

## OVERVIEW OF WESTERN'S CLASSIFIED STAFF CLASSIFICATION & COMPENSATION SYSTEM

Classified staff positions are non-faculty positions governed by either the [Public School Employees](#) ("PSE") or [Washington Federation of State Employees](#) ("WFSE") collective bargaining agreements. Classified staff provide academic, administrative and operational support services for the University in areas such as administrative/office/clerical, communications, library, budgeting, fiscal, program, custodial, maintenance, operations, campus police, information technology, procurement and engineering.

Each classified staff position has a [classification](#) belonging to a job class. Western HR determines a position's classification in accordance with State HR's policies, procedures and guidelines. Western must maintain alignment with the State in the way that it utilizes classifications and allocates positions into specific job classes and classifications. As the State continues to provide new/updated guidance and clarification of its classification system, whether through a salary survey, Director's Reviews or other methods, Western HR has a duty to adjust its allocation and classification process to maintain its alignment with the State.

Compensation for classified staff is dictated by State HR, which assigns each classification to a specific salary range. However, Western implemented the 2014 Salary Survey and, as a result, some of the salary ranges at Western for permanent classified staff may differ from those listed on the State's website. Western's salary ranges can be found [here](#). Temporary classified staff follow the salary ranges listed on the State's website.

## WESTERN'S POSITION ALLOCATION & REVIEW PROCESS

Western HR only reviews a position's classification in one of three instances:

- (1) A recruitment when the position is new and/or vacant;
- (2) When an employee submits a position review request; and
- (3) When a supervisor/department manager submits a position review request (often as a result of a reassignment of duties or a reorganization of the unit).

Answers to frequently asked questions regarding the position allocation process can be found [here](#).

### **Recruitment**

When a position is new and/or vacant, the department needs to submit an [updated position description form](#) to the Classification & Compensation Manager regardless of whether the position is temporary, project or permanent. The position's supervisor is responsible for completing the position description. A guide to creating and editing classified position descriptions is available [here](#).

HR will review the position description and discuss the description with the department either on the phone or in person. HR will then allocate the position to a specific classification. Whether the position is an existing position that is currently vacant or a new position, HR will conduct a review of the position and make the appropriate classification of the position.

Once HR allocates the position to the appropriate classification, the department can then submit a [Request to Recruit](#) through the routing instructions provided on the form.

*Please Note: Any Request to Recruit that does not have an accompanying approved position description and allocation by HR will be returned to the department until the department completes the position description form and HR has allocated the position to the appropriate classification.*

### **Employee-Requested Position Review**

If an employee does not believe that their current classification is right, they have the option to submit an [Employee-Requested Position Review Request](#) to HR. HR suggests that the employee discuss their Position Review Request with their supervisor and, if desired, their union representative, prior to submitting their request to HR.

A position review is a review of the position, not of the employee, so the employee's individual performance and longevity are not factored into the review. An employee-requested position review is a "look back" over the past six months only; work performed outside of the six-month window is not taken into consideration in the position review. Lastly, the allocation or misallocation of a similar position at Western is also not a determining factor in the appropriate allocation for a position.

A position review may result in either no change in classification or a change of classification that results in an increase, decrease or no change to the employee's salary. HR urges all employees to consult their union's bargaining agreement regarding the allocation process and discuss union-specific questions with their union representative. (e.g. PSE-CBA, Article 29; WFSE-CBA, Article 42).

An employee may withdraw a position review request until the time that HR publishes its allocation decision via email. An employee must notify the Classification/Compensation Manager in writing that they wish to withdraw their request.

HR suggests that all employees review the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) regarding the position review process and discuss any concerns they may have with their union representative prior to submitting a request to have their position reviewed by HR.

### Required Documents

For an employee's position review request to be fully submitted, the following documents must be submitted to Human Resources:

1. Updated [Position Description Form](#)  
(A guide to creating and editing classified position descriptions is available [here](#))
2. [Employee-Requested Position Review Form, Employee Portion](#)
3. Updated Organizational Chart
4. Supplemental materials (not required)

Once the employee has submitted these materials, HR will contact the employee's supervisor to fill out the [Employee-Requested Position Review Form, Supervisor Portion](#).

The updated Position Description Form and the Employee and Supervisor Portions of the Position Review Forms must be submitted in both digital and hard copy to Human Resources. Please submit the hard copies with original signatures. Please submit the digital copies directly to the Classification/Compensation Manager.

