

STATE OF WISCONSIN
CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION

CONSUMER COMPLAINT PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of This Classification Specification

This classification specification is the basic authority under ER 2.04, Wis. Adm. Code, for making classification decisions relative to present and future paraprofessional support positions that perform the full range of consumer complaint processing and resolution functions for a work unit or specialized program area(s) such as consumer protection or insurance. This classification specification will not specifically identify every eventuality or combination of duties and responsibilities of positions that currently exist, or those that result from changing program emphasis in the future; rather, it is designed to serve as a framework for classification decision making in this occupational area.

Classification decisions must be based on the “best fit” of the duties within the existing classification structure. The “best fit” is determined by the majority (i.e., more than 50%) of the work assigned to and performed by the position when compared to the class concepts and definition of this specification or through other methods of position analysis. Position analysis defines the nature and character of the work through the use of any or all of the following: definition statements; listing of areas of specialization; representative examples of work performed; allocation patterns of representative positions; job evaluation guide charts, standards or factors; statements of inclusion and exclusion; licensure or certification requirements; and other such information necessary to facilitate the assignment of positions to the appropriate classification.

B. Inclusions

These positions are located at the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and the Office of Commissioner of Insurance and provide paraprofessional support for a consumer complaint program area. Duties include processing and resolving consumer complaints that are non-routine in complexity, mediating complaints between consumers and businesses; and responding to questions regarding laws and codes.

C. Exclusions

Excluded from this classification are the following types of positions:

1. Positions that meet the statutory definitions of confidential, supervisor and/or management as defined in s. 111.81(7), (19) and (13), Wis. Stats. and as interpreted by the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission.
2. Positions that perform general paraprofessional support duties not related to a consumer complaint program for a majority of time (more than 50%) and are more appropriately classified as Operations Program Associate.
3. Positions that perform professional duties as defined in s. 111.81(15), Wis. Stats., for investigations involving compliance with or violations of statutes, rules, regulations,

administrative codes, and/or standards for the majority of time (more than 50%) and are more appropriately classified as Consumer Protection Investigator or Insurance Examiner.

4. Positions that perform security and public safety duties involving the processing, analysis, resolution and coordination of consumer complaints for the majority of time (more than 50%), and are more appropriately classified as Consumer Specialist.
5. All other positions that are more appropriately identified by other classification specifications.

D. Entrance Into This Classification

Employees enter this classification by competition.

E. Terminology Used in This Classification Specification

Paraprofessional: Work that is similar to professional work but does not have the breadth and depth of true professional work. A paraprofessional employee may perform duties that are a narrow, specialized subset of the professional employee's duties. A paraprofessional employee does not perform the full range of duties assigned to professional employees, or performs duties of lesser scope, impact, and complexity than duties assigned to professional employees. Paraprofessional duties tend to support the work of professional employees. A paraprofessional employee may carry out or implement plans or projects that are developed, planned, and managed by professional employees. The paraprofessional employee carries out or implements plans or projects based on extensive experience and supplemental on-the-job training rather than on formal academic education in the discipline itself. Paraprofessional work is performed in a narrow or highly specialized area of the overall occupation and requires a high degree of practical knowledge and skill. The experienced paraprofessional employee often works with considerable independence for significant periods of time. This independence, however, does not alter the nature and character of the work, which is to support a professional discipline.

Professional: Wisconsin statute s. 111.81(15) states, "Professional employee means: (a) Any employee in the classified service who is engaged in work: 1. predominantly intellectual and varied in character as opposed to routine mental, manual, mechanical or physical work; 2. Involving the consistent exercise of discretion and judgment in its performance; 3. Of such a character that the output produced or the result accomplished cannot be standardized in relation to a given period of time; 4. Requiring knowledge of an advanced type in a field of science or learning customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction and study in an institution of higher learning or a hospital, as distinguished from a general academic education or from an apprenticeship or from training in the performance of routine mental, manual or physical processes; or (b) Any employee in the classified service who: 1. Has completed the courses of specialized intellectual instruction and study described in par. (a)(4); and 2. Is performing related work under the supervision of a professional person to qualify to become a professional employee as defined in par. (a)."

