

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Classification Appeal and FLSA Programs

San Francisco Oversight Division
120 Howard Street, Room 760
San Francisco, CA 94105-0001

Classification Appeal Decision
Under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [The appellant]

Agency classification: Secretary (Typing)
GS-318-5

Organization: [The appellant's organization]
Indian Health Service
Department of Health and Human
Services

OPM decision: Secretary (OA)
GS-318-5

OPM decision number: C-0318-05-08

Carlos A. Torrico
Classification Appeals Officer

September 26, 2000
Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, this decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the government. The agency is responsible for reviewing its classification decisions for identical, similar, or related positions to ensure consistency with this decision. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions and time limits specified in the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*, appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

Since this decision changes the title of the appealed position, it is to be effective no later than the beginning of the fourth pay period after the date of this decision, as permitted by 5 CFR 511.702. The servicing personnel office must submit a compliance report containing the corrected position description and a Standard Form 50 showing the personnel action taken. The report must be submitted within 30 days from the effective date of the personnel action.

Decision sent to:

Appellant:

[The appellant's address]

Agency:

[The appellant's servicing personnel office]
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Introduction

On June 14, 1999, the San Francisco Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) received a classification appeal from [the appellant]. The appellant's position is currently classified as Secretary (Typing), GS-318-5. However, she believes her work warrants a higher grade level, and should possibly be classified in a different series. Her position is assigned to [the appellant's organization and installation] Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). We have accepted and decided this appeal under the provisions of section 5112 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

General issues

This appeal decision is based on a thorough review of all information submitted by both the appellant and her agency. In addition, an OPM representative conducted telephone interviews with the appellant on July 21, 28, and August 8, 2000. Her immediate supervisor was also interviewed by telephone on July 24, 27, and August 17, 2000. Both the appellant and her supervisor believe that the appellant's official position description number P-7089 is inaccurate. During the interview, the appellant discussed some additional duties she performs that are not recorded in her official position description. Although she has discussed this matter with her agency, she has been unable to resolve it within her agency. In such cases, it is OPM policy to decide the appeal based on the actual duties that management has assigned and that the appellant performs.

The appellant makes various statements about her agency and its evaluation of her position. In adjudicating this appeal, our only concern is to make our own independent decision on the proper classification of her position. By law, we must make that decision solely by comparing her current duties and responsibilities to OPM standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). Therefore, we have considered the appellant's statements only insofar as they are relevant to making that comparison.

Position information

The appellant serves as Secretary (Typing) in the [appellant's organization] Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). She performs a broad range of secretarial duties in support of the Director, [appellant's organization] and her staff. The [appellant's organization] is staffed by approximately 11 employees organized into six non-supervisory sub-sections and a management office, where the appellant's position is located. Her duties include establishing, maintaining, controlling, protecting, and disposing of records; maintaining the supervisor's calendar, processing and routing correspondence and other written material; scheduling appointments, arranging travel, preparing travel vouchers, coordinating meetings, and scheduling conferences; editing and composing letters and reports; monitoring and reporting time and attendance; using office automation equipment in performing her duties; and referring, scheduling, and contacting staff, visitors, the public, and officials of other government agencies. Within the scope of her duties, she also answers questions about her organization, and creates and maintains a pleasant atmosphere, orders supplies, and performs miscellaneous

clerical duties. In conversations with the appellant and her supervisor, a percentage of time was given for each of the appellant's major duties as follows:

- Secretarial – 90%
- Data Entry – 10%

Our fact-finding disclosed several collateral duties performed by the appellant that are not recorded in her official position description. These include performing patient registration, examining Patient Care Component encounter forms for accuracy, scheduling patient appointments, maintaining the client data system, posting employee time and attendance records, etc. However, these duties take no more than 10% of her work time. Only duties that occupy at least 25% of an employee's time can affect the grade of a position (*Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, section III.J*). Therefore, we have not evaluated them in this decision. Nevertheless, the agency should record them as collateral or miscellaneous duties in the appellant's PD.

During our review, we also noted some duties recorded in the appellant's official position description which she no longer performs, i.e., prepares SF-52 requests for personnel actions, serves as secretary and personal assistant to the Supervisory Clinical Psychologist. The agency should delete these duties from the appellant's PD in order to meet the standards of adequacy for position descriptions discussed in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, section III.E.

