

Job Family Position Classification Standard for Assistance Work in the Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900



Series Covered by This Standard:

Contact Representative	GS-0962
Legal Instruments Examining	GS-0963
Legal Assistance	GS-0986
Claims Assistance and Examining	GS-0998

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INTRODUCTION

This job family standard provides series and specialty definitions, titling instructions, and grading criteria for nonsupervisory one-grade interval administrative support (i.e., assistance) positions in the Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900.

COVERAGE

This job family standard covers the following occupational series:

Series		Series	
Contact Representative	GS-0962	Legal Assistance	GS-0986
Legal Instruments Examining	GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining	GS-0998

MODIFICATIONS TO AND CANCELLATIONS OF OTHER EXISTING OCCUPATIONAL SERIES AND STANDARDS

Issuance of this job family standard renames, modifies, or cancels occupational series and classification standards and guidance as described in the following table. The table also indicates how to classify work previously covered by classification standards affected by this issuance.

Previous Series	Action Taken / How to Classify Work Previously Covered
Clerk of Court GS-0945	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removes one-grade interval administrative support work from the GS-0945 Series. • Classify one-grade interval administrative support work previously covered by the GS-0945 Series to the Legal Assistance Series, GS-0986. • Classify two-grade interval administrative work previously covered by this series to the Clerk of Court Series, GS-0945.
Contact Representative GS-0962	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancels this classification standard, last revised in April 1971. • Removes two-grade interval administrative work from the GS-0962 Series. • Classify two-grade interval administrative work previously covered by the GS-0962 Series to the General Legal and Kindred Administration Series, GS-0901.
Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancels this classification standard, last revised in January 1992.
(continued)	

Previous Series		Action Taken / How to Classify Work Previously Covered
Legal Clerical and Assistance	GS-0986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancels this classification standard, last revised in January 1992. • Renames this series.
General Claims Examining	GS-0990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancels this series. • Classify one grade interval work previously covered by this series to the Claims Assistance and Examining Series, GS-0998. • Classify two-grade interval administrative work previously covered by the GS-0990 Series to the General Legal and Kindred Administration Series, GS-0901.
Loss and Damage Claims Examining	GS-0992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancels this series. • Classify work previously covered by this series to the Claims Assistance and Examining Series, GS-0998.
Dependents and Estates Claims Examining	GS-0995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancels this series. • Classify work previously covered by this series to the Claims Assistance and Examining Series, GS-0998.
Claims Clerical	GS-0998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancels this classification standard, last revised in June 1966. • Renames this series. • Classify work previously covered by this series to the Claims Assistance and Examining Series, GS-0998.

GENERAL SERIES, TITLING, AND OCCUPATIONAL GUIDANCE

This section provides information on series and specialty definitions, titling instructions, and occupational guidance for nonsupervisory one-grade interval administrative support positions in the Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900. It also provides information on titling instructions for supervisors, leaders, organizational titles, and parenthetical specialties in this job family.

GENERAL TITLING PROVISIONS

Supervisors and Leaders

- Add the prefix “Supervisory” to the title of positions classified using the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#).
- Add the prefix “Lead” to the title of positions classified using the [General Schedule Leader Grade Evaluation Guide](#).

Parenthetical Titles

- No parenthetical titles are prescribed for the following series:
 - Contact Representative, GS-0962
 - Legal Instruments Examining, GS-0963
- Parenthetical titles are prescribed for the following series as shown:
 - Legal Assistance, GS-0986
(Court)
 - Claims Assistance and Examining, GS-0998
(Loss and Damage)
(Dependents and Estates)
- Agencies may supplement the basic and prescribed parenthetical titles authorized in this standard with other agency-established parenthetical titles where appropriate as unofficial position titles (i.e., organizational or functional titles), if necessary for recruitment or other human resources needs.

Organizational Titles

- Use the official position titles as outlined below for human resources management, budget and fiscal purposes. This does not preclude continued use of organizational or functional titles for internal administration, public convenience, program management, or similar purposes.

INFORMATION BY SERIES	
Contact Representative, GS-0962	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Series Definition • Titling • Occupational Information
Legal Instruments Examining, GS-0963	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Series Definition • Titling • Occupational Information
Legal Assistance, GS-0986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Series Definition • Titling • Occupational Information
Claims Assistance and Examining, GS-0998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Series Definition • Titling • Occupational Information

CONTACT REPRESENTATIVE, GS-0962		<u>Qualification Standards</u>
Definition	<p>This series covers one-grade interval administrative support positions that supervise, lead, or perform support and related work in connection with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dispersing information to the public on rights, benefits, privileges, or obligations under a body of law; • explaining pertinent legal provisions, regulations, and related administrative practices, and their application to specific cases; and • assisting individuals in developing needed evidence and preparing required documents, or in resolving errors, delays, or other problems in obtaining benefits or fulfilling obligations. 	
Titling	<p>The basic title for this occupation is <i>Contact Representative</i>.</p>	
Occupational Information	<p>General Occupational Information</p> <p>Contact representatives respond to a variety of personal and telephone inquiries. Work within this series requires contact representatives to perform one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide sufficient information to enable individuals to determine the required or most appropriate actions to take to obtain benefits or privileges, to comply with reporting and disclosure requirements, or to fulfill other obligations under Federal laws or regulations; • explain or assist in preparing forms and documents needed to meet reporting requirements or to support claims or application for benefits; • explain the administrative and legal recourses available and the proper procedures for filing a complaint alleging violation of applicable law or regulations or for appealing a determination made by the agency; • explain administrative procedures and normal processing times; • expedite actions on pending cases; • initiate actions to resolve discrepancies and adjust agency records that may be incomplete or erroneous; • explain the application of regulatory provisions and the basis for agency determinations in individual cases; and/or • write necessary correspondence and narrative reports of contacts. <p><u>⇐BACK</u></p>	

LEGAL INSTRUMENTS EXAMINING, GS-0963		<u>Qualification Standards</u>
Definition	<p>This series covers one-grade interval administrative support positions that supervise, lead, or perform support and related work in connection with the examination of legal instruments and supporting documents, other than claims, to determine whether a requested action complies with certain provisions of various laws. The work requires the application of particular regulatory and procedural knowledge that is based on those laws.</p>	
Titling	<p>The basic title for this occupation is <i>Legal Instruments Examiner</i>.</p>	
Occupational Information	<p>General Occupational Information</p> <p>Legal instruments examiners perform one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine applications submitted by individuals, partnerships, corporations, or others requesting licenses, permits, rights, or privileges; • examine bonds that secure the performance of obligations or duties; • examine contracts and agreements made between the Federal Government and an individual, corporation, State agency, and others to furnish supplies or services; • examine conveyances and instruments submitted by individuals, partnerships, corporations, and others that effect and/or show evidence to the title or interest in property; • examine fiduciary accounts and financial statements that are required by law to be presented to the courts or to the responsible administrative agency by fiduciaries acting on behalf of incompetent veterans, minors, or incompetent beneficiaries of deceased veterans; • examine securities and instruments relating to the legal ownership of or entitlement to securities; and/or • examine statements and instruments filed by various organizations with respect to their creation, organizational structure, capitalization, operations, processes, etc. <p><u>←BACK</u></p>	

LEGAL ASSISTANCE, GS-0986		<u>Qualification Standards</u>
Definition	<p>This series covers one-grade interval administrative support positions that supervise, lead, or perform legal assistance work not classifiable in any other series in the Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900. The work requires specialized knowledge of processes, procedures, and practices to support legal activities.</p>	
Titling	<p>The basic title for this occupation is <i>Legal Assistant</i>.</p> <p>Use the following parenthetical title for the specialty as defined:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Court – Work that involves administrative support in connection with all court proceedings instituted before courts of justice.</p>	
Occupational Information	<p>General Occupational Information</p> <p>Legal assistants perform one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initiate and compose standardized legal documents routinely needed for specific legal actions; • accept service of legal documents, review them for correct form and timeliness, and annotate case files and status records to reflect receipt and due date for response or other required actions; • process legal instruments by checking them for required information, determining if any treatment such as simple computations is necessary, and routing the assembled material to a technical expert for examination; • locate and compile information from files; • maintain docket calendars and tickler systems, coordinate schedules with Clerks of Courts, remind attorneys of court appearances and deadlines for submitting various actions or documents, and notify witnesses of appearances and of changes resulting from suspensions or settlements; • attend and keep a record of all court proceedings; • maintain court calendar; and/or • establish, maintain, and close case files or systems of legal records, annotate indices and status records, compile workload and status reports, and locate and abstract data from files and records. <p>This series also covers one-grade interval administrative support positions that perform various legal assistant support functions, including assistance in conducting hearings or judicial proceedings, case management, litigation, debt collection, and other similar types of activities for which there are ample precedents, and established procedures.</p> <p><u>←BACK</u></p>	

CLAIMS ASSISTANCE AND EXAMINING, GS-0998		<u>Qualification Standards</u>
Definition	<p>This series covers one-grade interval administrative support positions that supervise, lead, or perform support and related work in examining, reviewing, developing, adjusting, reconsidering, or recommending authorization of claims by or against the Federal Government. The work requires knowledge of claims processing procedures and claims requirements. This includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine claims due to loss and damage by or against the Government; • settle claims for the payment of monetary allowances or gratuities based upon dependency on an active or deceased former military service member; • develop, examine, adjust, reconsider, and/or authorize settlement of claims against the Government; • settle claims involving assets of a deceased or incompetent person that are in the possession of a Government agency; and • examine and develop claims cases for adjudication including determining and verifying entitlement to benefits, verifying post-entitlement actions regarding beneficiaries, and answering inquiries about benefits or procedures for filing claims. 	
Titling	<p>The basic titles for positions in this occupation are:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Claims Assistant – Work that involves reviewing, verifying, correcting, or completing information on claims documents, and assisting employees or customers with claims documents, processes, procedures, or issues.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Claims Examiner – Work that involves developing, adjusting, reconsidering, and/or authorizing the settlement of straightforward claims. Work involves examining claims to identify and resolve inconsistencies or other easily identifiable situations to process or adjudicate the claim.</p> <p>Use the following parenthetical titles for specialties as defined:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Loss and Damage – Work that involves loss and damage by or against the Government.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Dependents and Estates – Work that involves the settlement of claims based on dependency on or estates of a military member.</p>	
Occupational Information	<p>General Occupational Information</p> <p>Work within this series includes one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine, review, or develop claims by or against the Federal Government; • determine and verify entitlement to benefits, where the legal requirements are clear and the examination process is routine; • examine, develop, and verify post-entitlement actions regarding established beneficiaries; • answer general or routine inquiries about benefits or procedures for filing claims; • determine the appropriate provisions under which claims should be submitted; • determine the nature and amount of supporting evidence required to process the claim; • recommend the settlement of claims; • conduct field interviews; and/or • take statements from witnesses. <p><u>←BACK</u></p>	

DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN ASSISTANT WORK AND SPECIALIST WORK

It is not always easy to distinguish between assistant positions classified in one-grade interval administrative support occupations and specialist positions classified in two-grade interval administrative occupations. Some tasks are common to both types of work, particularly at the higher grade levels of administrative support work and the lower, developmental grade levels of specialist work. To decide the proper occupational series, it is necessary to consider the characteristics and requirements of the work as well as management's intent in establishing the position. In making this determination, the following questions should be answered:

Is it a position that management establishes to support and augment the work of a specialist that requires the application of:

- established methods and procedures; and
- a practical knowledge, as opposed to a conceptual knowledge, of the techniques and guidelines pertinent to the assignment area?

