



# Human Resources Department

## SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

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### Position Study Request Instructions – Filled Position

#### PROCESS OVERVIEW

The Human Resources Director is responsible for overseeing the County's Classification Plan as defined in Civil Service Rule 5. This document outlines the process utilized when an employee believes they have been permanently assigned duties that are outside the scope of their position's current classification. It involves a series of steps beginning with the incumbent meeting with their Supervisor. Subsequent meetings with Department Head and Personnel Analyst are required BEFORE submitting a request to the Human Resources Director. The HR Director will advise all parties of the next steps in the process within 30 days of receiving the request. Generally, studies will be prioritized on a first come first served basis. However, given that the HR Department is simultaneously handling multiple requests, priority will be impacted by other factors including: Analyst workload, the number of incumbents involved and potential organizational impacts.

Once assigned, the Personnel Analyst will conduct the study which will involve meeting with the incumbent, Department Head, and others as appropriate. The information gained from these meetings will be used by the Analyst to develop their findings. HR will provide their findings within 120 days from the date the study begins. If the findings identify duties that are outside of the position's current classification, the Administrative Office, Human Resources, and the department will work together to determine the appropriate action.

#### PROCESS STEPS

- 1) The incumbent meets with their Supervisor to review their out of class concerns. The Position Study Request Form is NOT required for this step. After the meeting, the Supervisor provides a written response to the incumbent.
- 2) If the incumbent is unsatisfied with the Supervisor's response, they may then pursue their request with the Department Head, by completing the Position Study Request Form.
- 3) The Department Head, Personnel Analyst, and Supervisor, as necessary, will meet with the incumbent and review the request and issues that remain unresolved from the incumbent's meeting with their Supervisor.
- 4) The Department Head will provide a response to the incumbent and Human Resources, detailing their perspective on the incumbent's concerns.
- 5) If the incumbent remains unsatisfied with the Department Head's response they may then submit their request to the HR Director. The submission must include the responses received from the Supervisor and Department Head meetings.
- 6) The HR Director will review all requests within 30 days of receipt and will advise the incumbent, Department Head and Administrative Office of the scope of the study and the estimated date it will begin.
- 7) The assigned Personnel Analyst will review the information provided to the HR Director and will interview the incumbent and others as necessary.

- 8) In cooperation with the incumbent's department management and the Administrative Office, HR will make a determination within 120 days after the study begins.
- 9) A determination that a position is assigned duties that are inconsistent with its current classification may result in any of the following actions: reassignment of the out of class duties, reallocation to a higher or lower classification, or the creation of a new classification.
- 10) Classification changes will be brought to the Board of Supervisors for approval in June, September and November each year.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

**Part A:**

The incumbent of the position to be studied is responsible for completing Part A of the Position Review Request Form. The purpose of the form is to elicit the incumbent's description of their job duties and which duties they believe fall outside of their current job classification. Part A and the Supervisor's comments are to be provided to the Department Head.

**Part B:**

The Department Head must review Part A of this form and verify its accuracy on Part B. Part B must be signed and dated by the immediate Supervisor and Department Head. Comments by the Supervisor and Department Head are required, before submitting the request to the HR Director.

**Submittal Requirements:**

The following supporting materials must be submitted to Human Resources to request a position study:

- Electronic copy of the completed position study request form, the responses from the meetings with the Supervisor and Department Head, the department's current and proposed organization charts, and any other relevant attachments; **OR**
- Three (3) hard copies of the information noted above

The completed form must be signed and dated by the incumbent, their immediate Supervisor, and the Department Head.

**Position Study Request Form - Part A**

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**Name:**

**Date:**

**Department:**

**Current Job Classification:**

- 1. Please list all of your job duties, along with a percentage estimate of the time you spend carrying out each duty. The total should add up to 100%.**
- 2. In your opinion, which of the job duties listed under question number 1 fall outside of your current job classification? Why?**
- 3. What caused you to take on the job duties you believe fall outside of your current job classification?**
- 4. How long have you been performing the job duties that you believe fall outside of your current job classification?**
- 5. Are there other job classifications that, in your opinion, better reflect you assigned job duties? If so, please list: \_\_\_\_\_.**

**I certify that the information provided on this form is accurate.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Employee Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

## Position Study Request Form – Part B

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### Supervisor Review

Check one or more of the following:

- I have reviewed the information contained in Part A of this form
- See attached memo for additional comments
- Contact me for additional information

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Immediate Supervisor

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Date

### Department Head Review

Check one or more of the following:

- I have reviewed the information contained in Part A of this form
- See attached memo for additional comments
- Contact me for additional information

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Department Head

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Date

## **POSITION REVIEW PROCESS**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **1. What is a classification plan?**

A classification plan is a systematic process for describing and grouping jobs based on similarities in duties, responsibilities, and requirements. Class specifications broadly describe the duties, responsibilities, and qualifications of a particular job or similar group of jobs. They neither limit nor modify the authority of any County official or the Board of Supervisors to assign duties, direct and control the work of employees in the classified service. No employee should be required to perform duties of the position outside of the assigned classification, except on a temporary basis.