The results of our interviews, the appellant's position description, and other material of record furnish much more information about her duties and responsibilities and how they are performed.

Series, title, and standard determination

The agency has classified the appellant's position in the Secretary Series, GS-318. We concur with the agency's determination. The appellant's primary duties fall within the type of work performed by secretaries as described in the classification standard for the Secretary Series, GS-318, dated January 1979. That series includes all positions the duties of which are to assist one individual, and in some cases the subordinate staff of that individual, by performing general office work auxiliary to the work of the organization. Similar to the appellant's job, positions included in the GS-318 series must be the principal office clerical or administrative support position in the office, operating independently of any other such position in the office. Like the appellant's work, the duties require knowledge of clerical and administrative procedures and requirements; various office skills; and the ability to apply such skills in a way that increases the effectiveness of others. Secretarial duties do not require a technical or professional knowledge of a specialized subject-matter area.

As indicated in the record, the appellant believes that her duties should possibly be classified in the Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-303, or the Medical Records Technician Series, GS-675. We disagree. Positions classified in either of those series require application of *specialized* subject-matter knowledge. Positions in the GS-303 series perform specialized work for which no appropriate occupational series has been established. Positions assigned to the GS-

675 series require application of a practical knowledge of medical records procedures and references and the organization and consistency of medical records. They also require a basic knowledge of human anatomy, physiology, and medical terminology. Our fact-finding revealed that the appellant's duties do not require knowledge of a specialized subject-matter area, and as previously discussed fully meet the criteria for assignment to the Secretary Series, GS-318.

The title *Secretary* applies to all non-supervisory positions in the GS-318 occupation. Because the appellant's work requires significant knowledge of office automation systems and a fully qualified typist to perform word processing duties, the parenthetical title *Office Automation* or *OA* is added to the title. Thus, the proper title and series of the appellant's position is *Secretary (OA)*, GS-318.

Since use of office automation technology is a recurring part of the appellant's job, we evaluated the grade level of those duties by application of the grading criteria in the Office Automation Grade Evaluation Guide, dated November 1990. Our evaluation revealed that those duties would not exceed the GS-4 level, and therefore would not affect the overall grade level of the appellant's position. Thus we have not provided a separate evaluation of the appellant's use of office automation technology in this decision. The GS-318 standard provides grading criteria for evaluation of the appellant's position as discussed below.

Grade determination

The GS-318 standard uses the Factor Evaluation System (FES), which employs nine factors. Under the FES, each factor level description in a standard describes the minimum characteristics needed to receive credit for the described level. Therefore, if a position fails to meet the criteria in a given factor level description in any significant aspect, it must be credited at a lower level. Conversely, the position may exceed those criteria in some aspects and still not be credited at a higher level. Our evaluation of the grade of the appellant's position by application of the nine factors follows.

Factor 1, Knowledge required by the position, Level 1-3, 350 points

This factor measures the nature and extent of information or facts which the employee must understand to do acceptable work (e.g., steps, procedures, practices, rules, policies, principles, and concepts) and the nature and extent of the skills needed to apply that knowledge. In the GS-318 standard, this factor consists of two elements, Knowledge Type and Work Situation. The agency assigned Knowledge Type III, Level 1-3, and Work Situation A (described on pages 12-14 of the standard) to the appellant's position, but she indicated during our interview that her position warrants assignment of Knowledge Type III, Level 1-4, Work Situation B (described on pages 12-15 of the standard). We concur with the agency's determination.

Knowledge Type III positions require, in addition to Type II knowledge's, knowledge of duties, priorities, commitments, policies, and program goals of the staff sufficient to perform non-routine assignments. Secretaries at this level are fully responsible for coordinating the work of the office with other offices and for recognizing the need for such coordination in various circumstances.