OR

Is it a developmental position with clear progression to higher grade levels as a specialist based on progressively more difficult assignments that require the application of:

- a broad knowledge of subject matter principles, concepts, and methods;
- a high degree of analytical ability;
- skill in problem solving; and
- skill in communicating effectively, both orally and in writing?

Although some assistant duties may be similar to those of specialist trainees, specialist trainees are in temporary stages of development performing assignments requiring more judgment and analysis. Assistant duties are not designed to progress to specialist positions. They are designed to support the work of specialists in a legal or claims office.

Assistants for legal or claims work have boundaries that narrowly restrict their work. In contrast, full-performance specialists use broad legal knowledge, concepts, and principles to perform a wide variety of work in one or more subject matter areas. Assistants use a limited variety of techniques, standards, or regulations. Problems they deal with are recurring and have precedents. These limitations impact the breadth and depth of knowledge required, the complexity of problem solving, the applicability of guidelines, and/or the closeness of supervisory controls.

IMPACT OF AUTOMATION

Automation greatly affects the way legal products and services are delivered. Employees use computers to perform a wide variety of record keeping, correspondence, and work tracking operations. They input, delete, retrieve, manipulate, and correct information in databases or automated records. They design and produce reports using automated computer systems.

Although assistants use computers to perform basic work processes, knowledge of the rules and processes in a legal or claims office or pertaining to legal or claims procedures remains the paramount subject matter knowledge required to perform this work. The kind of automation tools involved, and the skill required to use them, generally replace or supplement work methods and techniques previously performed through manual or machine enhanced processes. These positions may require knowledge of the applications of information technology to the assignment area and skill in the use of information technology (IT) software and hardware systems but the positions are not directly involved in developing, delivering, or supporting IT systems and services. In many cases, an employee with advanced knowledge and skill in the use of IT systems may be regarded as the IT “expert” in the immediate organization and relied upon by other employees for limited technical advice and assistance in the application of IT systems to the assignment area. Although computers are used to facilitate work within this job family, the use of automation does not change the primary purpose of the work. Proper classification of positions within this and other administrative support occupations is based on the relevant knowledge and skills required to perform the primary – in this instance, legal- or claims-related – duties of the position.

CROSSWALK TO THE STANDARD OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION					
<p>The Office of Management and Budget requires all Federal agencies that collect occupational data to use the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system for statistical data reporting purposes. The Bureau of Labor Statistics will use SOC codes for National Compensation Survey and other statistical reporting. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and agencies will develop and maintain the “crosswalk” between the Federal occupational series and the SOC codes to serve this need. These SOC codes and this requirement have no effect on the administration of any Federal human resources management systems. The information contained in this table is for information only and has no direct impact on the classification of positions covered by this job family standard. The SOC codes shown here generally apply only to nonsupervisory positions in these occupations. As changes occur to the SOC codes, OPM will update this table. More information about the SOC is available at http://stats.bls.gov/soc.</p>					
Federal Occupational Series and Position Titles and Their Related Standard Occupational Classification System Codes					
Occupational Series	Standard Occupational Classification Code Based on Occupational Series		Position Title	Standard Occupational Classification Code Based on Position Title	
Contact Representative, GS-0962	43-4061	Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs	Contact Representative	43-4061	Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs
Legal Instruments Examining, GS-0963	23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	Legal Instruments Examiner	23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants
Legal Assistance, GS-0986	23-2099	Legal Support Workers	Legal Assistant	23-2099	Legal Support Workers, All Others
Claims Assistance and Examining, GS-0998	13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Appraisers, Examiners, and Investigators	Claims Assistant / Claims Examiner	13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators

EXCLUSIONS

Although some positions may include assistance work requiring legal and kindred knowledge and skills, classification to the Assistance Work in the Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900 may not be appropriate. To select the appropriate series, you must determine the paramount knowledge; i.e., the most important subject-matter knowledge required to perform the primary duties of the position. To determine the paramount knowledge, you must also consider the primary purpose for the position’s existence, the most important qualification(s) required, recruitment sources, career progression, and the background knowledge required. The following table provides examples of situations where the work may involve the application of related knowledge and skills, but not to the extent that it may warrant classification to this job family.

NOTE: In the table below, job family standard is abbreviated as JFS.

If....	See This Standard or Series Definition:
<p>1. Work involves performing quasi-legal work in examining, adjudicating, and authorizing claims for pensions, benefits, and national social insurance and need-based benefits programs.</p>	<p><u>GS-0105, Social Insurance Administration</u></p> <p><u>GS-0901, General Legal and Kindred Administration Series</u> and <u>Administrative Analysis Grade Evaluation Guide</u> with appropriate subject matter standard.</p> <p><u>GS-0991, Workers’ Compensation Claims Examining</u></p> <p><u>GS-0993, Railroad Retirement Claims Examining</u></p> <p><u>GS-0996, Veterans Claims Examining</u></p>
<p>2. Work involves two-grade interval administrative work in connection with proceedings instituted before courts of justice under the jurisdiction of a department or independent establishment in the executive branch of the United States Government or business operations in connection with such courts.</p>	<p><u>GS-0945, Clerk of Court</u> and <u>Administrative Analysis Grade Evaluation Guide</u> with appropriate subject matter standard.</p>

(continued)

EXCLUSIONS (continued)

If....	See This Standard or Series Definition:
<p>3. Work involves analysis of legal decisions; compiling substantive information on legal subjects; and collecting, analyzing, and evaluating evidence in connection with hearing, appeals, litigation, or advisory services. The work requires specialized knowledge of law, but not bar membership.</p>	<p><u>GS-0950, Paralegal Specialist</u></p>
<p>4. Work involves assistant, secretarial, or general office support work but does not require knowledge of legal processes, procedures, and practices.</p>	<p>Appropriate series within the General Administrative, Clerical, and Office Services Group, GS-0300</p>
<p>5. Work involves examining documents requiring knowledge of fiscal laws and regulations, and typically involves determining amounts of money properly payable and validating requests for payment.</p>	<p><u>JFS for Clerical and Technical Accounting and Budget Work, GS-0500</u></p>

HOW TO USE THIS STANDARD

Evaluate positions on a factor-by-factor basis using the factor level descriptions (FLDs) provided in this standard. Compare each factor in the position description to the appropriate FLDs and illustrations in the standard. If the factor information in the position description fully matches an FLD for the series and specialties in the standard, you may assign the level without reviewing the illustrations. FLDs are progressive or cumulative in nature. For example, each FLD for Factor 1 – Knowledge Required by the Position encompasses the knowledge and skills identified at the previous level. Use only designated point values. Record the results of your analysis on the Position Evaluation Summary form on the next page. Convert total points for all factors to grade levels using the grade conversion table that follows the FLDs.

This standard provides occupation- and specialty-specific illustrations as a frame of reference for applying factor level concepts. Do not rely solely on the illustrations in evaluating positions, because they reflect a limited range of actual work examples. Use the illustrations to gain insights into the meaning of the grading criteria in the FLDs. Consider each illustration in its entirety and in conjunction with the FLDs in your analysis, and do not merely use a selected portion of an illustration taken out of context as evidence of a match. The level of work described in some illustrations may be higher than the threshold for a particular factor level. If the factor information in the position description you are evaluating fails to fully match a relevant illustration, but does fully match the FLD, you may still assign the level.

The FLDs in this standard cover nonsupervisory positions at grades GS-2 through GS-8. Evaluate supervisory and leader positions by applying the appropriate guide.

You will find more complete instructions for evaluating positions in the following OPM publications: [Introduction to the Position Classification Standards](#) and [The Classifier's Handbook](#).

POSITION EVALUATION SUMMARY

Organization _____

Position # _____

Evaluation Factors Standards Used	Factor Level Used (FL#, etc.)	Points Assigned	Comments
1. Knowledge Required by the Position			
2. Supervisory Controls			
3. Guidelines			
4. Complexity			
5. Scope and Effect			
6/7. Personal Contacts and Purpose of Contacts			
8. Physical Demands			
9. Work Environment			
S U M M A R Y	Total Points		
	Grade Conversion		

Additional Remarks:

Title, Series, and Grade Assigned:

Date: _____

Agencies may copy for local use.

FACTOR LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

FACTOR 1 – KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION

Factor 1 measures the nature and extent of information or facts that an employee must understand to do acceptable work (e.g., steps, procedures, practices, rules, policies, theories, principles, and concepts) and the nature and extent of the skills necessary to apply that knowledge. You should only select a factor level under this factor when the knowledge described is required and applied.

NOTE: In the tables below, factor level description is abbreviated as FLD.

Factor 1 illustrations are located in Appendix F1.

Level 1-2		200 Points
Series	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> Legal Assistance <small>GS-0986</small> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> Claims Assistance and Examining <small>GS-0998</small> </div> </div>	
Titles/Specialties	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> Legal Assistant Illustration(s) </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> Claims Assistant Illustration(s) </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> Legal Assistant (Court) Illustration(s) </div>	
FLD	<p>Knowledge of, and skill in applying, established rules, processes, and procedures in a legal or claims office sufficient to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> compare straightforward information on claims forms or legal documents with basic requirements for legal services provided by the office; use personal computers and office software programs, such as word processing programs, as needed, to enter data, complete forms, and correct errors and omissions on documents, files, and records; and use required formats with correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. 	

