

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

3 DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS,)
4 Appellant,) CASE NO. R-ALLO-15-038
5 vs.)
6 RAHN DOTY,) ORDER OF THE BOARD
7 Respondent.) FOLLOWING HEARING ON
8) EXCEPTIONS TO THE
) DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

9 **Hearing on Exceptions.** This appeal came before the Personnel Resources Board, NANCY
10 HOLLAND YOUNG, Chair, SUSAN MILLER, Vice Chair, and VICKY BOWDISH, Member.
11 The hearing was held on December 17, 2015, at Capitol Court, Olympia, WA.

12 **Appearances.** Appellant Department of Corrections (DOC) was represented by Tina Cooley,
13 Classification, Pay and HRIS Manager. Respondent Rahn Doty was present by telephone
14 conference and was represented by Tawny Humbert, Teamsters Local 117 Representative, also
15 present by telephone conference.
16

17 **Background.** Respondent is a Mail Processing Driver Lead at Airway Heights Correctional Center
18 (AHCC). Prior to the position review by DOC Human Resources (HR), Respondent was an Office
19 Assistant 3 (OA3).
20

21 On March 18, 2014, DOC HR received identical PRRs from Respondent and the other OA3s
22 assigned to the mail room requesting reallocation to Mail Processing-Driver. On April 7, 2014,
23 Respondent submitted a second PRR to DOC HR requesting reallocation to Mail Processing-Driver
24 Lead. The second PRR included duties not present in the March 18, 2014 PRR.
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1 By letter dated October 21, 2014, DOC notified Respondent that his position was not reallocated to a
2 Mail Processing-Driver Lead, but to a Mail Processing-Driver. On November 17, 2014, Respondent
3 submitted a request to OFM State HR for a director's review of DOC's determination.
4

5 By letter dated September 9, 2015, the director's designee determined that Respondent's position
6 should be reallocated to Mail Processing Driver Lead. On October 8, 2015, Appellant filed timely
7 exceptions to the director's determination. In their exceptions, Appellant indicated the scope of
8 Respondent's work best fits the duties of the Mail Processing-Driver job class. Appellant's
9 exceptions are the subject of this proceeding.
10

11 As summarized in the director's review, Respondent is assigned to the mail room at AHCC.
12 Respondent is responsible for operating postal equipment; opening, inspecting and x-raying
13 incoming mail; applying postal regulations, shipping procedures and protocols to his daily work; and
14 remaining informed of changing laws and rules that apply to his work.
15

16 **Summary of Appellant's Arguments.**

17 Appellant takes exception to the director's decision. Appellant argues that Respondent is not
18 assigned as lead as the Glossary of Classification Terms describes, i.e., does not "regularly assign,
19 instruct and check the work of others." Appellant points out that the director's designee agrees with
20 this, stating in her decision, "Respondent does not regularly assign, instruct and check the work of
21 others."
22

23 Appellant quotes the language used in the director's decision: "Respondent's duties are best
24 described by the distinguishing characteristics and typical work of the Mail Processing-Driver Lead
25 classification." Appellant contends this contradicts the language used earlier in the decision that
26 states: "No class series concept or distinguishing characteristics exist for this classification."
27 Therefore, Appellant further contends that the director's designee contradicted herself and
28

1 erroneously compared Respondent's position to distinguishing characteristics that do not exist in the
2 class specification.

3
4 Appellant states the second PRR submitted includes the names and job titles of staff Respondent
5 says he leads and includes duties about training staff. Sgt. Orth does not agree that the second PRR
6 is accurate and complete and disagrees with Respondent concerning his lead duties, stating on the
7 supervisor portion of the PRR: "60% of the time all of the mailroom staff is doing various duties in
8 training other staff. That is why the position description of each mailroom staff member is the same.
9 There is no one person leading another person."

10 11 **Summary of Respondent's Arguments.**

12 Respondent argues that as a 12-year mailroom employee of AHCC, he knows mailroom procedures
13 and equipment better than anyone else and is expected by Sgt. Orth to train light duty workers and
14 new staff. Respondent further argues that when there are questions about mailroom protocol or
15 procedure, everyone is directed to him. Respondent contends that other mailroom staff has the
16 capability of training others, but relies on him to do so.

17
18 Respondent contends his initiative and extensive knowledge allows him to streamline processes for
19 the mailroom staff, for example designing a log that significantly aids in tracking mail and
20 streamlining mail processes. Respondent further contends he was asked by Sgt. Orth to write a desk
21 manual of mailroom procedures.

22
23 **Primary Issue.** Whether the director's determination should be affirmed in that Appellant's position
24 should remain at the Mail Processing- Driver Lead job class.

25
26 **Relevant Classifications.** Mail Processing-Driver; Mail Processing-Driver Lead.

