Level 5-4, the work requires resolving or advising on complex problems and issues requiring analyzing and/or troubleshooting a wide range of unusual conditions. This work ultimately affects the objectives and effectiveness of agency HR activities, missions, and programs. The assessment, analysis, and ultimate resolution of problems promote the overall quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of program operations.

The wording in the PD overstates the work performed by the appellant in that it describes ". . . resolution of a variety of complex problems, questions, and situations typically requiring analysis of a wide range of unusual conditions . . . and . . . decisions, findings, and recommendations are often of major significance to the facility" and, therefore, should be revised. Comparable to Level 5-3, the appellant provides advice and assistance to managers involved with the usual range of problems encountered in a VA facility, using generally accepted rules and procedures. Managers make their decisions considering the advice provided. The appellant's work affects the HR operations within the serviced organizations and in turn, impacts the overall HR operations at the facility. The appellant's work does not impact a wider range of agency activities throughout the agency or affect operations in other agencies as typical at Level 5-4.

Level 5-3 is credited for 150 points.

Factors 6 and 7, Personal Contacts and Purpose of Contacts

This combined factor is to measure the face-to-face and telephone and radio dialogue with persons not in the supervisory chain. These levels measure the persons contacted and the conditions under which the contact takes place. Factor 7 describes the purpose of the contacts selected under Factor 6 and measures a range of situations.

Personal contacts at Level 2 are primarily with employees and managers in the agency, both inside and outside the immediate office or related units, as well as employees, representatives of private concerns, applicants, retirees, beneficiaries, and/or the general public, in a moderately structured setting. Contacts with employees and managers may be from various levels such as headquarters, regions, districts, field offices, or operating offices at the same location.

At Level 3, the primary contacts are with persons outside the agency, including consultants, contractors, or business executives, in moderately unstructured settings. This may include contacts with agency officials who are several managerial levels removed from the employee when such contacts occur on an ad hoc basis. Each must recognize or learn the role and authority of each party during the course of the meeting.

Like Level 2, the appellant's principal contacts are with supervisors, managers, and employees in their serviced organizations; other HR staff members and management officials within the facility; and HR staff at other VA hospitals and the VISN. Contacts outside VA include offices of other Government agencies; community hospitals and organizations; educational and labor organizations; and the general public. The appellant does not have regular contacts with persons outside the agency the levels described as typical of Level 3, e.g., consultants, contractors, in moderately unstructured settings. Therefore, the position is properly credited at Level 2.

The purpose of contacts at Level B is to plan, coordinate, or advise on work efforts, to resolve issues or operating problems by influencing or persuading people who are working toward mutual goals and have basically cooperative attitudes. Contacts typically involve identifying options for resolving problems.

At Level C, the purpose of contacts is to influence and persuade employees and managers to accept and implement findings and recommendations. They may encounter resistance due to organizational conflict, competing objectives, or resource problems. The employee must be skillful in approaching contacts to obtain desired effect, e.g., gaining compliance with established policies and regulations by persuasion or negotiation.

The record indicates the purpose of contacts is to clarify issues and resolve problems and concerns. The appellant's contacts are primarily to answer questions, provide advice, resolve problems, verify credentials and currency of licenses, etc. Like at Level B, the appellant is expected to influence or persuade people working toward mutual goals. Contacts typically involve identifying options for resolving problems. The record did not show the appellant regularly involved in conflicts involving serious resistance, as is typical at Level C. Higher level staff such as the supervisor or the Assistant HRO would become involved in these instances.

Personal Contacts of Level 2 and Purpose of Contacts Level B result in crediting 75 points.

Summary

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Points</i>
1. Knowledge Required by the Position	1-7	1250
2. Supervisory Controls	2-4	450
3. Guidelines	3-3	275
4. Complexity	4-4	225
5. Scope and Effect	5-3	150
6. & 7. Personal Contacts and Purpose of Contacts	2-B	75
8. Physical Demands	8-1	5
9. Work Environment	9-1	<u>5</u>
<i>Total</i>		2435

A total of 2435 points falls within the point range for GS-11 (2355 – 2750).

Decision

The position is properly classified as Human Resources Specialist, GS-201-11.