Level 1-3		350 Points		
Series	Contact Representative	GS-0962	Legal Assistance	GS-0986
	Legal Instruments Examining	GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining	GS-0998
Title/Specialties	Contact Representative	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Legal Assistant (Court)	<u>Illustration(s)</u>
	Legal Assistant	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Claims Assistant	<u>Illustration(s)</u>
	Legal Instruments Examiner			
FLD	Knowledge of, and skill in applying, standardized rules, processes, and procedures sufficient to:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform the full-range of legal support assignments; • make simple determinations; • assist others to acquire information; • identify documentation and time requirements; and • use personal computers and office software programs to retrieve and sort information from files or records and to prepare documents with complicated formatting; e.g., headers and footers. 			

Level 1-4		550 Points	
Series	Contact Representative	GS-0962	Legal Assistance GS-0986
	Legal Instruments Examining	GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998
Titles/Specialties	Contact Representative	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Claims Examiner <u>Illustration(s)</u>
	Legal Instruments Examiner	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Claims Examiner (Loss and Damage) <u>Illustration(s)</u>
	Legal Assistant	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Claims Examiner (Dependents and Estates) <u>Illustration(s)</u>
	Legal Assistant (Court)	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	
FLD	<p>Knowledge of, and skill in applying, an extensive body of rules and procedures gained through extended training or experience sufficient to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform interrelated and nonstandard legal support work; • examine documents where the information and facts are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - straightforward and readily verifiable; - need little development; - require limited searches of reference, file, or historical material; and - entail comparisons with explicit criteria; • plan, coordinate, and/or resolve problems in support activities; • use a wide range of office software applications to prepare complex documents containing tables or graphs; and • use online legal resources to obtain information accessible over the Internet, as needed. 		

Level 1-5		750 Points		
Series	Contact Representative	GS-0962	Legal Assistance	GS-0986
	Legal Instruments Examining	GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining	GS-0998
Titles/Specialties	Contact Representative	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Legal Assistant (Court)	
	Legal Instruments Examining	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Claims Assistant (Loss and Damage)	<u>Illustration(s)</u>
	Legal Assistant	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Claims Examiner (Dependents and Estates)	<u>Illustration(s)</u>
FLD	<p>Knowledge of, and skill in applying, comprehensive legal regulations, techniques, and procedures that are not readily understood sufficient to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform assistance work requiring extensive searches of records, reference, or historical material and comparisons with complex, voluminous, or broadly written criteria; • use specialized, complicated techniques to complete assignments, such as comparing options or identifying conflicts; • develop, examine, adjust, reconsider, or authorize settlements; and • assist higher grade employees to plan strategies. 			

FACTOR 2 – SUPERVISORY CONTROLS

This factor covers the nature and extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor or another individual over the work performed, the employee’s responsibility, and the review of completed work. The supervisor determines what information the employee needs to perform the assignments; e.g., instructions, priorities, deadlines, objectives, and boundaries. The employee’s responsibility depends on the extent to which the supervisor expects the employee to develop the sequence and timing of the various aspects of the work, to modify or recommend modification of instructions, and to participate in establishing priorities and defining objectives. The degree of review of completed work depends upon the nature and extent of the review; e.g., close and detailed review of each phase of the assignment; detailed review of the completed assignment; spot check of finished work for accuracy; or review only for adherence to policy. The primary components of this factor are: **How Work Is Assigned, Employee Responsibility, and How Work Is Reviewed.**

NOTE: In the tables below, factor level description is abbreviated as FLD.

Level 2-1		25 Points
Series	<p>Contact Representative GS-0962</p> <p>Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963</p>	<p>Legal Assistance GS-0986</p> <p>Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998</p>
FLD	<p>How Work Is Assigned – The supervisor or designated employee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes specific assignments; and • provides clear and detailed oral and/or written instructions. <p>Employee Responsibility – The employee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performs the work as instructed; and • consults with the supervisor or designated employee on matters not specifically covered by the original instructions, or for clarification of instructions. <p>How Work Is Reviewed – The supervisor or designated employee closely reviews the work at various stages and at completion for accuracy, adequacy, and adherence to instructions and established procedures.</p>	

Level 2-2		125 Points
Series	Contact Representative GS-0962 Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963	Legal Assistance GS-0986 Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998
FLD	<p>How Work Is Assigned – The supervisor or designated employee provides assignments indicating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally what is to be done; • data and required information; • limitations; • deadlines; • quantities; and • priorities. <p>The supervisor provides specific instructions on new or unusual assignments that have clear precedents.</p> <p>Employee Responsibility – The employee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses initiative and works independently within the framework established by the supervisor in carrying out recurring assignments, such as obtaining, inserting, and correcting missing and incorrect data in the automated legal or claims tracking system; • follows limited or applicable instructions or procedures that specifically describe how the work is done, and the kind of adaptations or exceptions that can be made; and • refers specific problems not covered by the supervisor’s instructions or standard operating procedures to a supervisor or designated employee. <p>How Work Is Reviewed – The supervisor or designated employee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviews work to verify accuracy and conformance to procedures and any special instructions; • may spot check routine work products for accuracy; • reviews recurring assignments using established quality control procedures; • reviews new or difficult assignments; and • closely reviews situations with potential adverse impact in process and upon completion. 	

Level 2-3		275 Points
Series	<p>Contact Representative GS-0962</p> <p>Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963</p>	<p>Legal Assistance GS-0986</p> <p>Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998</p>
FLD	<p>How Work Is Assigned – The supervisor makes assignments by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outlining or discussing issues; and • defining objectives, priorities, and deadlines. <p>The supervisor or designated employee provides advice or additional specific instructions on new or unusual situations that do not have clear precedents.</p> <p>Employee Responsibility – The employee independently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plans the work; • resolves problems; • carries out successive steps of assignments; • follows instructions, policies, previous training, or accepted practices; • makes adjustments using accepted legal practices and procedures; • handles problems and/or deviations that arise in accordance with instructions, policies, and guidelines; and • refers controversial issues to the supervisor for direction. <p>How Work Is Reviewed – The supervisor or designated employee reviews completed work for technical soundness, appropriateness, and conformity to policies and requirements. The technical methods and procedures used in completing assignments seldom require detailed review.</p>	

FACTOR 3 – GUIDELINES

This factor covers the nature of guidelines and the judgment employees need to apply them. Individual assignments may vary in the specificity, applicability, and availability of guidelines; thus, the judgment employees use similarly varies. The existence of detailed plans and other instructions may make innovation in planning and conducting work unnecessary or undesirable. However, in the absence of guidance provided by prior agency experience with the task at hand or when objectives are broadly stated, the employee may use considerable judgment in developing an approach or planning the work. Here are examples of guidelines used in assistance work in the Legal and Kindred Group:

- Federal regulations covering program operations
- Administrative policies and locally developed guidance
- Agency policies and operational procedures
- Official tax publications
- Legal system documentation
- Local policies, handbooks, precedent cases, and operating procedures
- Reference and coding manuals
- Legal dictionaries and legal references
- Claims manuals

Do not confuse guidelines with the knowledge described under Factor 1 – Knowledge Required by the Position. Guidelines either provide reference data or impose certain constraints on applications. For example, in some of the functional areas covered by this standard, there may be several generally accepted methods of accomplishing work, perhaps set forth in an agency operating manual. However, in a particular office, the policy may be to use only one of those methods; or the policy may state specifically under what conditions the office may use each method. The primary components of this factor are: **Guidelines Used** and **Judgment Needed**.

NOTE: In the tables below, factor level description is abbreviated as FLD.

Level 3-1		25 Points
Series	Legal Assistance GS-0986	Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998
FLD	<p>Guidelines Used – The employee uses specific and detailed guidelines, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • desk procedures; • checklists; • oral and/or written instructions; and/or • work samples that cover all aspects of the assignment. <p>For example, the guidelines cover step-by-step procedures on how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sort, control, and route work or information; • perform simple tracking of transactions; and • identify routine information missing from documents. <p>Judgment Needed – The employee follows clear-cut steps outlined in the guidelines provided to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sort incoming or outgoing transactions; • sort documents into appropriate categories; • enter routine data elements into a manual or automated system; and • control the flow of specific documents. <p>The employee does not deviate from the outlined steps unless the supervisor or designated employee authorizes it.</p>	

Level 3-2		125 Points
Series	Contact Representative GS-0962	Legal Assistance GS-0986
FLD	Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998
<p>Guidelines Used – The employee uses readily available guidelines in the form of agency policies and procedures that are clearly applicable to most transactions. These guidelines consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legal regulations; • dictionaries and references; • computer manuals; • office manuals; • office policies and procedures; • directives; • general decisions; and • agency guides. <p>Judgment Needed – The employee uses judgment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine the most appropriate guidelines or procedures to follow based on the nature of specific assignments; • adapt guidelines in specific cases, and make minor deviations; and • refer issues that do not readily fit instructions or are outside of existing guidelines to the supervisor or a designated employee for resolution. 		

Level 3-3		275 Points
Series	<p>Contact Representative GS-0962</p> <p>Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963</p>	<p>Legal Assistance GS-0986</p> <p>Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998</p>
FLD	<p>Guidelines Used – The employee uses guidelines that have gaps in specificity and are not applicable to all work situations. When completing a transaction, the employee may have to rely on experienced judgment, rather than guides, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fill in gaps; • identify sources of information; and • make working assumptions about what transpired. <p>Judgment Needed – The employee uses judgment to select the most appropriate guideline and decide how to complete the various transactions. For example, the employee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reconstructs incomplete files; • devises more efficient methods for procedural processing; • gathers and organizes information for inquiries; and • resolves problems referred by others. <p>In some situations, guidelines do not apply directly to assignments and require the employee to make adaptations to cover new and unusual work situations.</p>	

FACTOR 4 – COMPLEXITY

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 primary components of this factor are: **Nature of Assignment, What Needs To Be Done, and Difficulty and Originality Involved.**

NOTE: In the tables below, factor level description is abbreviated as FLD.
Factor 4 illustrations are located in Appendix F4.

