

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

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS	)	
Appellant,	)	CASE NO. R-ALLO-15-048
vs.	)	
TINA HANSEN	)	ORDER OF THE BOARD
Respondent.	)	FOLLOWING HEARING ON
	)	EXCEPTIONS TO THE
	)	DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

**Hearing on Exceptions.** This appeal came before the Personnel Resources Board, NANCY HOLLAND YOUNG, Chair, SUSAN MILLER, Vice Chair, and VICKY BOWDISH, Member. The hearing was held on March 17, 2016, at Capitol Court, Olympia, WA.

**Appearances.** Appellant Department of Corrections (DOC) was represented by Roxanne Stewart, Human Resource Consultant. Respondent Tina Hansen was present by telephone. Also present by telephone was Respondent’s supervisor, Richard Moore, Facilities Manager at Airway Heights Corrections Center (AHCC).

**Background.** Prior to the director’s determination, Respondent was a Secretary Senior in the Maintenance Department at AHCC. Respondent submitted a position review request (PRR) to DOC Human Resources (HR) on December 24, 2014, requesting reallocation to Administrative Assistant 3 (AA 3).

By letter dated March 11, 2015, Appellant DOC notified Respondent her position was not reallocated to an AA 3 and remained as a Secretary Senior. On April 9, 2015, Respondent submitted a request to OFM State HR for a director’s review of DOC’s determination.

By letter dated November 5, 2015, the director’s designee determined Respondent’s position should be reallocated to AA 2.

1 On November 23, 2015, Appellant filed timely exceptions to the director's determination. In their  
2 exceptions, Appellant indicated the scope of Respondent's work best fits the duties of the  
3 Secretary Senior job class. Appellant's exceptions are the subject of this proceeding.

4  
5 Respondent is responsible for programming and managing the electronic database, Micro Main, and  
6 serves as liaison between Mr. Moore and Facilities staff. Respondent's work includes resolving  
7 problems and responding to inquiries; relaying important information to Mr. Moore; and performing  
8 complex clerical duties, including creating reports and tracking and interpreting data from Micro  
9 Main.

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

12 Appellant takes exception to the director's review and contends the duties and responsibilities of  
13 Respondent's position best fit the definition and typical work of the Secretary Senior job class.

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15 The director's designee indicates the position prioritizes workload for maintenance staff. However,  
16 Appellant asserts Mr. Moore indicated in a teleconference with DOC HR that Respondent does not  
17 prioritize the work of professional staff and that prioritization for maintenance work orders is  
18 handled by the Plant Manager 3.

19  
20 Appellant contends the technical tasks in Micro Main constitute 25% of Respondent's work and the  
21 majority of her work is clerical. Appellant further contends the distinguishing characteristics of  
22 Administrative Assistant 1 specify that clerical and/or secretarial duties should not exceed 25% of  
23 the total work. Appellant maintains since Respondent's work is only 25% technical and the rest is  
24 clerical in nature, the duties and responsibilities of her position do not meet the criteria for an AA 1  
25 or an AA2.

26  
27 Appellant asserts the monthly maintenance done in Micro Main consists of cleaning up the data on  
28 maintenance assignments, ensuring records are preserved and ensuring information is in the correct

1 category. These duties are consistent with the definition in the Secretary Senior class specifications  
2 where it states, "...developing, modifying and/or maintaining data base management... systems..."  
3 and are also identified in the typical work statements.

4  
5 Appellant takes exception to the director's review in that the director's designee compared  
6 Respondent's position with other AA 2 position descriptions. Appellant asserts Board practice has  
7 been such that allocations are based on overall duties of positions compared to class specifications,  
8 not by comparing positions to each other.

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

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12 Respondent asserts the majority of her work is administrative and her position should be allocated to  
13 the AA 2 or AA 3 job class, consistent with other AA 2s and AA 3s performing similar work within  
14 DOC. Respondent argues that while she may not prioritize the work orders for the Maintenance  
15 Mechanics, two-thirds of her work in Micro Main involves prioritizing and managing preventative  
16 and maintenance requests. Since May 2010, Respondent states she entered over 300,000  
17 preventative and maintenance requests into Micro Main and the work relating to this database has  
18 grown to the point of taking up the majority of her time. When absent, her work in Micro Main is  
19 handled by higher-level staff, or not done at all.

20  
21 Respondent states her responsibilities in Micro Main include creating and designing reports; and  
22 developing and managing a tracking system for capital and in-house projects. Respondent further  
23 states the complex tracking system she designed accounts for every action, staff or contractor  
24 involved in Facilities maintenance projects. Respondent contends she is the first point of contact for  
25 emergency facilities work and is responsible for assigning staff to handle that work.

1 **Primary Issue.** Whether the director's determination should be affirmed in that Appellant's position  
2 should remain at the Administrative Assistant 2 job class.

3  
4 **Relevant Classifications.** Secretary Senior; AA 2.

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

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

20  
21 We have carefully reviewed the documentation submitted during the director's review and  
22 considered the arguments presented by the parties at the hearing before the Board. Respondent  
23 advocates for comparing her position with other AA 2s at DOC, however, allocating criteria  
24 consist of the class specification's class series concept (if one exists), the definition and the  
25 distinguishing characteristics. Typical work is not an allocating criterion, but may be used to  
26 better understand the definition or distinguishing characteristics. Therefore, the Board cannot use  
27 other positions as a comparison for allocation purposes, especially given other positions may be  
28 misallocated.