Similar to Knowledge Type III, the appellant must possess a thorough knowledge of the [appellant's unit] Director's duties, priorities, policies, views, concerns and commitments sufficient to perform recurring and special assignments. The appellant's position requires a general knowledge of the different disciplines located within the [appellant's unit] (i.e., Masters level social work, Psychiatrist, Clinical Psychologist, Substance Abuse, Recreation Director, Mental Health Technician) in order to input patient data, establish files, refer calls, and answer questions. The appellant's work requires a practical knowledge of the purpose, operations, procedures, techniques, and guidelines of the specific programs or functions involved. As the principal administrative support person in the unit, her assignments include scheduling appointments, ordering supplies, making travel arrangements, maintaining the office calendar, filing documents, etc. The appellant is required to apply knowledge of the substantive programs and activities of the office as they relate to the clerical and administrative functions involved.

Knowledge Type III secretaries, like the appellant, are fully responsible for coordinating the work of the office with the work of other offices and for recognizing the need for such coordination in various circumstances. For example, she coordinates the distribution of office correspondence between her Department and other organizations at the facility including the Business Office/Managed Care Director, Nursing Department, and Medical Records Administration. In her work, the appellant independently screens telephone calls for the Director and staff, and answers inquiries and requests for service, and initiates actions for emergency treatment of patients. The appellant also searches and retrieves from office files and other sources data and information needed for budget reports, statistical reference, inquiries, personnel information and other requests by her supervisor or department staff. The appellant is regularly called upon to record the minutes of the Bi-weekly Executive staff committee and Section supervisors' meetings. She is expected to apply knowledge of grammar, spelling, capitalization, formats, forms, clerical procedures, and usual terminology of the organizational unit or units for which the work is done. The position requires knowledge of the nature and contents of publications, forms and other guidelines, informational material pertinent to carrying out or coordinating office work and specific program activities. Knowledge Type III is the most characteristic of the appellant's position.

The appellant's position does not require Type IV knowledge as described on pages 13-14 of the GS-318 standard. Our review disclosed that she does not regularly perform tasks such as independently eliminating conflict and duplication in extensive office procedures, determining when new procedures are needed, systematically studying and evaluating new office machines and recommending the acceptance or rejection of their use, and studying the clerical activities of the office and subordinate offices to recommend specific restructuring of the way activities are carried out.

Work Situation A covers organizations that are small and of limited complexity. Although the organization may include several subordinate sections or subgroups, the staff is directed primarily through face-to-face meetings, and internal procedural and administrative controls are simple and informal. Within the supervisor's organization, there are few complicated problems or coordination requiring formal procedures and controls for adequate solution.

In Work Situation B, the staff is organized into subordinate segments, which may in turn be further divided. Direction of the staff is exercised through intermediate supervisors, and the subordinate groups differ from each other in such aspects as subject matter, functions, relationships with other organizations, and administrative requirements in ways that place demands upon the secretary that are substantially greater than those described at Work Situation A. The presence of subordinate supervisors does not by itself mean that Work Situation B applies. There is a system of formal internal procedures and administrative controls, and a formal production or progress reporting system. Also organizations described as Work Situation A in terms of internal coordination are credited with Work Situation B when they have extensive responsibility for coordinating work outside of the organization.

The appellant's position meets Work Situation A. The [appellant's unit], composed of 10 full time permanent positions and one part-time position, constitutes a small organization. The record indicates that the appellant's supervisor directs the staff primarily through face-to-face meetings and no subordinate organizational elements or supervisors exist within the Department. This is representative of Work Situation A organizations. Within the appellant's organization, internal procedural and administrative controls are simple and informal, and there are few complicated problems of coordination requiring formal procedures and controls for adequate solutions.

Work Situation B is not met. As mentioned above, some Work Situation A organizations meet Work Situation B if they extensively coordinate work with outside organizations. The appellant's organization has contact with several outside organizations, such as Tribal headquarters, and County and State agencies. However, her role with these outside groups is involvement in the clerical procedures. When these organizations call or visit the [appellant's unit], she refers the caller or visitor to the appropriate person and only answers basic questions. The role of a Work Situation B secretary in such a situation is in establishing and maintaining numerous outside contacts for the purpose of coordinating substantive program requirements, administrative details, and staff support responsibilities. The appellant's contact with outside organizations does not involve such issues. Although her administrative work involves outside groups and adds to her workload, it does not significantly add to the complexity of her job. Like Work Situation A, the appellant's organization faces few administrative problems requiring coordination through the use of formal procedures and controls for adequate solution. Procedures and administrative controls governing internal office operations are essentially provided for in agency and area publications. Further, her position does not meet the criteria that describe differences in functions, relationships with other organizations, administrative requirements or complexity of coordination. As mentioned above, because of the small and limited complexity of the appellant's unit, supervisors direct staff primarily through face-to-face meetings and internal procedural and administrative controls are simple and informal.