Level 4-2		75 Points									
Series	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 35%; padding: 5px;">Contact Representative GS-0962</td> <td style="width: 30%;"></td> <td style="width: 35%; padding: 5px;">Legal Assistance GS-0986</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963</td> <td></td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998</td> </tr> </table>	Contact Representative GS-0962		Legal Assistance GS-0986	Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963		Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998				
Contact Representative GS-0962		Legal Assistance GS-0986									
Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963		Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998									
Titles/Specialties	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 35%; padding: 5px;">Contact Representative Illustration(s)</td> <td style="width: 30%;"></td> <td style="width: 35%; padding: 5px;">Legal Assistant (Court) Illustration(s)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Legal Instruments Examiner Illustration(s)</td> <td></td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Claims Assistant Illustration(s)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Legal Assistant Illustration(s)</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Contact Representative Illustration(s)		Legal Assistant (Court) Illustration(s)	Legal Instruments Examiner Illustration(s)		Claims Assistant Illustration(s)	Legal Assistant Illustration(s)			
Contact Representative Illustration(s)		Legal Assistant (Court) Illustration(s)									
Legal Instruments Examiner Illustration(s)		Claims Assistant Illustration(s)									
Legal Assistant Illustration(s)											
FLD	<p>Nature of Assignment – Work consists of related steps, processes, and standard explanations of methods or programs in the function. Assignments may also be designed to prepare the employee for more difficult work. The data in legal documents are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • factual in nature; • usually designed to record specific items of routinely required information in a uniform manner; and • used for only one primary purpose or action. <p>Supporting documents contain direct, firsthand evidence and are usually considered as conclusively establishing the point in question.</p> <p>What Needs To Be Done – The employee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • checks and performs initial processing of legal documents received in the office; • answers inquiries about applications, legal instruments, forms, and/or benefits; • obtains missing or incomplete information as needed; • compares information submitted with information previously recorded; and • considers and evaluates sources of information, appropriateness of citations, and legal requirements of documents, legal instruments, or claims. <p>Difficulty and Originality Involved – The employee recognizes different procedures required to process documentation and assist customers. Choices are limited. Difficulties encountered include meeting strict deadlines and keeping track of large quantities of facts, figures, information, and paperwork.</p>										

Level 4-3		150 Points	
Series	Contact Representative	GS-0962	Legal Assistance GS-0986
	Legal Instruments Examining	GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998
Titles/Specialties	Contact Representative	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Claims Assistant <u>Illustration(s)</u>
	Legal Instruments Examiner	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Claims Examiner (Loss and Damage) <u>Illustration(s)</u>
	Legal Assistant	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Claims Examiner (Dependents and Estates) <u>Illustration(s)</u>
	Legal Assistant (Court)		
	Nature of Assignment – Work consists of different and unrelated processes, methods, and sequences of tasks.		
FLD	What Needs To Be Done – The employee:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyzes facts and identifies issues; • defines the problems; • determines courses of action from many alternatives; • searches, isolates, and determines the interrelationships among available information; • assesses a variety of situations that depend on the particulars of the case and/or the submitting party; • selects appropriate resources and applies those resources to the problem at hand; • evaluates records in relation to legal requirements; • develops recommendations for problem resolution; and • adjusts and authorizes settlements. 		
<p>Difficulty and Originality Involved – The employee determines what needs to be done including choosing the order of research necessary, the sequence of steps, and the manner in which findings are presented. Actions may be complicated by situations where the facts are not clearly established. Verification or development of information from external sources is frequently required. The organization and presentation of information on documents can vary substantially. The same document is used for different purposes or actions. Successive submissions of the same type of document may involve different kinds of information.</p>			

FACTOR 5 – SCOPE AND EFFECT

This factor covers the relationships 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. Effect measures such things as whether the work output facilitates the work of others, provides timely services of a personal nature, or impacts on the adequacy of research conclusions. The concept of effect alone does not provide sufficient information to properly understand and evaluate the impact of the position. The scope of the work completes the picture allowing consistent evaluations. Only consider the effect of properly performed work. The primary components of this factor are: **Scope of the Work** and **Effect of the Work**.

NOTE: In the tables below, factor level description is abbreviated as FLD.
Factor 5 illustrations are located in Appendix F5.

Level 5-1		25 Points	
Series	Legal Assistance GS-0986	Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998	
Titles	Legal Assistant Illustration(s)	Claims Assistant Illustration(s)	
FLD	<p>Scope of the Work – Work involves repetitive or closely related tasks in support of the office, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sorting and routing documents or transactions; or • verifying repetitive kinds of data. <p>The assistant applies well-established rules that are specific to individual transactions. Work is also designed to familiarize the assistant with higher level duties.</p> <p>Effect of the Work – Work affects the work of higher grade employees within the immediate office. Work contributes to the efficiency of the office, but has little or no impact beyond the immediate office.</p>		

Level 5-2		75 Points	
Series	Contact Representative GS-0962	Legal Assistance GS-0986	
	Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998	
Titles/Specialties	Contact Representative <u>Illustration(s)</u>	Legal Assistant (Court) <u>Illustration(s)</u>	
	Legal Instruments Examiner	Claims Assistant <u>Illustration(s)</u>	
	Legal Assistant <u>Illustration(s)</u>		
FLD	<p>Scope of the Work – Work involves specific rules, regulations, or procedures. Work is constrained by well-defined and precise conditions. Work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewing documents for missing information; • searching records and files; • verifying and maintaining records of transactions; and • answering routine procedural questions. 		
	<p>Effect of the Work – Work affects the quality of services performed by the office. Work provides the basis for subsequent actions taken by the organization to provide services to the public.</p>		

Level 5-3		150 Points	
Series	Contact Representative	GS-0962	Legal Assistance GS-0986
	Legal Instruments Examining	GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998
Titles/Specialties	Contact Representative	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Claims Examiner <u>Illustration(s)</u>
	Legal Instruments Examiner	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Claims Examiner (Loss and Damage) <u>Illustration(s)</u>
	Legal Assistant	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	Claims Examiner (Dependents and Estates) <u>Illustration(s)</u>
	Legal Assistant (Court)	<u>Illustration(s)</u>	
FLD	<p>Scope of the Work – Work involves treating a variety of routine problems, questions, or situations within the work environment. The employee advises and assists applicants or other individuals requesting benefits or services with a variety of problems, questions, or situations in conformance with established criteria. Work may involve subjective considerations, such as looking for misrepresentations, fraud, or other illegal activity.</p>		
	<p>Effect of the Work – Work affects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the accurate and timely attainment of licenses, permits, or other legal documents, rights, or privileges; • the accurate and timely resolution of claims; and • the economic well being of individuals requesting benefits, claims, and/or services. 		

FACTOR 6 – PERSONAL CONTACTS AND FACTOR 7 – PURPOSE OF CONTACTS

These factors include face-to-face and remote dialogue – e.g., telephone, email, and video conferences – with persons not in the supervisory chain. (NOTE: Personal contacts with supervisors are under Factor 2 – Supervisory Controls.) The levels of these factors consider/take into account what is necessary to make the initial contact, the difficulty of communicating with those contacted, the setting in which the contact takes place, and the nature of the discourse. The setting describes how well the employee and those contacted recognize their relative roles and authorities. The nature of the discourse defines the reason for the communication and the context or environment in which the communication takes place. For example, the reason for a communication may be to exchange factual information or to negotiate. The communication may take place in an environment of significant controversy and/or with people of differing viewpoints, goals, and objectives.

Above the lowest levels, credit points under Factors 6 and 7 only for contacts that are essential for successful performance of the work and that have a demonstrable impact on the difficulty and responsibility of the work performed. Factors 6 and 7 are inter-dependent. Accordingly, use the same personal contacts for selection of both the Factor 6 and the Factor 7 levels.

Determine the appropriate level for Personal Contacts and the corresponding level for Purpose of Contacts. Obtain the point value for these factors from the intersection of the two levels as shown on the [Point Assignment Chart](#) at the end of this section.

PERSONAL CONTACTS					
	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; width: 50%;">Contact Representative GS-0962</td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 50%;">Legal Assistance GS-0986</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998</td> </tr> </table>	Contact Representative GS-0962	Legal Assistance GS-0986	Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998
Contact Representative GS-0962	Legal Assistance GS-0986				
Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998				
Level 1	Other employees and support personnel in the immediate office or related units within the agency. Limited contact with employees outside the office. Contacts at this level are of a routine and recurring nature.				
Level 2	Employees in the same agency and/or with members of the general public in a moderately structured setting, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applicants; • retirees; • beneficiaries; • Federal Reserve representatives; • bank employees; • taxpayers; • court personnel; or • other individuals related to court processes. 				

PURPOSE OF CONTACTS			
Contact Representative		GS-0962	Legal Assistance
Legal Instruments Examining		GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining
			GS-0986
			GS-0998
Level A	To acquire or exchange information or facts needed to complete an assignment.		
Level B	To plan or arrange work efforts. To coordinate and schedule activities. To resolve problems relating to documents or procedures. To provide explanations of why approval was not given, discuss measures that might be taken to obtain approval in the future, and explain alternative options that may be available.		

POINT ASSIGNMENT CHART			
Contact Representative		GS-0962	Legal Assistance
Legal Instruments Examining		GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining
			GS-0986
			GS-0998
		Purpose of Contacts	
Level		A	B
Personal Contacts	1	30	60
	2	45	75

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FACTOR 8 – PHYSICAL DEMANDS

NOTE: Laws and regulations governing pay for irregular or intermittent duty involving unusual physical hardship or hazard are in *section 5545(d), of title 5, United States Code, and Subpart I of part 550 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.*

NOTE: In the table below, factor level description is abbreviated as FLD.

Level 8-1		5 Points
Series	Contact Representative GS-0962	Legal Assistance GS-0986
	Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998
FLD	The work is mainly sedentary, but may require periods of walking, standing, bending, driving an automobile, etc. Employees frequently carry case files and other similar materials. The work does not require any special physical effort or ability.	

FACTOR 9 – WORK ENVIRONMENT

NOTE: Laws and regulations governing pay for irregular or intermittent duty involving unusual physical hardship or hazard are in *section 5545(d), of title 5, United States Code, and Subpart I of part 550 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.*

NOTE: In the table below, factor level description is abbreviated as FLD.

Level 9-1		5 Points
Series	Contact Representative GS-0962	Legal Assistance GS-0986
	Legal Instruments Examining GS-0963	Claims Assistance and Examining GS-0998
FLD	The work area is usually an office setting that is adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated. The work environment involves everyday risks or discomforts that require normal safety precautions.	

GRADE CONVERSION TABLE

Convert total points on all evaluation factors to General Schedule grades using the following table. The shaded area reflects grade levels commonly attained in this job family.

