

The State Classification System – the Union's role



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Background

- Jobs in California State Civil Service are grouped into Class Specifications, which describe
 - Grouped in series, and include the qualifications for each level
- There are currently about
 - 4,500 different job classifications
- Grouped into
 - 2500 Class Specifications

Background

- Common Contents of Class Specifications:
 - Minimum qualifications
 - Summary range of typical job duties
- Some specifications are outdated – referring to job duties from the 1950s- 1970s

3 Steps of review – New Classes

1. CalHR –California Department of Human Resources – has general authority for the classification plan
2. SPB – State Personnel Board – approval of classifications – to satisfy the constitutional safeguards of the Merit principle
3. Unions – representing the concerns for the affected workers on duties, salary and working conditions

CalHR's Authority

- CalHR administers the Personnel Classification Plan of the State of California including:
 - Allocating every position to its class and
 - Ensuring the proper class in the classification plan
 - Govt Code 19818.6

Grouping Work into Classes

- When positions are sufficiently similar with:
 1. Substantially the same experience, knowledge and ability, and
 2. Substantially the same tests of fitness – if a particularly level of fitness is required and also
 3. The same schedule of compensation can be applied with equity

How Does Salary Fit In?

- CalHR sets the salary range for each Class
 - based on the principle that like salaries shall be paid for comparable duties and responsibilities.
- Giving consideration to the prevailing rates for comparable service...
 - in other public employment and
 - in private business
 - **Govt Code 19826**

SPB's Role

- Approves Classes for consistency with the MERIT principle – which is...
 - Constitutional requirement that appointment and service SHALL BE based on merit and determined by competitive examination
 - Including....
 - Appropriate duties and
 - Appropriate Minimum Qualifications

Union Involvement

- Receives Notice of new classifications or modification of existing classifications
 - Right to Bargain about the change - “Meet and Confer”
 - If agreement – joint recommendation to SPB
 - If no agreement – management can submit it to SPB
 - If approved by SPB, triggers a second meet and confer about the impact of the approval
- Salary – no class may be established unless it has a salary

Union Representation Goals

- Class Allocation is proper (or misallocation is minimized)
- Salary appropriateness is achieved
- Upward Mobility is available
- Recruitment and Retention Goals are satisfied
- Vacancy rates are minimized or addressed
- Minimum qualifications are appropriate

Common Problems in Class Structure

- Misallocation
- Salary disparity with other state workers or private sector
- Vacancy Rates – due to goals of recruitment and retention not being achieved
- Upward mobility is blocked
- Class specifications are out of date – do not reflect actual work

Real Life Problem 1

Employee in Department A makes more than Employee in Department B

- Employees perform substantially similar work but have different class titles and are paid different salaries
 - Proliferation of department-specific classes – leading to similar classes with different titles and disparate pay scales

Real Life Problem 2

**“This job is a like a bridge
to nowhere”**

- Employees have no upward mobility because experience in their current classification does not count in any other classification
 - Proliferation of department-specific classes that do not allow for transfer or promotion eligibility

Real Life Problem 3

Vacancy Rates are so high that we work side by side with private consultants who make more money than state workers doing the same job

- Results of hiring freezes on civil service but no freeze on contracting out work to vendors

Questions?