The appellant believes that Benchmark #2, GS-318-6, in the standard (pages 49-52) reflects her duties very closely. However, that benchmark and others indicate that organizations under Work Situation B are typically much larger and more complex than the appellant's. The simplest organization described in the benchmarks under Work Situation B is a research and development division with 95 positions and three branches. Each branch is further subdivided. The division has a formalized system of internal procedures including extensive reporting requirements, and

coordination of subordinate units and projects is difficult to maintain. The appellant's organization does not approach that level of size or complexity.

With a combination of Knowledge Type III and Work Situation A, this factor is evaluated at Level 1-3 and 350 points are assigned.

Factor 2, Supervisory controls, Level 2-3, 275 points

This factor covers the nature and extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, the employee's responsibility, and the review of completed work. The agency has credited the appellant's supervisory controls with Level 2-3 (described on pages 17-19 of the standard), and we concur.

At Level 2-3, the supervisor defines the overall objectives and priorities of the work in the office and assists the secretary with some special assignments. The secretary plans and carries out the work of the office and handles problems and deviations in accordance with established instructions, priorities, policies, commitments and program goals of the supervisor, and accepted practices in the occupation.

At Level 2-4 (pages 19-20), the supervisor sets the overall objectives of the work. The secretary and the supervisor, in consultation, develop the deadlines and the work to be done. At this level, the secretary handles a wide variety of situations and conflicts requiring use of initiative to determine the approach to be taken or methods to use. This level is most likely to be found in organizations of such size and scope that many complex office problems arise which cannot be brought to the attention of the supervisor.

Level 2-3 is met. Similar to supervisory controls described at Level 2-3, the appellant performs her work following the established office procedures. She plans and carries out the day-to-day work of the office independently, referring only very unusual office problems to the supervisor or other staff members, i.e., patient emergency interventions. The appellant receives telephone calls and visitors, screening those that can be handled without the supervisor's help, and personally answers substantive questions not requiring technical knowledge. Like Level 2-3, the appellant keeps the supervisor's calendar, and schedules appointments and conferences without prior approval. After conferring with the supervisor, the appellant makes necessary arrangements for conferences, including space, time, contacting participants and making travel arrangements. The appellant works on special projects assigned by the supervisor, drafts and signs routine correspondence of a non-technical nature, and independently prepares required monthly reports. Comparable to Level 2-3, the supervisor reviews the appellant's work from an overall standpoint by checking adequacy, appropriateness, and conformance to established policy.

Level 2-4 is not met. Unlike Level 2-4 there is little consultation between the appellant and the supervisor in developing deadlines and the work to be done. Level 2-4 involves a high degree of independence, and initiative in determining the approach to be taken or methods to use. Unlike Level 2-4, the appellant does not have authority to make decisions on whether or not a subordinate of the [appellant's unit] Director should attend a particular conference, nor is she involved in making arrangements for official social obligations. Additionally, unlike Level 2-4,

when gathering data for specific reports, information is readily available, not highly specialized or located in just a few places. Moreover, although the appellant may develop and send out brief administrative instructions to the staff (i.e., memos), we found no indication that she devises and installs new office procedures.

This factor is evaluated at Level 2-3 and 275 points are credited.

Factor 3, Guidelines, Level 3-2, 125 points

This factor covers the nature of guidelines and the judgment needed to apply them. The agency has credited the appellant's guidelines with Level 3-2 (described page 21 of the standard) but the appellant believes that a higher level (i.e., Level 3-3, described on pages 21-22 of the standard) is warranted. We agree with the factor level assigned by the agency.