Point Range	GS Grade
190-250	1
255-450	2
455-650	3
655-850	4
855-1100	5
1105-1350	6
1355-1600	7
1605-1850	8
1855-2100	9
2105-2350	10
2355-2750	11
2755-3150	12
3155-3600	13
3605-4050	14
4055-up	15

APPENDICES

APPENDIX F1 – FACTOR 1 ILLUSTRATIONS

Level 1-2: Legal Assistant, GS-0986

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, basic rules, procedures, and operations sufficient to:

- provide basic assistance in the office;
- provide routine information and assistance to applicants or petitioners and/or their representatives in response to telephone, walk-in, or written inquiries;
- locate and review case files and/or other material to obtain status of cases; and
- prepare routine written correspondence from personal, telephonic, and/or written inquiries from applicants, petitioners, attorneys, and/or their representatives regarding the status of individual applications or petitions.

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Knowledge of, and skill in applying, basic rules, processes, and procedures concerning agency land information sufficient to:

- review applicant land case files for necessary legal documents;
- input abstract acreage figures from survey plats into automated records and update databases; and
- provide other support and assistance work in the office.

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Level 1-2: Legal Assistant (Court), GS-0986

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, basic rules, procedures, and operations of courts sufficient to:

- maintain a legal docket to advise staff of due dates of various filings of legal materials;
- inform staff of court appearances;
- organize documents and exhibits for pending cases; and
- establish legal and related files, including investigative files (e.g., quarterly progress reports, monthly case lists, special assignment lists, and opening and closing reports), litigation files (evidence, documents, administrative proceedings material, civil cases, and criminal referrals), and other legal files (opinions or briefs).

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Level 1-2: Claims Assistant, GS-0998

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, established rules, processes, and procedures concerning claims sufficient to:

- examine applications for benefits or claims submitted by a claimant when they arrive in the office;
- verify that routine items, such as the identity of the claimant are on the document;
- return incomplete applications to the applicant with a form requesting additional information;
- consolidate claims files or related folders; and
- review official records in the agency records center to verify information on applications.

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Level 1-3: Contact Representative, GS-0962

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, standardized rules, processes, and procedures concerning land management sufficient to:

- provide written and oral information to the public regarding land status records, land sales, timber sales, mining, recreation, adoptions of wild horses and burros, and map purchases;
- ask questions to get a clear and accurate understanding of information sought by the public; and
- provide other support and assistance work in the office.

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Knowledge of, and skill in applying, standardized rules, processes, and procedures concerning outpatient and inpatient medical care in civilian facilities available under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS) sufficient to:

- provide answers to written, telephonic, electronic, and personal inquiries;
- assist patients and medical staff in completing forms; and
- verify patients' eligibility for benefits by referring to documents, such as dependent or active duty identification card, date of birth, certificate of service, and unit assignment orders.

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Level 1-3: Legal Assistant, GS-0986

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, standardized rules, processes, and procedures concerning commonly utilized general reference sources, legal research tools, and computer processing sufficient to:

- gather information and assist attorneys with basic research;
- type documents, such as certificates of service, cover letters, correspondence, reports, pleadings that include tables of contents and tables of citations; and
- assemble briefs and/or memoranda, assuring consistent use of acceptable forms of citation, conformity to format, and other pertinent individual legal requirements for the various courts.

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(continued)

Level 1-3: Legal Assistant, GS-0986 (continued)

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, standardized rules, processes, and procedures in a legal office sufficient to:

- provide assistance to attorneys in the office;
- answer a variety of general inquiries from customers that relate to the functions of field activities, procedures, and office practices;
- compose replies to inquiries of a general nature;
- furnish information concerning the laws administered by the department, its regulations and procedures, and the status of various cases; and
- compose transmittal letters to be sent to private attorneys, employees, employers, and court assistants.

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Knowledge of, and skill in applying, standardized rules, processes, and procedures concerning funding requirements and legal contracts sufficient to:

- review project files and current funding authority documents to prepare contracts;
- provide initial review of cooperative agreements or contract files to determine if they contain appropriate provisions;
- obtain appropriate data to prepare annual contributions or cost-sharing contracts; and
- prepare transmittal letters containing complicated formatting.

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Level 1-3: Legal Assistant (Court), GS-0986

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, standardized court rules, processes, and procedures sufficient to:

- provide answers to written, telephonic, electronic, and personal inquiries regarding court proceedings and records;
- prepare documents, such as warrants, subpoenas, and hearing notices;
- notify appropriate parties concerning the scheduling of court hearings, postponements, cancellations, and rescheduling of court activities; and
- collect fees due to the court and maintain record of fees paid or due.

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Level 1-3: Claims Assistant, GS-0998

Knowledge of, and skill in applying:

- standardized rules, processes, and procedures concerning claims processing; and
- basic arithmetic

sufficient to:

- review claims and correct amounts for allowable items;
- use information furnished by the claimants to determine the appropriate provisions under which claims should be submitted and the nature and amount of supporting evidence required to process the claim;
- assist claimants in preparing supporting evidence;
- examine files;
- determines allowable items; and
- calculate the correct amounts for allowed items.

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(continued)

Level 1-3: Claims Assistant, GS-0998 (continued)

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, standardized rules, processes, and procedures concerning legal hospital documentation requirements sufficient to:

- review in-patient admissions documents and emergency room records and prepare subsequent reports;
- retrieve computerized information on causes of injury, names of parties involved, and names of insurance companies and attorneys;
- request police reports from local and State agencies, and review military police blotters on a daily basis for potential claims information;
- create and forward demand letters to persons or companies that may be liable if recovery action is indicated;
- review files and prepare reports for claims involved in Federal court litigation; and
- draft letters to attorneys and insurance companies, using legal technical vocabulary.

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Level 1-4: Contact Representative, GS-0962

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, an extensive body of rules and procedures concerning benefits processing sufficient to:

- clarify benefit processes and procedures to customers;
- conduct personal or telephone interviews;
- search records or guidelines;
- provide full explanations in response to specific inquiries relating to the agency;
- resolve problems and issues;
- evaluate the extent of customers' knowledge of the options and choices open to them;
- explain the requirements placed on them by laws and regulations; and
- review records and contact other offices to learn the status of pending actions, the reasons for delays or changes, and what action or additional information is required to resolve the case.

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Level 1-4: Legal Instruments Examiner, GS-0963

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, an extensive body of rules and procedures concerning securities sufficient to:

- examine evidence necessary to support standard and nonstandard transactions, process claims, or establish entitlement to official information;
- review previous correspondence and evidence in files in relation to new information, taking into account relevance to the requested transaction; and
- determine status of interest payments and entitlement to official information; and
- support action to be taken on applications for disposition or relief using information obtained from computer generated listings and on-line computer displays of securities accounts.

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(continued)

Level 1-4: Legal Instruments Examiner, GS-0963 (continued)

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, an extensive body of rules and procedures concerning the examination of standard and nonstandard applications for licenses and permits involving firearms and explosives sufficient to:

- examine information on the applications concerning the legal manufacture, sale, collection, and use of firearms and explosives;
- consider such things as type of activity (e.g., pawnbroker, collector, dealer, manufacturer); kind of business ownership; proposed storage facilities; quantities of explosives involved; and criminal convictions, if any;
- initiate record checks;
- secure related law enforcement and court documents;
- make various contacts to verify facts or obtain additional information;
- refer probable violations to field investigation and inspection personnel; and
- compare accumulated information with pertinent records, files, and legal requirements to resolve issues.

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Knowledge of, and skill in applying, an extensive body of rules and procedures concerning the examination of standard and nonstandard applications, attachments, and technical showings for private radio station licenses sufficient to:

- consider type of activity, frequency, power emission, and other operational and technical details, for service eligibility;
- compare information provided with available records, maps, charts, and previous filings;
- compare requested frequencies to standard technical specifications and clearances; and
- answer questions and provide information by phone, mail, and in person regarding certain published regulatory and policy specifications, status of applications, filing and processing procedures, and other functions of the licensing activity.

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Knowledge of, and skill in applying, an extensive body of rules and procedures concerning international standards (treaties and conventions) and national maritime policies sufficient to:

- examine documents for application of procedures and to renew all forms of merchant marine documents, licenses, and certificates of competency;
- help customers renew licenses;
- resolve documentation inconsistencies; and
- establish eligibility for licenses by reviewing information on drug tests, medical qualifications, professional experience factors, training, and character requirements.

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Level 1-4: Legal Assistant, GS-0986

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, an extensive body of rules and procedures concerning legal documents used in the department and other Government agencies sufficient to:

- assist attorneys in researching pleadings, briefs, and other legal documents on questions relating to general law, administrative law, departmental decisions, and regulations;
- assess specialized source material available in the library, including Attorney General opinions, Comptroller General decisions, past decisions of the agency head, General Counsel's opinions, and departmental manuals, circulars, field letters, and regulations;
- use automated legal databases and the internet; and
- select and compile information to be used as evidence.

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Knowledge of, and skill in applying, an extensive body of rules and procedures concerning the Social Security Administration and the Department of Justice sufficient to:

- review civil complaints;
- determine the nature of the action;
- coordinate the administrative handling of each assigned case;
- review copies of court decisions in each case to determine whether the decision is adverse to the agency and, if so, request appeal recommendation from appropriate offices of the Social Security Administration;
- review attorneys' fee orders to ascertain if fee amounts are within statutory limits for the particular case; and
- type documents, such as certificates of service, cover letters, correspondence, reports, pleadings that include tables of contents, tables of citations, statutory appendices, and financial and statistical tables.

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Level 1-4: Legal Assistant (Court), GS-986

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, an extensive body of judicial rules and procedures sufficient to:

- examine case files to determine sufficiency of documentation;
- identify material that may be pertinent to issues or cases;
- identify and resolve issues or problems of court procedures and court documentation; and
- use personal computers to prepare legal documents that require legal research.

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Level 1-4: Claims Examiner, GS-0998

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, an extensive body of rules and procedures concerning claims, benefits, and/or obligations sufficient to:

- analyze issues and make determinations on cases;
- explain current criteria for benefits or obligations that apply directly to individuals;
- review guidelines and regulations to determine the specific provisions that are applicable to each case;
- review records presented by an individual or designated source within the agency to determine the status of the individual's case, and time span expected for processing the case;
- determine claim amounts allowed per line item, considering such issues as depreciation, insurance, preexisting damage, and salvage value; and
- deduct amounts recovered by claimants from insurers' and carriers' money.

