

Subchapter 3: Development of Classification Standards

3-3. AGENCY CLASSIFICATION GUIDES

d. **DOT Guides.** The Office of Personnel and Training, Office of the Secretary, must approve prior to application any new or revised Departmental position classification guides for positions in the General Schedule (GS) and Federal Wage System (FWS). Only DOT position classification guides may be used in the classification of Departmental positions. Position classification guides include single agency guides and other directives used to provide guidance for classifying positions for which Office of Personnel Management (OPM) standards are not published or to provide specific instruction in the application of published OPM standards.

(1) **Criteria for Review:** Classification guides meeting the following requirements shall be reviewed and approved by the Office of Personnel and Training, Office of the Secretary, for issuance as a Department of Transportation classification guide.

- (a) Guides must cover occupations in which the Department is a major or sole Federal employer.
- (b) Guides must cover occupations with an employee population in excess of 50.
- (c) Guides must cover occupations whose principal duties and responsibilities relate to regulating transportation or providing direct services to transportation systems.
- (d) Guides must reflect classification principles and evaluation criteria present in the most nearly applicable published Office of Personnel Management classification standards.

(2) **Documentation:** Classification guides and supporting documentation shall be submitted with the following information:

- (a) A discussion of the occupation to which the guide will be applied and the purpose of the guide shall be provided in addition to any related occupational studies conducted.
- (b) A discussion of the organizational structure and functions affected by the proposed guide.
- (c) An identification of the problems the guide is designed to address.

(d) A comparison of the guide with the most nearly applicable Office of Personnel Management standards, to ensure that OPM classification principles and evaluation criteria are properly reflected in the guide.

(e) A trial application of the guide, with evaluation statements, against applicable OPM and Departmental classification appeal decisions.

(f) An indication whether the guide will prospectively change 20 or more substantially similar positions from one grade level to another or from one system to another (e.g., Federal Wage System to General Schedule).

(3) **Office of Personnel and Training, Office of the Secretary Review.** The Office of Personnel and Training, Office of the Secretary, will review all classification guides to:

- (a) Assure that proposed guides conform with the Secretary's statutory responsibility for position classification and with OPM policy;
- (b) Assure appropriate coordination with other Operating Administrations, departments, and agencies; and
- (c) Provide Departmental information to OPM or other agencies regarding the classification basis for significant categories of employees.

(4) **Application and Reporting on Guides:**

- (a) Application of Departmental classification guides should be completed within 6 months of the date the published guide is issued.
- (b) Operating Administrations shall report to the Office of Personnel and Training, Office of the Secretary, when the application of each new or revised guide is completed and the number of pay category, series, or grade changes resulting from application.

e. **Occupational Studies.** The Office of Personnel and Training, Office of the Secretary, shall be informed prior to initiation of an occupational study in order that any potential impact on other sectors of the Department work force or on Office of Personnel Management requirements be evaluated. Periodic maintenance

reviews or cyclic surveys to update the description of position duties and the classification of positions which do not address a specific occupational group do not need to be reported.

f. **Annual Survey.** The Office of Personnel and Training, Office of the Secretary, will annually require Operating Administrations to identify their plans for initiating or revising Departmental classification guides for which

they are the primary user and for conducting occupational studies. Operating Administration responses should provide an estimate of the anticipated scheduling of these actions. Annual Office of Personnel and Training surveys will be timed where practical to coincide with the development of Office of Personnel Management standards development plans.