At Level 3-2, guidelines typically include dictionaries; style manuals; agency instructions concerning such matters as correspondence, or the handling of classified information; and operating policies of the supervisor or organization served. The secretary locates and selects the appropriate guidelines, references, and procedures for application to specific cases, referring situations to which the existing guidelines cannot be applied or significant proposed deviations to the supervisor. The secretary may also determine which of the established alternatives to use.

At Level 3-3, guidelines include a large body of unwritten policies, precedents, and practices which are not completely applicable to the work or are not specific and which deal with matters relating to judgment, efficiency, and relative priorities rather than with procedural concerns. The secretary applies and adapts guidelines, such as regulations or the supervisor's policies, to specific problems for which the guidelines are not clearly applicable.

Level 3-2 is met. The appellant's guidelines include the Medical Terminology Dictionary, ICD-9 Coding Manual, software manuals, travel regulations (Tribal and Federal), Policy and Procedures Manual of the hospital, Mental Health and Social Services (MHSS) user's manual, and RPMS ICD Coding subsystem. Other guides include style manuals, dictionaries, personnel manual and agency instructions concerning such matters as correspondence, and time and leave reporting. They include both step-by-step instructions and general procedural guidelines. Like Level 3-2, she locates and selects the appropriate guidelines, references, and procedures for application to specific cases, and determines which established alternatives to use.

Level 3-3 is not met. The guidelines used at this level are less specific in how they are to be defined, applied, and monitored than those typical of Level 3-2. Unlike Level 3-3, the appellant does not work from a large body of unwritten policies, precedents, and practices that are not completely applicable to her work and which deal with matters relating to judgment, efficiency, and relative priorities rather than with procedural concerns. Most of the appellant's work concerns procedural matters, as at Level 3-2, rather than, for example, complaints, inquiries and patient intervention where her supervisor, other staff member's or agency preferences might be unclear. Unlike Level 3-3 secretaries, the appellant does not frequently use judgment to interpret and adapt guidelines to situations where the guidelines are not clearly applicable.

This factor is assigned Level 3-2 and 125 points are credited.

Factor 4, Complexity, Level 4-2, 75 points

This factor covers the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of tasks, steps, processes, or methods in the work performed; the difficulty in identifying what needs to be done; and the difficulty and originality involved in performing the work. The agency has credited the complexity of the appellant's position with Level 4-2 (described on pages 22-23 of the standard) and we concur.

At Level 4-2, the work consists of duties that involve various related steps, processes, or methods. In addition to duties as varied as those described at Level 4-1, secretaries at this level perform a full range of procedural duties in support of the office, including such duties as requisitioning supplies, printing, or maintenance service; filling out various travel forms for staff members; arranging for meeting rooms; and preparing scheduled reports from information readily available in the files. Decisions regarding what needs to be done involve various choices requiring the secretary to recognize the existence of and differences among clearly recognizable situations.

At Level 4-3, the work includes various duties involving different and unrelated processes and methods. For example, in addition to duties described at Levels 4-1 and 4-2, such as performing a full range of clerical and procedural tasks in support of the office, the secretary at Level 4-3 performs a number of duties comparable to the following: preparing one-of-a-kind reports from information in various documents when this requires reading correspondence and reports to identify relevant items, and when decisions are based on a familiarity with the issues involved and the relationships between the various types of information; or setting up conferences requiring the planning and arranging of travel and hotel accommodations for conference participants when this is based on a knowledge of the schedules and commitments of the participants. Decisions regarding what needs to be done, and how to accomplish it, are based on the secretary's knowledge of the duties, priorities, commitments, policies, and program goals of the supervisor and staff, and involve analysis of the subject, phase, or issues involved in each assignment. The chosen courses are selected from many alternatives.

Level 4-2 is met. Similar to Level 4-2, the appellant performs a variety of procedural duties in support of the organization. Some of these involve preparing recurring reports, correcting errors in coding, helping prepare budgets and grants, and maintaining time and attendance records. In addition, as at Level 4-2, the appellant's work involves following proper procedures and making factual determinations when requisitioning supplies or maintenance service; completing travel forms for staff, conference participants and patients; and preparing scheduled reports from information readily available in office files. As at Level 4-2, actions or responses made differ in such areas as the source of information, and the kinds of entries or transactions based on the appellant's knowledge of procedural requirements and functions of the staff. Her decisions involve various choices within clearly recognizable situations.