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Level 1-4: Claims Examiner (Loss and Damage), GS-0998

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, an extensive body of rules and procedures concerning loss and damage of military personal property sufficient to:

- investigate and evaluate data and other evidence of property damage and losses to household baggage, household goods, military clothing, and privately owned motor vehicles;
- conduct field interviews;
- obtain statements from witnesses;
- visually inspect damaged items including vehicles and other objects of claim activity;
- prepare affidavits of claimants and identify all pertinent facts in narrative form; and
- prepare comprehensive investigative reports of damages or losses and provide recommendations as to cause.

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Level 1-4: Claims Examiner (Dependents and Estates), GS-0998

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, an extensive body of rules, regulations, techniques, and procedures concerning dependents and estates sufficient to:

- render determination and annual redetermination for parents, parents-in-law, and older incapacitated children who are claimed for basic allowance for quarters (BAQ), medical care, transportation, and other benefits by members on active duty and the retired rolls;
- determine (in cases of unsatisfactory resolution) whether members are entitled to continue to receive the BAQ;
- initiate action for recovery of the BAQ; and
- counsel complainants on options for recourse under the garnishment law.

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Level 1-5: Contact Representative, GS-0962

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, comprehensive rules, regulations, techniques, and procedures sufficient to:

- review the particular circumstances and goals of individuals in order to apply the combination of benefits, services, or regulatory requirements that will best meet their needs over a span of time;
- advise individuals on all aspects of benefits and services that should be considered in deciding the most advantageous choice or action;
- describe alternative ways of crediting some types of service (e.g., military service, service before a specified time, or service involving wages above or below a specified amount);
- demonstrate alternative formulas for computing benefits with offsetting advantages and disadvantages;
- discuss the possibility of transfer of credits from one program to another and the possibility of waiving certain benefits in order to meet income limitations or dual compensation restrictions; and
- explain optional elections of effective dates based on various age and service combinations, additional protection or survivor benefits, different payment plans, and similar matters.

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Level 1-5: Legal Instruments Examiner, GS-0963

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, comprehensive rules, regulations, techniques, and procedures concerning applications and amendments for registration of broker-dealers, investment advisers, transfer agents, and municipal securities dealers sufficient to:

- examine applications and amendments to determine possible conflict of interest situations, fraudulent business practices, and/or illegal fee structures;

- compare information contained in the application with information found in the amendments; and
- make determinations concerning conflicts and discrepancies in applications and amendments submitted for registration.

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Knowledge of, and skill in applying, comprehensive rules, regulations, techniques, and procedures concerning beneficiary estates, the protection of benefit rights, and the identification of problems requiring action by field employees or attorneys sufficient to:

- examine instruments and documents and determine rights of beneficiaries;
- review and approve petitions and statements of accounts that have been submitted during court proceedings or that are submitted by non-court-appointed fiduciaries;
- determine fund needs;
- authorize release of funds from restricted accounts;
- approve the liquidation of bonds;
- adjust fund allowances for beneficiaries upon request according to rules and procedures; and
- advise fiduciaries of other Federal and State benefits to which the beneficiary may be entitled.

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Knowledge of, and skill in applying, comprehensive rules, regulations, techniques, and procedures concerning government bonds sufficient to:

- determine whether irregularities affect the validity of the bond, and whether the bond is sufficient to protect the interests of the Government as required by statute, regulation, or agreement;
- examine bonds, such as:
 - advance payment bonds in connection with Medicare contracts;
 - performance and payment bonds given in support of contracts for supplies, services, and construction contracts;
 - bonds given to secure the safekeeping and return of Government property;
 - bonds given in connection with structures erected in navigable waters;
 - annual bid bonds;
 - consents of surety; and
- identify irregularities with bonds and supporting documents, such as contracts, wills, trust indentures, powers of attorney, and court orders.

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Level 1-5: Legal Assistant, GS-0986

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, comprehensive rules, regulations, techniques, and procedures concerning civil penalties from mine operators sufficient to:

- make computations to determine debts;
- attempt to collect civil penalties from mine operators prior to preparation of collection packages for referral to the Department of Justice for enforced collection;
- review reports of civil penalty accounts to recommend collection strategy; and
- compute additional charges due using rates that differ from case to case and according to kind of charge.

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Knowledge of, and skill in applying, regulations and agency manuals, court decisions and precedents, Federal sentencing laws and guidelines, outstanding warrants, and State extradition law sufficient to:

- review legal instruments from law enforcement organizations (e.g., police departments) and make appropriate sentencing determinations;
- investigate inmate's prior criminal history records and track prior incarcerations for lawful application of jail time credit in response to various law enforcement agency inquiries; and
- establish appropriate release dates from custody for inmates.

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Level 1-5: Claims Assistant (Loss and Damage), GS-0998

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, comprehensive rules, regulations, techniques, and procedures concerning reimbursement of medical expenses rendered in the treatment of injured personnel as a result of negligent acts by third parties sufficient to:

- assist specialists or other legal employees to plan strategy in presenting the Government in its most favorable position by citing State and Federal laws, including contractual laws governing each factual case; and
- assist probation officers or their designees in finalizing an equitable payment plan in order to preclude placing an undue financial burden upon the responsible party.

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Level 1-5: Claims Examiner (Dependents and Estates), GS-0998

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, a comprehensive body of rules and procedures concerning claims and benefits regarding military dependents and estates sufficient to:

- develop and adjudicate:
 - applications for dependent benefits containing insufficient evidence; or
 - claims of an infrequent or nonrecurring nature; and
- determine the actual degree of dependency on the member of the armed services based upon information contained in an affidavit executed by the claimed persons, or information presented on behalf of the claimants.

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APPENDIX F4 – FACTOR 4 ILLUSTRATIONS

Level 4-2: Contact Representative, GS-0962

Nature of Assignment – Engages in on-the-job training concerning the organization and functions of the agency and effective contact techniques.

What Needs To Be Done – Studies informational, procedural, and regulatory material. Observes experienced contact representatives perform assignments.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Assignments increase in difficulty as training progresses.

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Level 4-2: Legal Instruments Examiner, GS-0963

Nature of Assignment – Reviews legal instruments and supporting documents, and assists customers.

What Needs To Be Done – Reviews information on legal instruments to determine whether they conform to governing provisions and whether the submitting party has met all requirements. The employee also reviews support documentation to insure that no conditions or conflicts exist that might preclude approval. Examples of such documents include:

- proof of birth;
- proof of age;
- proof of marriage;
- other required proofs;
- available records;
- database extracts; and
- historical material

The employee also provides information to customers regarding requirements for legal instruments or other relevant information.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Difficulties encountered include meeting strict deadlines and keeping track of large quantities of facts, figures, information, and paperwork. The employee must:

- pay attention to detail;
- be meticulous and accurate in searching file material and documenting records;
- make precise notations; and
- make exact calculations.

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Level 4-2: Legal Assistant, GS-0986

Nature of Assignment – Provides assistance to applicants or petitioners and/or their representatives.

What Needs To Be Done – Performs the following duties:

- presents routine information in response to telephone, walk-in, or written inquiries;
- prepares routine written correspondence in reply to personal, telephone, and/or written inquiries;
- locates and reviews case files and/or other material to obtain status of cases;
- checks citations on decisions;
- prepares evidence and exhibits; and

- routes court- and Board-ordered dispositions in accordance with the orders issued.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Recognizes difficulties that arise from keeping track of large quantities of facts, information, and paperwork and applies prescribed procedures to maintain data.

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Level 4-2: Legal Assistant (Court), GS-0986

Nature of Assignment – Provides administrative support for the Court.

What Needs To Be Done – Assists individuals with questions concerning various legal information required on documents and in finding the appropriate courtroom. Assists employees of the Court, local law enforcement officers, and prosecutors in drafting:

- complaints;
- subpoenas;
- warrants;
- commitments; and
- other documents incidental to the functions of the court.

Receives court fees and maintains fees records.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Recognizes different procedures to evaluate inquiries and determine the appropriate response. Considers different legal requirements when assisting individuals in preparing court forms and official documents. Accurately records information on fees and keeps fee records up-to-date.

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Level 4-2: Claims Assistant, GS-0998

Nature of Assignment – Processes claim forms.

What Needs To Be Done – Performs the following duties:

- reviews sources of information and consistency of legal citations on claims forms;
- obtains and processes supporting documentation when required to process a claim;
- compares and evaluates information on claims and supporting documentation; and
- returns claims forms to claimants for additional information if needed.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Recognizes different procedures to evaluate sources of information, appropriateness of citations, and legal requirements for claims. Determines whether necessary documentation or information needed to process documents has been provided.

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Level 4-3: Contact Representative, GS-0962

Nature of Assignment – Provides information concerning alternative options and entitlements.

What Needs To Be Done – Provides information on alternative sources of care, medical feasibility of treatment options, billing, claims processing, and entitlement. For a variety of benefits and/or services, explains issues to customers that affect rates, payments, entitlements, waivers, and reconsideration rights.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Determines the interrelationships of available information and data.

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Level 4-3: Legal Instruments Examiner, GS-0963

Nature of Assignment – Reviews legal instruments, such as loan requests.

What Needs To Be Done – Reviews multiple types of loan requests (e.g., direct participation and development) that involve various business forms, such as:

- proprietorships;
- partnerships;
- profit and non-profit corporations; and
- local and State development corporations.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Determines whether the submitting party has provided required documentation and that the instruments are adequate in content to achieve the intended agency lien position.

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Nature of Assignment – Reviews legal instruments to prepare proofs of claim.

What Needs To Be Done – Reviews a variety of claim documents such as:

- probate estates; and
- debtors' schedules in cases involving bankruptcy.

Coordinates and advises U.S. Attorney's Office regarding tracking of cases referred to the Department of Justice for collection.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Interprets criteria, such as outstanding rights or provisions that may affect final recommendations. Determines whether instruments conform to legal provisions, policies, precedent decisions, procedures, and other criteria.

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(continued)

Level 4-3: Legal Instruments Examiner, GS-0963 (continued)

Nature of Assignment – Reviews and evaluates a variety of maritime documents.

What Needs To Be Done – Reviews maritime documents to determine eligibility for credentials. Resolves inconsistencies between applications and official sea service abstracts, medical reports, or criminal records.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Determines whether documents conform to standards set in Federal regulations, international maritime training standards, and national maritime policies.

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Level 4-3: Legal Assistant, GS-0986

Nature of Assignment – Conducts legal research concerning past court decisions.

