BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

JULI DALGARN, Appellant, v. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, Respondent.	Case No. ALLO-00-0037 ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

Hearing on Exceptions. This appeal came on for hearing before the Personnel Appeals Board, GERALD L. MORGEN, Vice Chair, and LEANA D. LAMB, Member. The hearing was held on May 2, 2001, in Room 100 of the Airport Ramada Inn in Spokane, Washington. WALTER T. HUBBARD, Chair, did not participate in the hearing or in the decision in this matter.

Appearances. Appellant Juli Dalgarn was present and was represented by Electra Jubon, Area Representative for the Washington Federation of State Employees. Respondent Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) was represented by Pam Pelton, Classification and Compensation Manager.

Background. Appellant's supervisor submitted a classification questionnaire (CQ) for Appellant's position requesting that the position be reallocated from the Data Compiler 3 classification to an information technology classification. Gayle Fox, Human Resource Manager, reviewed Appellant's position and by letter dated April 27, 2000, informed her that her position was reallocated to the Information Technology Technician 2 (IT Technician 2) classification.

By letter dated May 16, 2000, Appellant appealed to the Director of the Department of Personnel (DOP). On July 26, 2000, the DOP Director's designee, Paul Peterson, conducted an allocation

review of Appellant's position. By letter dated August 2, 2000, Mr. Peterson determined that Appellant's position was properly allocated to the IT Technician 2 classification.

On August 29, 2000, Appellant appealed the Director's determination to the Personnel Appeals Board. Appellant requested that her position be reallocated to the Information Technology System Specialist 2 (IT System Specialist) 2 classification. Appellant's exceptions to the Director's determination are the subject of this proceeding.

Appellant is employed by DSHS's Development Disabilities Division (DDD) at Lakeland Village in the Computer Services department. Appellant provides support services for the Lakeland Village computer network and desktop computer systems. She is responsible for installing software applications and operating systems, setting up hardware, troubleshooting user problems and training users.

Summary of Appellant's Argument. Appellant argues that her position was allocated based on a CQ completed by management that did not reflect the duties she was performing. Appellant asserts that her assignments include setting up computers, installing software applications, LAN and WAN responsibilities, system mapping for the Lakeland Village cottages, hardware configuration and consulting on cabling, assisting with troubleshooting problems and bringing the system back on line, and coordinating with vendors and users in recommending purchases of compatible equipment. Appellant contends that she utilizes her technical knowledge and skills to perform her duties with little supervision. Therefore, Appellant asserts that her position should be allocated to the IT System Specialist 2 classification.

Summary of Respondent's Argument. Respondent argues that positions are allocated based on the duties assigned and described in the CQ and that supervision is not an allocating criterion.

Respondent asserts that Appellant is not assigned professional level work and does not perform the level of troubleshooting or problem solving that require consultation skills. Respondent further asserts that Appellant is not required to understand the environment or have a working knowledge of the Lakeland Village program or client needs to perform her duties and responsibilities and that she does not have purchasing authority. Respondent contends that the purpose of Appellant's position is to assist other information technology staff and higher-level professionals. Respondent contends that the level of duties and responsibilities assigned to Appellant's position are best described by the IT Technician 2 classification.

Primary Issue. Whether the Director's determination that Appellant's position was properly allocated to the Information Technology Technician 2 classification should be affirmed.

Relevant Classifications. Information Technology Technician 2, class code 03274, and Information Technology System Specialist 2, class code 03273.

Decision of the Board. The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement of the volume of work performed nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed. Also, a position review is not a comparison of work performed by employees in similar positions. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the class which best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

Because a current and accurate description of a position's duties and responsibilities is documented in an approved classification questionnaire, the classification questionnaire becomes the basis for

allocation of a position. An allocation determination must be based on the overall duties and responsibilities, as document in the CQ. Lawrence v Dept of Social and Health Services, PAB No. ALLO-99-0027 (2000).

Position allocations are "based upon an investigation of duties and responsibilities assigned and/or performed and other information and recommendations." (WAC 356-20-200).

At the IT Technician 2 level, incumbents' work is spot-checked and they perform routine technical tasks related to computer applications, hardware and equipment.

At the IT System Specialist 2 level, incumbents' work is spot-checked and they resolve standard problems and perform standard installation, troubleshooting or consultation tasks related to computer equipment, hardware, software, and systems.

The difference between the IT Technician 2 and the IT System Specialist 2 classifications is very small. Both classifications work under spot-check supervision, but the IT System Specialist 2 classification appears to have a higher level and breadth of responsibilities than the IT Technician 2 classification. Furthermore, IT System Specialist 2 encompasses professional level duties while the IT Technician 2 encompasses lower level, routine duties.

Appellant's CQ indicates that she works under little supervision, provides technical assistance to users of software applications, assists the network administrator and computer services manager in troubleshooting programs and applications, installs new computers and related equipment, assists in the setup and maintenance of computer sub-servers, and trains computer users regarding applications and operating systems. The examples of work provided with her CQ show that she maps connections; installs and reconfigures applications; installs computers, peripheral equipment,

and hardware; resolves database, hardware and software problems; and trains computer users. Consultation with users and vendors is inherent in the duties Appellant performs.

Appellant performs standard, professional-level duties. The breadth of her responsibilities and the technical skills she employs in installing and maintaining computer hardware and software, troubleshooting problems, training computer users, assisting higher level technicians, and consulting with vendors and users are best described by the IT System Specialist 2 classification.

Conclusion. Appellant's appeal on exceptions should be granted and her position should be reallocated to the IT System Specialist 2 classification. The determination of the Director, dated August 2, 2000, should be reversed.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal of Juli Dalgarn is granted, the determination of the Director, dated August 2, 2000, is reversed, and Appellant's position is reallocated to the Information Technology System Specialist 2 classification.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2001.

WASHINGTON STATE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

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Gerald L. Morgen, Vice, Chair

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Leana D. Lamb, Member