1 The class series concept for the Secretary series is found in the Secretary class specifications and  
2 states:

3 In support of a supervisor and/or staff members, provides secretarial services and  
4 assistance for the purpose of facilitating the supervisor's and/or staff members' own work  
5 and **relieving the supervisor and/or staff members of day-to-day clerical detail.**

6 Applies knowledge of supervisor's and/or staff members' work commitments including  
7 status of projects and nature of contacts. Secretarial duties include making travel  
8 arrangements, scheduling meetings, taking notes and transcribing minutes, screening calls  
9 and visitors, keeping supervisor's and/or staff members calendar(s) and committing  
10 supervisor's and/or staff members' time (emphasis added).

11 The definition for the Secretary Senior classification states:

12 Perform complex secretarial duties such as independently planning, organizing and  
13 prioritizing work, monitoring and evaluating budget(s) status and initiating corrections,  
14 developing travel itineraries, compiling reports, studies, and/or applications, developing,  
15 modifying, and/or maintaining data base management, office record keeping, or filing  
16 system(s), establishing office procedures, standards, priorities, and deadlines, and  
17 coordinating office operations. Positions initiate action to ensure work unit and/or office  
18 goals are met and have frequent contacts with clients, the public, staff members from other  
19 departments, students, and faculty.

20 Assignments and projects are of a complex nature. Independent performance of complex  
21 secretarial assignments requires substantive knowledge of a variety of regulations, rules,  
22 policies, procedures, processes, materials, or equipment. Problems are resolved by  
23 choosing from established procedures and/or devising work methods. Guidance is  
24 available for new or unusual situations. Deviation from established parameters requires  
25 approval. Work is periodically reviewed to verify compliance with established policies and  
26 procedures.

1 The definition for the AA 2 classification states:

2 Provide administrative and staff support services for a section or unit with delegated  
3 authority to act in supervisor's absence in areas of substance.

4 The distinguishing characteristics for the AA 2 classification states:

5 These positions may be distinguished from lower level classes by addition of the  
6 delegation of authority to act for or in the regular place of the superior in substantive areas,  
7 and/or supervision of some professional or several clerical subordinates and a formal  
8 reporting alignment identifying the position as the principal administrative assistant to the  
9 superior who is at the first professional supervisory level or above.

10  
11 There is no class series concept for the Administrative Assistant series. However, the  
12 distinguishing characteristics in the AA 1 class specification differentiate “administrative” from  
13 “clerical:”

14  
15 The technical work addressed in the definition is distinguished by a professional position  
16 fully delegating a technical portion of the position's duties which in turn encompasses the  
17 majority of the Administrative Assistant's work and can be traced to originate directly  
18 from a professional position's duties and responsibilities.

19  
20 Administrative Assistant positions do not report to a Clerical Supervisor. Their work is  
21 not clerical or secretarial as stated in those class specifications. However, only positions at  
22 this level in the class series may be assigned some clerical and/or secretarial duties not to  
23 exceed 25% of the total work.

24  
25 The differences between Secretary Senior and AA 2 lie in whether or not the majority of work is  
26 clerical (Secretary Senior) or administrative (AA 2). The Secretary class series concept states in  
27 relevant part: “...provides secretarial services and assistance for the purpose of facilitating the  
28 supervisor’s and/or staff members’ own work and relieving the supervisor and/or staff members of  
day-to-day clerical detail...”

1 The Board does not find the majority of Respondent's duties are to relieve staff members and Mr.  
2 Moore of day-to-day clerical work, as stated in the class series concept for Secretary. Rather,  
3 Respondent provides administrative support services for Facilities, with delegated authority to act  
4 in Mr. Moore's absence in areas of substance. This includes responding to inquiries; relaying  
5 messages; dispatching staff for emergencies; keeping Mr. Moore informed of important  
6 information about facilities maintenance; coordinating with contractors for preventative  
7 maintenance; running reports; or interpreting and explaining supervisor's policies or viewpoints.  
8 With no other administrative or clerical staff within Facilities, the complex work of data  
9 management in Micro Main is handled by higher level staff in Respondent's absence.

10  
11 The technical work performed by Respondent originates from Mr. Moore as Facilities Manager,  
12 constitutes the majority of Respondent's duties and responsibilities and is consistent with the  
13 Administrative Assistant distinguishing characteristics.

14  
15 The Board has considered all Appellant's exceptions to the director's determination and finds the  
16 duties of this position best fit the definition and distinguishing characteristics of the  
17 Administrative Assistant 2.

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19 In a hearing on exceptions, the Appellant has the burden of proof (WAC 357-52-110). Appellant  
20 has not met her burden of proof.

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**ORDER**

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Department of Corrections is denied, the director's determination date November 5, 2015, is upheld, and Respondent's position remains allocated to the Administrative Assistant 2 job class.

DATED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016.

WASHINGTON PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD

\_\_\_\_\_  
NANCY HOLLAND YOUNG, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
SUSAN MILLER, Vice Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
VICKY BOWDISH, Member