What Needs To Be Done – Performs the following duties:

- researches pleadings, briefs, and other legal documents;
- utilizes automated legal databases and the internet; and
- selects and compiles information that provides insight on legal issues and situations.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Chooses the order of research necessary to obtain required information. The situations on documents may not match the issue being researched.

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Level 4-3: Claims Assistant, GS-0998

Nature of Assignment – Processes claims for offers of settlement.

What Needs To Be Done – Performs the following duties:

- inspects documents and property in question;
- reviews offers of settlement; and
- advises claimant regarding acceptance or rejection of offers of settlement.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Determines accuracy, propriety, and sufficiency of evidence.

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Level 4-3: Claims Examiner (Loss and Damage), GS-0998

Nature of Assignment – Examines documentation for claims concerning loss and damage.

What Needs To Be Done – Reviews all supporting documents and verifies information. Evaluates whether evidence supports actions against contractors. Authorizes payment, when appropriate.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Determines acceptance or rejection of claims.

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Level 4-3: Claims Examiner (Dependents and Estates), GS-0998

Nature of Assignment – Examines documentation for claims concerning dependents.

What Needs To Be Done – Evaluates information contained in an affidavit executed by the claimant or information presented in behalf of the claimant to ensure validity and accuracy. Authorizes payments.

Difficulty and Originality Involved – Determines whether dependents are entitled to receive dependent benefits as provided by law.

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APPENDIX F5 – FACTOR 5 ILLUSTRATIONS**Level 5-1: Legal Assistant, GS-0986**

Scope of Work – Reviews legal documents, investigations, applications, or other legal forms and information. Establishes and maintains case files. Assigns case numbers to files. Provides assistance to applicants on routine inquiries. Organizes documents, exhibits, and other legal materials.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the work of higher grade employees within the immediate organization.

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Level 5-1: Claims Assistant, GS-0998

Scope of the Work – Reviews claims documents to verify the identity of the claimant, completeness of factual information on the documents, and timely filing of the documents. Compares information on the claims document with official records submitted by the applicant or requests verification of the information on the document from official records located at a records center. Consolidates duplicate claims files, traces non-record mail, and processes Notices of Death.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the work of higher grade employees within the immediate organization.

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Level 5-2: Contact Representative, GS-0962

Scope of the Work – Conducts personal or telephone interviews. Searches records or guidelines to determine answers or resolve problems. Provides full explanations in response to specific inquiries relating to agency programs.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the accuracy or reliability of transactions the office performs.

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Level 5-2: Legal Assistant, GS-0986

Scope of the Work – Assists attorneys with basic research. Types briefs, including tables of contents, tables of citations, statutory appendices, certificates of service, cover letters, correspondence, reports, pleadings, and financial and statistical tables.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the quality of the legal services the office provides.

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Level 5-2: Legal Assistant (Court), GS-0986

Scope of the Work – Answers routine procedural inquiries. Receives visitors and directs them to the appropriate court room or office. Maintains records and files. Verifies information on documents before filing.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the quality of services provided by the court and court employees.

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Level 5-2: Claims Assistant, GS-0998

Scope of the Work – Assists claimants in the preparation of supporting evidence. Searches files for information related to claims. Retrieves computerized information concerning claims and names of attorneys. Uses personal computer and word processing software to prepare correspondence and memoranda.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the accurate and timely resolution of claims.

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Level 5-3: Contact Representative, GS-0962

Scope of the Work – Advises and assists customers with a variety of problems, questions, or situations. Helps customers outline their situation and state the reasons for their inquiry. Explains various benefit options, qualifying conditions, and reporting requirements that apply to the customer.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the operations within the office and the ability of individuals to receive benefits and/or services.

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Level 5-3: Legal Instruments Examiner, GS-0963

Scope of the Work – Examines documents to adjust, reinstate, suspend, terminate, and otherwise resolve issues. Reviews previous correspondence and evidence in files. Reviews computer generated listings to determine status of entitlement or to support action to be taken on applications for disposition or relief. Makes various contacts to verify facts or obtain additional information. Compares accumulated information with pertinent records, files, and legal requirements and issues. Recommends denial or revocation of legal instruments.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the ability of individuals, partnerships, corporations, and others to ascertain facts, such as ownership of or interest in property, or to carry out transactions that affect personal livelihoods.

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Level 5-3: Legal Assistant, GS-0986

Scope of the Work – Searches pleadings, briefs, and other legal documents on questions relating to general law, administrative law, departmental decisions, and regulations for use by higher graded employees. Utilizes automated legal databases to conduct searches for information to be used as evidence. Reviews copies of court decisions to determine whether the decisions are adverse to the agency. Compiles information for use by the office.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the operations within the legal office.

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Level 5-3: Legal Assistant (Court), GS-0986

Scope of the Work – Provides assistance in administering judicial services of the court. Maintains court calendar. Examines case files to determine sufficiency of documentation. Prepares court transcripts, court orders, judgments, and other documents incidental to the functions of the court. Resolves problems pertaining to court procedures.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the accurate and timely provision of court services and documentation.

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Level 5-3: Claims Examiner, GS-0998

Scope of the Work – Reviews guidelines and regulations to determine the specific provisions that are applicable to each claims case. Reviews records presented by an individual or designated contacts to obtain information and facts surrounding the claim. Determines the status of the individual's case, time span expected for processing the case, and other factors.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the ability of individuals, partnerships, corporations, and others to negotiate settlements or compromises.

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Level 5-3: Claims Examiner (Loss and Damage), GS-0998

Scope of the Work – Reviews guidelines and regulations to determine the specific provisions that are applicable to claims concerning loss and damage. Examines claims and supporting documentation to determine contractor liability or liability among multiple contractors. Authorizes appropriate action.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the effectiveness of the worldwide programs.

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Level 5-3: Claims Examiner (Dependents and Estates), GS-0998

Scope of the Work – Reviews guidelines and regulations to make annual redetermination of dependency for all approved parents, parents-in-law, and overage children, to ensure that eligibility for benefits continues to exist. Reviews requests for reconsideration of disapproval actions. Determines whether to sustain disapproval or, if warranted, to reconsider and approve.

Effect of the Work – Work affects the ability of military dependents to obtain benefits.

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APPENDIX H – HISTORICAL RECORD AND EXPLANATORY MATERIAL

This appendix describes the development of this job family standard. We highlight some key dates and milestones and provide information about proposals we tested and about our deliberations as we crafted the final version of the standard for issuance. We believe users will find the information helpful as background for understanding and applying the job family standard. Readers with extensive position classification experience may recall the forerunner of this appendix as the Explanatory Memorandum that we formerly issued with some final position classification standards.

KEY DATES AND MILESTONES

In **1997**, the Classifications Programs Division (CPD) (formerly the Office of Classification) within the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) notified agencies that we were about to begin a study to develop the Position Classification Standard for Technical and Clerical Occupations in the Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900.

In **June 1998**, we distributed the original draft job family standard (JFS) in a narrative format for a 120-day review. Prior to final review and issuance of the proposed job family standard, we consulted with the agencies and made a coordinated decision to produce future JFSs in the Factor Evaluation System (FES) format. We then revised the draft JFS in the FES format with work illustrations at various factor levels and incorporated agency-suggested improvements, as appropriate.

In **April 2000**, we electronically released the revised Draft Job Family Position Classification Standard for Assistance Work in the Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900, for a short agency review and comment. Since the JFS was a revised draft, we felt it was not necessary to conduct a full test application again.

In **May 2001**, given the degree to which the final standard would amend series definitions and coverage, we notified stakeholders in advance to give them an opportunity to provide comments. We circulated information about the redefinition and restructuring of the series within the job family and the related cancellations and modifications of series. We provide a thorough description of the series restructuring at B.2. below.

RESULTS OF AGENCY REVIEW, COMMENT, AND TEST APPLICATION

A. JOB FAMILY STANDARDS – GENERAL ISSUES. In addition to using the job family standard (JFS) approach to developing and issuing position classification standards, we make every attempt to simplify and streamline position classification concepts, documents, and procedures with each succeeding issuance of a new JFS. We tested and implemented several ideas in the GS-0900 JFS for Assistance Work, with the help of agency human resources (HR) offices and subject-matter experts. This standard incorporates many lessons learned from recent JFS issuances.

1. Eliminating Occupational Category Code(s) From Job Family Standard Designations.

The draft JFS for Assistance Work in the Legal and Kindred Group had the letter “C” appended to the occupational group code to indicate that it covered assistance work. Since the release of the draft, we considered the pros and cons of using such a designation, particularly with respect to classification standards for one-grade interval work. For this type of work, we want to acknowledge the declining use of the term “clerical” to describe support and assistance work, as well as some confusion that has developed over time around using the term “technician” in a position title and the designation of technical occupations. In addition, OPM is reexamining the use and meaning of the term “professional” as it applies to occupations in the Federal service. For these reasons, and to prevent future confusion, we have decided not to append the occupational category letters (i.e., P, A, T, and/or C) to the occupational group code for JFSs. This does not mean that series and positions will no longer have the designated P, A, T, or C occupational categories. We will continue to use those categories and record them in the Central Personnel Data File (CPDF). This change should have no impact on agency application of the JFS.

2. Incorporating Hypertext Linking and Embedded File Features To Improve Navigation Through a Job Family Standard.

Job family standards can incorporate a significant amount of material about various occupations and specializations, only some of which will be relevant to a particular classification determination. Also, we continue to emphasize moving to an automated, electronic environment for using this classification guidance. Consequently, we included in the draft JFS links between factor level descriptions (FLDs) and the related illustrations for particular series and specialties, as well as other electronic features so that individuals applying the standard could be selective about the material that was actually displayed on the screen.

Agency Comments: Agencies were mixed in their reactions to these features. Many found them useful. Others found the separation of FLDs and illustrations in a printed version of the document to be confusing and cumbersome. In particular, the separation of titling and occupational information from the general guidance about series was unpopular.

Our Response: We will retain the links that are designed to permit selective reading of illustrations. We believe this feature will be even more valuable in future JFSs that have a larger number of occupations. However, we have reunited all the guidance about series, titling, and occupational information near the beginning of a JFS. Also, we will retain links between our JFSs and the relevant qualification standards. We view the continued development of such features as important to fulfilling our general commitment to make classification less dependent on printed documentation. We believe that our agency customers, particularly those with limited classification experience, will find them beneficial. Of course, users who prefer having the illustrations closer to the FLDs are free to print copies of the JFS and rearrange its pages in whatever way they find most useful.