Professional work cannot be standardized or routinized and requires independent judgment and discretion. Professional work involves many gray areas that require substantial analysis and judgment to reach the appropriate conclusion. Work classified as professional requires education and training in the principles, concepts, and theories of the occupational area. These are often gained through the completion of a four-year degree in a specified curriculum at a college or

university. In a limited number of circumstances, such knowledge may be gained through on-the-job experience.

Professional work requires creativity, analysis, evaluation, and interpretation. It involves applying or interpreting natural law, principles, or theory; evaluating the research of others; and assessing the need for and validity of proposed changes and improvements in procedures and methods. Professional responsibility involves the ability to reason from existing knowledge to unexplored areas; to adapt methods to circumstances that deviate from the standards; and to stay abreast of and evaluate technical subjects, analyses, and proposals.

Professional work requires a high order of analytical ability combined with a comprehensive knowledge of (1) the functions, processes, theories, and principles of the occupational area; and (2) the methods used to gather, analyze, and evaluate information. A type of work closely relating to and resembling professional level work, with a more limited scope of functions, decision making, and overall accountability. A paraprofessional position may have responsibility for segments of professional level functions but is not responsible for the full range and scope of functions expected of a professional position.

II. DEFINITION

CONSUMER COMPLAINT PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

Positions perform the full range of consumer complaint support activities. Positions analyze complaints to identify where a law violation may exist and discuss with a manager or program expert; analyze the need to request additional information from the complainant; organize evidence for administrative actions; and generate original correspondence. In addition, positions must mediate, analyze and resolve complaints between consumers and businesses by using the fact situation of the law to obtain compliance and be responsible for having knowledge of multiple areas of law/state statutes/codes. Positions may provide education and training services to businesses, industry, governmental organizations, community civic groups or the general public, assist with open records requests, advise consumers on business histories, perform case tracking, and distribute requested forms. Positions may perform leadworker functions for lower level staff by training, reviewing work, and answering questions. Work is performed under general supervision.

Representative Positions:

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: Positions are responsible for receiving contacts from and counseling consumers and businesses; researching case histories and statutes; providing mediation services between consumers and businesses; developing, updating, and managing information, resources, and referral materials as well as general program activity reports; assigning, transferring, and referring complaints; managing the fact sheet inventory; scheduling public appearances; providing telephone consultation to consumers, businesses, governmental agencies, legislators, media and others on consumer protection issues; and maintaining database management files.

Office of the Commissioner of Insurance: Positions analyze and resolve consumer complaints involving the business practices of insurers and agents in the areas of claims, policyholder service, marketing and underwriting. Positions review information and analyze written inquiries to identify possible complaints of a law violation; review and analyze complaints, determine further investigation by OCI or referral to more appropriate agency; communicate with insurance companies to resolve complaints; analyze applicable policy provisions, procedures and laws to determine if violations exist; communicate with

complainants to explain disposition of complaints and methods to obtain relief; and interpret insurance laws and regulations to consumers and complainants.

III. QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications required for these positions will be determined at the time of recruitment. Such determinations will be made based on an analysis of the goals and worker activities performed, and by an identification of the education, training, work, or other life experience which would provide reasonable assurance that the knowledge and skills required upon appointment have been acquired.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

This classification was created effective July 24, 2005, and announced in Bulletin OSER-0071-MRS-SC, as a result of the Administrative Support Unit Survey, for some positions formerly classified in the Program Assistant series. The classification was abolished and recreated effective October 12, 2008, and announced in Bulletin OSER-0225-MRS/SC to remove the A/B pay designations from the title as a result of ASU 2007-2009 bargaining.

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