BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

EDITH LAWRENCE, Appellant, v. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, Respondent.	)	Case No. ALLO-99-0027 ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE DETERMINATIONS OF THE DIRECTOR

Hearing on Exceptions. This matter came on for hearing before the Personnel Appeals Board, GERALD L. MORGEN, Vice Chair, and LEANA D. LAMB, Member, on Appellant's exceptions to the Director's determination dated September 3, 1999. The hearing was held on March 24, 2000, in the Personnel Appeals Board hearing room in Olympia, Washington. WALTER T. HUBBARD, Chair, did not participate in the hearing or in the decision in this matter.

Appearances. Appellant Edith Lawrence was present and was represented by Michael Hanbey, Attorney at Law of Ditlevson, Rogers, Hanbey & Dixon, P.S. Respondent Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) was represented by George Weirich, Classification and Compensation Supervising Manager.

Background. In May 1994, Appellant accepted a reduction in force option within the Medical Assistance Administration (MMA) as a Research Analyst 3. The majority of the duties listed on the Classification Questionnaire (CQ) of her new position related to the Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS). However, Appellant never performed the majority of the duties listed in the CQ, instead, she was assigned to perform various studies and projects unrelated to the MMIS.

Appellant requested a review of her Research Analyst (RA) 3 position by submitting a classification questionnaire (CQ) dated November 3, 1997, to Respondent's Employee Services office. Appellant requested that her position be reallocated to a Washington Management Service (WMS) position. Mr. Weirich conducted a position audit and reviewed the classes of Research Analyst 3 and Medical Assistance Program Manager 1. On May 14, 1998, Mr. Weirich informed Appellant that the decision to place her in a position in WMS could not be made by Employee Services. He further informed Appellant that based on the audit of her position and a review of her CQ that her position was correctly allocated to the RA 3 classification.

Appellant appealed to the Department of Personnel. The Director's determination was issued on September 3, 1999. The Director's designee concluded that Appellant's position was properly allocated to the RA 3 classification. On September 20, 1999, Appellant filed exceptions to the Director's determination with the Personnel Appeals Board. Appellant's exceptions are the subject of these proceedings.

Summary of Appellant's Argument. Appellant disagrees with DOP's determination that her position is properly allocated to the RA 3 classification. Appellant contends that Respondent placed too much emphasis on her more recent assignments rather than applying weight to the preceding period of time that she performed the duties of her position which she asserts were consistent with the MAPM 1 classification. Appellant argues that the coordination activities she engaged in, the individual to whom she reported and her interaction with other in state and out of state agencies constitutes a basis for finding that her position should be allocated to the MAPM 1. Appellant contends that the CQ used to determine her allocation focuses only on some of her activities, including her research duties, but that in any case, the MAPM 1 class specification requires the incumbent to engage in some activities related to research.

Summary of Respondent's Argument. Respondent contends that Appellant's CQ, which she signed on November 3, 1997, accurately reflects her duties and responsibilities. Respondent argues that although Appellant's immediate supervisor disagreed with the examples of the work Appellant included in the CQ, the work itself still fit within the RA 3 classification. Respondent asserts that the MAPM 1 classification defines a position which is more of a contributor to programs managed by other managers and that the primary duties and responsibilities of Appellant's position are related to conducting research. Respondent contends that based on the majority of Appellant's research duties, Appellant is properly allocated to the RA 3 classification.

Primary Issue. Whether the Director's determination that Appellant's position is properly allocated to the Research Analyst 3 classification should be affirmed.

Relevant Classifications. Research Analyst 3, class code 04100, and Medical Assistance Program Manager, class code 52300.

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).

The definition for the Medical Assistance Program Manager 1 specification indicates that the incumbent "[i]n the Medical Assistance Administration, reports to a higher level Medical Assistance Program

Manager and is responsible for medical assistance program analysis and evaluation, developing and writing policies and procedures, utilization review, preparing issue papers and reports, implementing policy changes and/or monitoring and administering provider contracts. Provides consultative services to clients, medical providers, and other professionals in the community and/or department regarding program administration."

The definition for the Research Analyst 3 specification states the incumbent "outlines, organizes and conducts research, data and/or statistical analysis work, may supervise or lead support staff of one or more persons on a periodic or regular basis; or regularly supervises two or more professional level personnel in the ongoing processing of research, or complex statistical or data reporting activities." Under the distinguishing characteristics, the specification indicates, "[t]his is independent and responsible research and/or analytical work involving the determination of the area requiring analysis or study, the method of analysis or study, and the preparation of respective reports. Work involves sophisticated analysis which may be in a specialized field."

Appellant's CQ, dated November 3, 1997, indicates that she spends 70 percent of her time outlining, organizing and conducting research and collecting data for identified health issues, as well as identifying problem areas, drawing conclusions, and recommending solutions. Appellant provided the following examples of her work:

> Analyzes, develops new applications of Medical Services Verification [MSV] for Quality Improvement of client services. Acts a leadworker in administering a Survey for Medical Assistance Administration's improvement of Policy and Procedures.
>
> Conducts study and analysis of Medicaid and Medicare for Nationwide Ambulance Services. Evaluates a National Research and statistical analysis of the development for an effective policy for Washington State's Air and Ground Ambulance criteria. Research, review study analysis and identifying fact-finding comparison of Medicare for an effective criteria for Medicaid Ambulance Services for the State of Washington.

In this case, Appellant's supervisor agreed with the assigned duties, however, she disagreed with the examples of work provided by Appellant in her CQ. Rather, Appellant's supervisor stated that Appellant was not a lead worker on the MSV, which was an assignment and not a project, and stated that Appellant was not solely responsible for the development of the questionnaire. The supervisor clarified that Appellant was assigned the task of collecting questions from other surveys for review, setting up meetings with customers who would be utilizing the MSV and organizing the information for the development of the MSV questionnaires. Regarding Appellant's second example, the supervisor stated that Appellant did not perform a study or any statistical or cost analysis of the data gathered from other states, rather she called other states and asked for their information which was compiled in a packet without any analysis or recommendation.

The record here contains only two completed CQ's for the position which Appellant occupies. The first CQ, dated November 1994, lists duties and responsibilities which were described by the RA 3 classification. The second and most current CQ was completed by Appellant and signed on November 3, 1997. Although Appellant submitted an undated document from a former supervisor (Exh. 25) regarding her duties, the duties listed indicate that Appellant was conducting studies and surveys, tasks which are described by the RA 3 classification specification.

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

As described in Appellant's classification questionnaire, Appellant conducts research and collects data for identified health issues. She identifies problem areas, draws conclusions, and recommends solutions. These duties do not meet the definition of a MAPM 1. Appellant is not responsible for medical assistance program analysis and evaluation, for developing and writing policies and procedures, for utilization review, preparing issue papers and reports, implementing policy changes and/or monitoring and administering provider contracts. She does not provide consultative services to clients, medical providers, and other professionals in the community and/or department regarding program administration. The primary focus of Appellant's duties and responsibilities is to conduct research which is clearly encompassed by the RA 3 classification. Appellant's position is properly allocated to the RA 3 classification and the Director's designee should be affirmed.

Conclusion. The appeal on exceptions by Appellant should be denied and the Director's determination dated September 3, 1999, should be affirmed and adopted.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Appellant is denied and the Director's determination dated September 3, 1999, is affirmed and adopted. A copy is attached.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2000.

WASHINGTON STATE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

_____
Gerald L. Morgen, Vice Chair

_____
Leana D. Lamb, Member