3. Changing Titling Practices To Use “Assistant” for Administrative Support Positions.

As we undertook the current overall effort to establish JFSs for the entire General Schedule, we developed a policy to replace the terms “clerk” and “technician” in official position titles for clerical occupations and to use the term “assistant” instead. We based that policy on our observations and on agency suggestions that, in general, traditional clerical jobs are functioning more along the lines of assistants in administrative support settings than as pure

clerical roles. Consequently, we proposed changing many official position titles within the draft JFS for this one-grade interval administrative support work from “clerk” or “technician” to “assistant.”

Agency Comments: The majority of respondents supported the change.

Our Response: We are implementing the new titling practice in this and other JFSs that cover one-grade interval administrative support occupations.

4. Providing Information About Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Codes.

The Office of Management and Budget requires OPM, as a Federal agency that uses and reports statistical occupational information, to use the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system to identify occupations. These SOC codes and this requirement have no impact on the administration of any Federal human resources management systems. To help our users acquaint themselves with the SOC structure and coding scheme, we are providing information in a new table, “Crosswalk to the Standard Occupational Classification,” within **GENERAL SERIES, TITLING, AND OCCUPATIONAL GUIDANCE** in each JFS. We do this to indicate the SOC codes that apply to Federal positions in that job family on the basis of their occupational series and position titles. We provide the table as information only. The SOC system has no impact on agency application of the JFS.

5. Retaining “Knowledge Required by the Position” To Describe Factor 1. As part of an ongoing effort with OPM’s Employment Service (ES) to integrate occupational studies and their related products more fully, we had proposed renaming Factor 1 to “Competencies Required by the Position” in another draft JFS and were following that practice with this draft JFS.

Agency Comments: As with the other draft JFSs, agencies expressed concern about confusion that using the “competencies” label could cause. Moreover, they noted, correctly, that the competencies that ES is looking at in their models are not confined to the classification and grading criteria covered by Factor 1.

Our Response: We will continue to use “Knowledge Required by the Position” as the name of Factor 1 in this and future JFSs. Factor level descriptions for this factor will continue to focus on the kind or nature of the knowledge and skills needed and how that knowledge and those skills are used in doing the work.

B. THE GS-0900 JOB FAMILY STANDARD FOR ASSISTANCE WORK – SPECIFIC ISSUES. We also tested ideas that apply only to assistance work in the Legal and Kindred Group that this JFS covers.

1. Consolidating One-Grade Interval Claims-Related Assistance Work Into a Single Series. The second draft JFS released in FES format proposed consolidating three separate series dealing with claims assistance work into a single series due to the similarity of their primary duties and support knowledge and skills. We proposed to revise the old Claims Clerical Series, GS-0998, rename it the Claims Assistance Series, GS-0998, redefine its

coverage to include the work previously classified to the Loss and Damage Claims Examining Series, GS-0992, and to the Dependents and Estates Claims Examining Series, GS-0995, and cancel those two series. We selected the GS-0998 series because it already had a more general name, is the largest series in terms of population, and would result in the fewest series changes for users.

Agency Comments: The agencies supported our proposal to combine the three series.

Our Response: As we made further refinements of the occupational structure for this job family and occupational group, which is described in greater detail at B.2. below, we concluded that the newly consolidated GS-0998 series would also be appropriate to cover the one-grade interval work previously classified to the General Claims Examining Series, GS-0990. We renamed the series as Claims Assistance and Examining Series, GS-0998, and revised its definition and titling to better reflect the assistance and examining work that the series will now cover. We have consolidated four series and canceled the General Claims Examining Series, GS-0990, the Loss and Damage Claims Examining Series, GS-0992, and the Dependents and Estates Claims Examining Series, GS-0995.

- 2. Redefining Series Included in the Assistance Job Family Standard To Cover Only One-Grade Interval Work.** As we undertook the current overall effort to establish JFSs for the entire General Schedule, we decided to eliminate occupational series that covered both one-grade interval and two-grade interval work (other than the Student Trainee, GS-XX99 series) and clearly segregate these lines of work into separate series. We believe this approach will help simplify the classification process for all users.

Originally, the first draft JFS released in narrative format had included the Contact Representative Series, GS-0962, and the General Claims Examining Series, GS-0990, both of which covered one-grade interval and two-grade interval work. In response to many agency-suggested improvements from the initial review, we expanded the job family coverage of the second draft JFS released in FES format to include the Clerk of Court Series, GS-0945, because that series covered some one-grade interval support work. In that second draft JFS, we included grading criteria only for one-grade interval work. However, we continued to include two-grade interval work in the series definitions and coverage for GS-0945, GS-0962, and GS-0990, and we referred users to the Administrative Analysis Grade Evaluation Guide for grading criteria.

Agency Comments: Some reviewers expressed concerns about our approach in using broad definitions and referring users to the Administrative Analysis Grade Evaluation Guide.

Our Response: The draft Assistance JFS for the GS-0900 group released for review and comment had not accomplished our goal of segregating one-grade interval work from two-grade interval work completely or clearly. Consequently, we carefully reexamined and revised the occupational structure for the job family before issuing a final JFS that would cover only one-grade interval assistance work.

Resolving this situation required dealing with two issues. First, we had to establish a location within the General Schedule occupational structure for two-grade interval work previously classified to the Contact Representative Series, GS-0962, and the General Claims Examining Series, GS-0990. Simultaneous with the issuance of this final JFS for Assistance Work, we have established a new occupational series, the General Legal and Kindred Administration Series, GS-0901, and issued a Position Classification Flysheet for that series, which covers two-grade interval work not covered by other series in the Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900. The new GS-0901 series will initially cover the two-grade interval administrative work formerly included in the Contact Representative Series, GS-0962, and General Claims Examining Series, GS-0990, and we have prescribed parenthetical specialty titles for that purpose.

The second issue involved separating the one-grade interval and two-grade interval work previously covered by the Clerk of Court Series, GS-0945. Here, we concluded that we would retain the GS-0945 series as a two-grade interval administrative occupation and remove the one-grade interval work to be classified to another series. We accomplished this by issuing a Position Classification Flysheet for the Clerk of Court Series, GS-0945, that redefines and clarifies its coverage for two-grade interval work only and directs the user to classify related one-grade interval work to the Legal Assistance Series, GS-0986. Further, within the GS-0986 series, we have established a parenthetical specialty title, (Court), for use with the one-grade interval work previously classified to GS-0945.

To summarize, we believe the following actions we have taken will clarify this separation of one-grade interval and two-grade interval work in the Legal and Kindred Group:

- removing the two-grade interval work from the Contact Representative Series, GS-0962, and General Claims Examining Series, GS-0990;
- establishing the General Legal and Kindred Administration Series, GS-0901, as a two-grade interval administrative series and issuing a Position Classification Flysheet for that series to define coverage, which initially includes work formerly classified to the GS-0962 and GS-0990 series;
- removing the one-grade interval work from the Clerk of Court Series, GS-0945, and adding that work to the Legal Assistance Series, GS-0986;
- renaming and redefining the Claims Assistance and Examining Series, GS-0998, to include work previously covered by the Loss and Damage Claims Examining Series, GS-0992, and the Dependents and Estates Claims Examining Series, GS-0995, and canceling those two series;
- removing the one-grade interval work from the General Claims Examining Series, GS-0990, and adding that work to the renamed and redefined Claims Assistance and Examining Series, GS-0998;
- canceling the General Claims Examining Series, GS-0990, because its two-grade interval work was moved to the new General Legal and Kindred Administration Series, GS-0901, and its one-grade interval work was moved to the Claims Assistance and Examining Series, GS-0998;

- retaining the Contact Representative Series, GS-0962, and redefining it to cover only one-grade interval work; and
- redefining the Clerk of Court Series, GS-0945, as a two-grade interval administrative series and issuing a Position Classification Flysheet to define coverage.

The material in this final JFS concerning **EXCLUSIONS** and describing **MODIFICATIONS TO AND CANCELLATIONS OF OTHER EXISTING OCCUPATIONAL SERIES AND STANDARDS** also covers these matters and directs users to the proper series and definitions.

It is worth noting that, in effect, these actions to segregate this work represent the initial steps in defining a job family for administrative work in the Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900. Ultimately that job family will include the redefined Clerk of Court Series, GS-0945, and the new General Legal and Kindred Administration Series, GS-0901. Further, on the basis of the research undertaken for this and other job family standards, we believe it is quite possible that we will propose establishing a new series that covers two-grade interval claims examining work and that uses parenthetical specialty titles to distinguish different benefits programs.

- 3. Classifying Positions Above Grade 8:** The classification standard for the Contact Representative Series, GS-0962, issued April 1971, described both one-grade interval and two-grade interval work and provided grading criteria to the grade 10 level. However, in the interest of simplifying the classification guidance, the second draft JFS, released in FES format, provided grading criteria only to the grade 8 level. As noted in B.2. above, other series in this job family also had covered both one-grade interval and two-grade interval work.

Agency Comments: Some agencies expressed concern regarding the lack of grading criteria for work that exceeds grade 8.

Our Response: We recognize that work in the Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900, may be properly classified above grade 8 in two circumstances. Some work situations may substantially exceed factor levels in this JFS and still follow a one-grade interval pattern. These situations may warrant higher factor levels than those defined in this JFS and should be evaluated in conjunction with the appropriate factor levels in the Primary Standard at Appendix 3 of the [Introduction to the Position Classification Standards](#).

The other circumstance where a position may exceed grade 8 concerns work that follows a two-grade interval pattern. This JFS does not contain grading criteria for two-grade interval work, which might well exceed grade 8. As discussed at B.2. above, we have taken a number of actions to limit the series in this JFS to one-grade interval work. We provide instructions directing users to the appropriate flysheets, standards, and guides to classify two-grade interval work previously covered by some of the series in this job family. Based on further occupational study and factfinding, we will provide more definitive classification guidance for evaluating two-grade interval administrative work when we issue a future Job Family Standard for Administrative Work in the Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900.

4. **Assessing Impact on Grades.** We followed our usual practice of requesting that agencies report any effect that applying the draft JFS had on the grades of the tested positions. The JFS covers approximately 7,000 positions Governmentwide.

Agency Comments: The results of agency test application were extremely positive. Agencies reported minimal grade changes (upgrades and downgrades combined).

Our Response: We acknowledge that the series changes will require actions on numerous positions, which will often be accomplished using automated human resources processing systems. We are also developing revised guidelines for implementation of new standards that will better accommodate limited resources for implementation. Based on these considerations and the results of agency test application, we have ample justification to release the final JFS.