Level 4-3 is not met. Although the appellant must research files to gather relevant data for inquiries and reports, she rarely prepares one-of-a-kind reports necessitating the degree of research and review envisioned at Level 4-3. She is not expected to identify relevant items and

make decisions based on a familiarity with the issues and the relationships between various types of information. The appellant provided two examples of reports that she believes meet the Level 4-3 criteria. We disagree. We found that these examples (e.g., reports to BADA) are regular and routine and are not sufficiently complex to meet the criteria established at the higher level. The appellant does set up conferences and meetings, as depicted in the second example at Level 4-3. However, unlike Level 4-3 the record indicates that she does not regularly set up conferences and meetings that require arranging for both the travel and hotel accommodations of all participants. This and other work of the appellant's does not involve different and unrelated processes and methods.

Level 4-2 is assigned for this factor and 75 points are credited.

Factor 5, Scope and effect, Level 5-2, 75 points

This factor covers the relationship between the nature of work, i.e., the purpose, breadth, and depth of the assignment, and the effect of work products or services both within and outside the organization. The agency has credited the scope and effect of the appellant's position with Level 5-2 (described on page 24 of the standard) and we agree.

At Level 5-2, the purpose of the work is to carry out specific procedures. The work affects the accuracy and reliability of further processes. Duties frequently appearing at this level include serving as liaison between the supervisor and subordinate units, consolidating reports submitted by subordinate units, and arranging meetings involving staff from outside the immediate office.

At Level 5-3 (page 24), positions serve offices that clearly and directly affect a wide range of agency activities, operations in other agencies, or a large segment of the public or business community. The secretary at this level modifies and devises methods and procedures that significantly and consistently affect the accomplishment of the mission of the office. The secretary identifies and resolves various problems and situations that affect the orderly and efficient flow of work in transactions with parties outside the organization.

Level 5-2 is met. The purpose of the appellant's position is to perform and coordinate the full range of procedural administrative and clerical duties in support of staff of the [the appellant's unit] Department. These include consolidating reports submitted by her supervisor's subordinates, and arranging meetings involving staff, sometimes from outside the immediate office. Her work frees the staff from administrative burdens, and ensures that work conforms to appropriate policies and procedures. Similar to Level 5-2, her duties directly affect the accuracy, reliability, and acceptability of further processes.

Level 5-3 is not met. Unlike Level 5-3, her work does not directly and significantly affect a wide range of agency activities, operations in other agencies, or a large segment of the public or business community. Unlike Level 5-3, her work does not identify and resolve various problems and situations that affect the orderly and efficient flow of work in transactions with parties outside the organization requiring the appellant to devise new methods and processes affecting accomplishment of the mission of the office. While we recognize that she sometimes prepares reports for the benefit of parties outside her organization (e.g., state agencies), she is not

concerned with identifying and resolving various problems and situations affecting the orderly and efficient flow of those transactions as envisioned at Level 5-3.

This factor is evaluated at Level 5-2 and 75 points are assigned.

Factor 6, Personal contacts, Level 6-2, 25 points

This factor covers the types of personal contacts that occur in the work with persons not in the supervisory chain. The agency found that the appellant's personal contacts were comparable to Level 6-2 (described on pages 25-26 of the standard) and we concur.

At Level 6-2, the personal contacts are with employees in the same agency, but outside the immediate organization. People contacted generally are engaged in different functions, missions, and kinds of work, e.g., representatives from various levels within the agency such as headquarters, regional, district, or field offices, or other operating offices in the immediate installation. Contacts may also be with members of the general public, as individuals or groups, in a moderately structured setting.

At Level 6-3 (page 26), the personal contacts are with individuals or groups from outside the employing agency in a moderately unstructured setting. For example, the contacts are not established on a routine basis, requiring the secretary to identify and locate the appropriate person to contact or to apply significant skill and knowledge in determining to whom a telephone call or visitor should be directed; the purpose and extent of each contact is different; and the role and authority of each party is identified and developed during the course of the contact.