#### **2. Why are position studies conducted?**

Requests should be submitted when there have been significant and/or major changes that appear to be ongoing in an incumbent's duties and responsibilities, particularly in the level of complexity, decision making authority and scope of the position.

The most common reasons studies are conducted are:

- Gradual changes in the level and scope of duties performed
- Changes in organizational relationships and responsibilities
- Recruitment and/or retention problems
- Changes in requirements as mandated law, e.g. license or certification

#### **3. What factors do not justify a reclassification?**

- Performance of the incumbent in the position; reclassification should not be considered a reward or means to promote
- Retention of a specific employee
- Increase in workload that is of the same nature and level of complexity (volume) – this is a workload issue, not a class issue
- Knowledge, skills, and abilities possessed by the incumbent which are not required or regularly used in the position
- Desired salary changes
- Technological changes or tools (e.g. new software) that does not substantially alter the essential functions of the job, particularly if the industry is similarly changing to the new technology

#### **4. What happens during a study?**

A position study requires a significant amount of research and analysis. The process involves thoroughly researching, analyzing, determining, and documenting the responsibilities, duties, skills, knowledge and abilities related to a position. The incumbent's role is to thoroughly and accurately complete the Position Study Request and provide information to the analyst regarding the work that is being performed. The analyst looks at various factors in determining the proper class, including:

- decision making responsibilities and authority
- scope and complexity of work
- nature and purpose of contact with others

- supervision received and exercised
- working conditions and physical effort
- organizational level, size, etc.

### **5. How long does it take to conduct a study?**

The HR Department's goal is complete a study within 120 days from the day the study begins. A study may take a few weeks to several months, depending on the complexity of the study, the workload of the assigned analyst and other priorities. The study results in a finding made by the Personnel Analyst, in cooperation with the incumbent's department and the Administrative Office. The findings will identify any out of class duties which exist and will recommend any of the following actions: develop a new class, reallocate the position to a different class (either higher or lower), or reassign the "out of class" duties and retain the position's current classification.

### **6. Who can ask for a position study and where do I find the forms?**

An Incumbent or Department Head may submit a position study request to Human Resources. However, the requesting party must make a compelling case in the request stating the classification issues in order for Human Resources to accept and assign the study. The process requires that incumbents review their concerns with their Supervisor and Department Head prior to submitting their request to HR. The required forms can be found: [Position Study Request Form](#)

### **7. I've been asked to do something outside of my normal duties, can I get my position reclassified?**

Not necessarily. Most of the County's job classifications have been written broadly to be able to encompass a wide variety of duties and responsibilities. To think that an employee can't do anything outside of what's specifically stated in a job class specification is not accurate. Employees often perform duties that are not specifically listed on the class specification, but as long as those duties are within the overall purpose, scope, and level of the class, then the duties are likely to be appropriately assigned. The most effective managers/Supervisors are those identify appropriate assignments that support employee career development.

### **8. If Human Resources does study a position, does this mean the incumbent will get more money?**

Not necessarily. There are several possible outcomes to a classification study. Human Resources may determine that an incumbent is in the correct job classification. The incumbent may be reclassified into a job classification which pays the same, more, or less than the current job classification. Or Human Resources may determine that a new job classification needs to be created, and they will do a salary study at that time to set the salary of the new job.

### **9. Human Resources studied an employee's position, and determined it to be the correct job classification, but made some changes to the job specification. Why isn't the salary being studied at this time?**

Salaries are only studied under very specific circumstances. Human Resources may, but under very limited circumstances, re-evaluate a classification's salary if those specification updates are extremely significant to the overall scope, complexity, purpose, and knowledge and abilities of

the classification. Salary may also be reviewed to address recruitment and retention issues or as required by MOU.

**10. When an incumbent gets reclassified to a higher level position, do they automatically get promoted or do they have to apply for the job?**

Typically, incumbents are promoted without examination and awarded permanent status in the new classification. Under certain conditions however, the incumbent may need to apply for the position in a recruitment. Usually a promotional recruitment is conducted which is limited to current county employees or employees of the hiring department.