### Employee Interview

Once HR has received the employee's documents and the supervisor's portion of the position review form, HR will contact the employee by email to set up an interview time to discuss the employee's position with the employee. The employee should feel free to have their union representative attend the interview. At the interview, HR will be asking questions of the employee that relate to their position. The employee should come prepared to discuss their position and their position review request form. The interview is the employee's opportunity to tell HR anything that may not be included, or may be unclear, in the position review request; to emphasize key duties/issues/changes in the employee's position; to draw HR's attention to specific points; and, most importantly, to present whatever information they may want HR to know about their position.

### Supervisor Interview

After HR meets with the employee, HR will meet with the employee's supervisor to discuss the employee's position. The supervisor should be prepared to discuss any issues or questions about the employee's position that they have as well as be prepared to discuss the Supervisor and Employee Portions of the position review form.

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### HR Allocation Determination & Write-Up

After HR meets with the employee and the supervisor to discuss the position, HR follows the State's [allocation process](#). In making an allocation determination, HR reviews the Employee and Supervisor Portions of the Position Review Request form, the employee's updated position description, the org chart, notes from interviews with the employee and supervisor and any supplemental materials the employee has submitted to HR in support of their position review request.

HR then determines appropriate classification for the position:

- (1) HR reviews the category concept (if one exists) for a class series. This is often referred to as a "class series concept" in a specification. It is found in the specification for the first level of a class series. Many of the class series concepts utilize words that are specifically defined by State HR in its [Glossary of Classification Terms](#). The State's intent behind the class series concepts are also further described in [State Director's Reviews](#).

If the position does not fit into the class series concept, the class series is not the "best fit" (the State defines a "best fit" classification as the classification that fits 51% of a position's duties and responsibilities) for the position and HR reviews additional class series concepts until the "best fit" class series is identified. Once the "best fit" class series is identified, HR moves to Step 2.

- (2) HR reviews the definition or basic function of the various specifications of a class series to determine which specification "best fits" with the position. Again, the [Glossary of Classification Terms](#) can be useful to determine if any of State HR's words in the definition have a specific or intended meaning.

If none of the class definitions fit, HR will look back to the class series concept and may review additional class series concepts to determine if there is a better class series fit for the position.

- (3) Once HR finds the "best fit" definition, HR reviews the distinguishing characteristics, again utilizing the [Glossary of Classification Terms](#). If the distinguishing characteristics do not fit the position, HR may review additional specifications within the class or may review additional class series concepts.
- (4) HR reviews the "Typical Work" of the specification. The "typical work" is not allocating criteria, but can be helpful to provide support for the duties typically performed at each level of the class series.
- (5) In many cases, HR also reviews relevant [Director's Reviews](#), [Personnel Resources Board decisions](#) and [additional guidance](#) available on State HR's website.
- (6) Pursuant to [State HR's instruction](#), Western HR does not consider:
  - Volume of work
  - Performance of work
  - Desired salary

- Comparisons of other employees' positions (except in terms of determining level of authority of incumbent's position, supervisory/lead responsibility, etc.)
- Expertise & training (unless a required qualification)
- Seniority

Once the appropriate classification is determined for the position, HR prepares a written decision. The decision may include excerpts from the Employee and Supervisor portions of the Position Review Request and statements made during the employee and supervisor interviews. The decision will include an analysis of the position's duties and responsibilities in comparison to relevant class specifications (see above). The decision will also include, if necessary, re-allocation information related to a change in union bargaining unit and a change in the employee's compensation. Once the written decision is published by HR via email, the decision is final. Other than the statements made by HR in the allocation decision, no discussions or statements by HR during the position review process are binding.

#### Appeal Process

If an employee disagrees with HR's decision, the employee may request a State [Director's Review](#) of the decision from the Director of the State's Office of Human Resources within thirty (30) calendar days of being provided the results of the position review via email. The procedural information for a Director's Review is provided at the end of the allocation decision. Please note, if an employee wishes to appeal the decision and submits additional materials to the State in support of their request, the additional materials must have confidential and/or protected information redacted. This includes information protected by FERPA and HIPPA.

#### **Supervisor-Requested Position Review**

A supervisor can request that HR review a position at any time, though the most common times are when a unit is undergoing re-organization or when there has been a significant re-assignment of duties and responsibilities within the unit. Prior to submitting a review request, a supervisor should contact the Classification/Compensation Manager to discuss the purpose and intent of the review request and to discuss the review process.

To initiate a Supervisor-Requested Position Review, the supervisor needs to submit an [updated position description form](#) and organizational chart to the Classification & Compensation Manager. HR will then meet with the supervisor to discuss their position review request. Once that is complete, HR will review the position description, organizational chart, interview notes and relevant State HR classifications and guidance and make an allocation decision for the position.

## QUESTIONS

If you have additional questions regarding the position allocation and review process, please contact the Classification/Compensation Manager or the HR Analysts.