

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

3 DREW IHLI)
4 Appellant) CASE NO. R-ALLO-17-005
5 vs.) ORDER OF THE BOARD
6 DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND) FOLLOWING HEARING ON
7 INDUSTRIES,) EXCEPTIONS TO THE
8 Respondent.) 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, for a
11 hearing on Appellant’s exceptions to the director’s determination dated February 15, 2017. The hearing
12 was held on June 1, 2017, in Room 110 of Capitol Court, Olympia WA.

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14 **Appearances.** Appellant Drew Ihli was present. Respondent Department of Labor and Industries
15 (LNI) was present and represented by Kate Trickle, Classification and Compensation Manager.

16
17 **Background.** On October 7, 2015, Appellant submitted a Position Review Request (PRR) to LNI’s
18 Human Resources (HR) Office requesting reallocation from Information Technology Specialist 3
19 (ITS 3) to ITS 4.

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21 By letter dated June 24, 2016, Respondent notified Appellant that his position was properly
22 allocated to the ITS 3 classification.

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24 On July 15, 2016, OFM State HR received Appellant’s request for a written Director’s review of
25 LNI’s allocation determination.

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27 By letter dated February 15, 2017, the Director’s Review Specialist notified Appellant that
28 his position was properly allocated to ITS 3.

1 On March 2, 2017, the PRB received Appellant's Appeal Request. In his request, Appellant took
2 exception to the Director's Review Determination.

3
4 Appellant works in the Insurance Services Division and is one of five ITS 3s reporting to Laura
5 Goshorn, ITS 4. In summary, as described in his PRR, Appellant troubleshoots various system issues
6 arising from customers in Claims Administration, Legal Services and other divisions. Appellant
7 writes test scripts and performs tests on repairs, enhancements, or new developments along with pre-
8 scheduled maintenance tasks. He is responsible for testing claims management computer software
9 for claims, employer and provider management systems.

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11 The review period for this allocation request was six months prior to October 7, 2015.

12
13 **Summary of Appellant's Arguments.**

14 Appellant highlights that comparable to an ITS 4, he works independently when testing, tracking,
15 maintaining, troubleshooting, consulting and managing tables for claim allocation. Appellant states
16 he identifies the problems and writes up the requirements for service requests, which he routes to the
17 Information Services (IS) Division.

18 Appellant asserts that consistent with an ITS 4, he works with users in multiple areas, including
19 outside agencies. Appellant contends that when someone internal or within another agency reports a
20 problem, he independently evaluates the proposed problem to verify its legitimacy and may proceed
21 with troubleshooting for solutions. Appellant further contends new system installations require
22 Appellant to independently test and verify the suitability of the install. He pulls data for a variety of
23 queries, such as the number of patients per provider.

24
25 Appellant pointed out the LINUS program interacts with many applications and this, along with other
26 systems he tests and troubleshoots, creates a level of complexity befitting an ITS 4.

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

2 Respondent supports the Director's determination to maintain Appellant's current classification as
3 ITS 3. Respondent does not deny that Appellant operates independently, however contends he
4 collaborates with higher-level staff and submits service requests to IT programmers for various
5 system repairs. Respondent agrees that some of Appellant's work falls into the ITS 4 classification,
6 but the majority of duties are at the ITS 3 level.

7 Respondent concurs with Appellant that he does work with multiple agencies and users, but asserts
8 ITS levels are not based on the number of users the position is required to work with, rather the
9 quantity and types of systems.

10 Respondent contends that many services performed by Appellant are done in concert with the IS
11 Division, rendering his work part of a broader team. Respondent contends that LNI's organizational
12 structure is such that ITS 3s assist and report to ITS 4s.

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15 **Primary Issue.** Whether the director's determination should be affirmed and whether Appellant
16 should remain allocated to the ITS 3 classification.

17
18 **Relevant Classifications.** Information Technology Specialist 3; Information Technology Specialist
19 4.

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

1 In *Norton-Nader v. Western Washington University*, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-08-020
2 (2008), the Personnel Resources Board (Board) stated that the following standards are the
3 hierarchy of primary considerations in allocating positions:

- 4 a) Category concept (if one exists).
- 5 b) Definition or basic function of the class.
- 6 c) Distinguishing characteristics of a class.
- 7 d) Class series concept, definition/basic function, and distinguishing characteristics of
8 other classes in the series in question.

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

16
17 The definition for the ITS 4 states, in relevant part:

18 As a senior-level specialist in an assigned area of responsibility and/or as a team or
19 project leader, applies advanced technical knowledge and considerable discretion
20 to evaluate and resolve complex tasks such as planning and directing large-scale
21 projects; conducting capacity planning; designing multiple-server systems;
22 directing or facilitating the installation of complex systems, hardware, software,
23 application interfaces, or applications; developing and implementing quality
24 assurance testing and performance monitoring; planning, administering, and
25 coordinating organization-wide information technology training; acting as a liaison
26 on the development of applications; representing institution-wide computing and/or
27 telecommunication standards and philosophy at meetings; or developing security
28 policies and standards.

1
2 There are no distinguishing characteristics for ITS 4.

3
4 This job class requires a greater degree of technical knowledge and discretion than that of
5 an ITS 3 in order to resolve complex tasks such as planning and directing large-scale
6 projects; facilitating the installation of complex systems; conducting organization-wide
7 information technology training; representing institution-wide computing and/or
8 telecommunication standards and philosophy at meetings or develop security policies and
9 standards. Additionally, this job class is a senior-level specialist and/or a team or project
10 leader. The majority of Appellant's duties do not fit the definition of ITS 4.

11
12 The definition for the ITS 3 states, in relevant part:

13 In support of information systems and users in an assigned area of
14 responsibility, independently performs consulting, designing,
15 programming, installations, maintenance, quality assurance,
16 troubleshooting and/or technical support for applications, hardware and
17 software products, databases, database management systems, support
18 products, network infrastructure equipment, or telecommunications
19 infrastructure, software or hardware.

20
21 There are no distinguishing characteristics for ITS 4

22
23 The Board is aware Appellant was assigned work on more systems during the six-month
24 review period. However, the work increased in volume, not in the complexity and skill
25 required. The majority of Appellant's duties entail maintaining, tracking, testing,
26 supporting; and manipulating and extracting data via Data Warehouse. Appellant reports
27 to an ITS 4 and relies upon higher-level IT staff in the IT Division to handle programming
28 and other corrections as needed. Consulting with internal and external customers is for the

1 purpose of troubleshooting and writing service requests when needed for the IT Division
2 to fix and update.

3
4 The Board finds the majority of work assigned to Appellant is consistent with the definition
5 of Information Technology Specialist 3. As illustrated in Appellant's PRR and PD, he
6 consults with a variety of users; maintains systems; troubleshoots; manages databases;
7 provides support to products and equipment, hardware and software. Programming and
8 more technical problem resolutions are routed to the IT Division.

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10 In a hearing on exceptions, the appellant has the burden of proof. WAC 357-52-110.
11 Appellant has failed to meet his burden of proof.

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14 **ORDER**

15 NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by
16 DREW IHLI is denied and the director's determination dated February 15, 2017, is
17 affirmed.

18 DATED this ____ day of _____, 2017.

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20 **WASHINGTON PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD**

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NANCY HOLLAND YOUNG, Chair

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SUSAN MILLER, Vice Chair

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VICKY BOWDISH, Member

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