1 **Decision of the Board.** The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best
2 describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a
3 measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that
4 work is performed. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a
5 particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a
6 determination of the class that best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position.
7 See *Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University*, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

8
9 Most positions within the civil service system occasionally perform duties that appear in more
10 than one classification. However, when determining the appropriate classification for a specific
11 position, the duties and responsibilities of that position must be considered in their entirety and
12 the position must be allocated to the classification that provides the best fit overall for the majority
13 of the position's duties and responsibilities. (Emphasis added). *Dudley v. Dept. of Labor and*
14 *Industries*, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-07-007 (2007).

15
16 We have carefully reviewed the documentation submitted during the director's review and
17 considered the arguments presented by the parties at the hearing before the Board. Allocating
18 criteria consist of the class specification's class series concept (if one exists), the definition and
19 the distinguishing characteristics. Typical work is not an allocating criterion, but may be used to
20 better understand the definition or distinguishing characteristics.

21 The definition for the Mail Processing-Driver classification states:

22 Positions at this level independently perform mail services such as delivering, collecting
23 and processing both foreign and domestic mail and resolving routine customer problems.
24 Incumbents configure and operate routine and complex electronic mailing equipment,
25 digital scanning and tracking equipment, and x-ray and biohazard scanners. When
26 delivering and collecting mail, incumbents regularly operate pickup, panel, and other
27 trucks up to one-ton capacity.

1 The definition for the Mail Processing-Driver Lead classification states:

2 Positions allocated to this level regularly assign, instruct, and check the work of others and
3 independently oversee and perform mail services including sorting, processing, delivering,
4 and collecting mail, and operating mail management system. Incumbents typically
5 interpret department and institutional rules and regulations concerning mail operations,
6 resolve complex customer problems, recommend cost effective mailing methods, and
7 address other special or complex mailing requirements and needs.

8 There is no class series concept or distinguishing characteristics.

9
10 The Board has considered all Appellant's exceptions to the director's determination and finds the
11 duties of this position best fit the definition and distinguishing characteristics of the Mail
12 Processing-Driver.

13
14 *In Emerson vs. Department of Transportation*, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-09-010, the Board ruled
15 that the opinion of the supervisor should be given appropriate weight. In this case, the supervisor,
16 Sgt. Orth, did not assign Respondent lead duties, rather indicated in the supervisor portion of the
17 PRR that all mailroom staff train other staff. This statement lines up with Respondent's
18 testimony that he does not regularly assign and check the work of staff, rather informs and
19 instructs them on an as-needed basis, such as when problems occur or rules/laws change. The
20 supervisor's opinion appears to be true and correct.

21
22 Respondent shows initiative in his work by training others, serving as a point of contact,
23 streamlining processes and keeping up on rule and law changes. However, a lead worker has the
24 designated responsibility to regularly assign, instruct and check the work of employees on an
25 ongoing basis. Sgt. Orth, not Respondent, is accountable for the work assignments and the
26 performance of mailroom staff.

1 While typical work is not allocating criteria, absent distinguishing characteristics, the Board may
2 look to typical work for guidance (PRB Case No. R-ALLO-11-014, *Kristin Mansfield vs.*
3 *Department of Fish and Wildlife*). The class specifications for the Mail Processing-Driver and
4 Mail Processing-Driver Lead include a typical work statement as follows: “Directs the work of
5 lower-level staff and assures mail quality control standards are met.” According to the typical
6 work of the Mail Processing-Driver, directing work of light duty staff or occasional new staff and
7 assuring quality control is within the job class specifications.

8
9 According to the Glossary of Classification Terms, “Direct the Work of Others” is defined as:
10 “Provides work guidance or direction but is **NOT** a lead; does **NOT** have the responsibility of
11 assigning, instructing and checking the work of others on a regular and ongoing basis.” Some of
12 the work statements Respondent added to the second PRR submitted include:

13
14 Trains and directs the work of staff in the interpretation of applicable DOC Policies.

15 Directs mail room staff in all procedures and updates as they occur.

16 Training and directing staff in the operation of applicable machinery and software.

17
18 Respondent is not the designated lead in the mailroom and does not perform lead duties, rather he
19 applies his knowledge when and where applicable to guide or direct the work of others.
20 Additionally, both the Mail Processing-Driver and Mail-Processing-Driver Lead have identical
21 typical work statements around directing the work of staff and assuring quality control. The
22 difference between the two job classes is in the designated lead duties and there is no evidence or
23 testimony that Respondent regularly assigns and checks work on an ongoing basis. For this
24 reason, allocation to Mail-Processing Driver Lead is inappropriate.

25
26 In a hearing on exceptions, the Appellant has the burden of proof (WAC 357-52-110). Appellant
27 has met their burden of proof.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by the Department of Corrections is granted, the director's determination dated October 21, 2014, is reversed, and Respondent's position is reallocated to the Mail Processing-Driver job class.

DATED this ____ day of _____, .

WASHINGTON PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD

NANCY HOLLAND YOUNG, Chair

SUSAN MILLER, Vice Chair

VICKY BOWDISH, Member