Level 6-2 is met. The appellant has frequent contact with individuals outside her immediate organization who are engaged in different functions, missions, and kinds of work, e.g., representatives from various levels within the agency such as headquarters, regional, area, or field offices, or other operating offices in the immediate installation. Like Level 6-2, she also has contacts with individuals external to her agency that occur in a moderately structured setting, e.g., tribal officers, physicians, and travel agents. Contacts at Level 6-2 include visitors and calls requiring secretaries to clarify first why the caller or visitor is in contact with the office, in order to obtain the necessary information or properly respond to an inquiry. Similarly, the appellant must determine whether callers merit referral to other individuals within the immediate office such as the [unit] Director, or the Clinical Psychologist or Psychiatrist.

Level 6-3 is not met. Unlike Level 6-3, the visitors and calls the appellant handles are frequently routine rather than out-of-the-ordinary. At Level 6-3, contacts frequently occur in moderately unstructured settings where the purpose and extent of each contact is different and the role and authority of each party is identified and developed during the course of the contact. Unlike Level 6-3, the appellant's contacts involve typically non-controversial matters, where the role and authority of each participant is readily apparent and unquestioned. Unlike the appellant, secretaries at Level 6-3 must frequently handle sensitive or contentious matters, where the role and authority of the parties may at first be uncertain, as when dealing with attorneys, contractors, the news media, or public action groups, etc.

This factor is assigned Level 6-2 and 25 points are credited.

Factor 7, Purpose of contacts, Level 7-2, 50 points

This factor covers the purpose of personal contacts that may range from factual exchanges of information to resolving problems affecting the efficient operation of the office. The agency found that the purpose of the appellant's contacts met Level 7-2 (described on page 27 of the standard), and we agree.

The purpose of the appellant's contacts fully meets Level 7-2, which is the highest level for Factor 7 described in the standard. Like Level 7-2, the purpose of the appellant's contacts is to plan, coordinate, or advise on work efforts or to resolve operating problems. She ensures that reports and responses to correspondence are submitted by the staff on time and in proper format, schedules appointments, makes travel arrangements, and schedules conferences.

This factor is evaluated at Level 7-2 and 50 points are assigned.

Factor 8, Physical demands, Level 8-1, 5 points

This factor covers the requirements and physical demands placed on the employee by the work assignment. This includes physical characteristics and abilities and physical exertion involved in the work. Both the agency and the appellant agree that the appellant's level of physical demands is comparable to Level 8-1 (described on page 28 of the standard), and we concur with that determination. Level 8-1 is the only level for this factor described in the standard.

Similar to Level 8-1, the appellant's work is sedentary, and no special physical demands are required. However, there is occasional walking, standing, or bending required.

This factor is evaluated at Level 8-1 and 5 points are credited.

Factor 9, Work environment, Level 9-1, 5 points

This factor considers the risks and discomforts in the employee's physical surroundings or the nature of the work assigned and the safety regulations required. Both the agency and the appellant agree that the appellant's work environment is comparable to Level 9-1 (described on page 28 of the standard), and we concur. Level 9-1 is the only level for this factor described in the standard.

Similar to Level 9-1, the appellant's work is performed in an office, and involves everyday risks or discomforts and safety precautions associated with offices and meeting rooms. Her work area is adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated.

This factor is assigned Level 9-1 and 5 points are credited.

Summary

Our comparison of the appellant's current duties and responsibilities to the nine FES evaluation factors in the GS-318 standard results in the following:

Factor	Level	Points
1. Knowledge Required by the Position	1-3	350 Points
2. Supervisory Controls	2-3	275 Points
3. Guidelines	3-2	125 Points
4. Complexity	4-2	75 Points
5. Scope and Effect	5-2	75 Points
6. Personal Contacts	6-2	25 Points
7. Purpose of Contacts	7-2	50 Points
8. Physical Demands	8-1	5 Points
9. Work Environment	9-1	<u>5</u> Points
Total points:		985 Points

A total of 985 points are credited to the appellant's position. By reference to the grade conversion table on page 9 of the GS-318 standard, we find that the appellant's work falls in the GS-5 range (855-1100). Therefore, the position is classified at that grade level.

Decision

The appellant's position is properly classified as a Secretary (OA), GS-318-5.