

STATE OF MAINE

Classification and Compensation Team

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

REGARDING CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION



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Below are frequently asked questions regarding areas of the State of Maine's compensation and classification system, particularly the Functional Job Analysis (FJA) process.

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FJA REVIEW PROCESS

Q: When will my FJA be reviewed and how long will it take to complete after I've sent it to HR?

A: FJA's are processed in the order they are received by BHR. It is not possible to provide a baseline estimate for completion as every request is different and the number of FJA's being reviewed at any given time fluctuates. If you have questions about the status of your FJA request, you should contact your agency's human resources personnel.

Q: Who needs to sign the FJA form and what form do I use?

A: Who signs the form depends on the type of request:

- For management-initiated requests, there must be signatures from the HR designate and the Commissioner or appointing authority. It is not required that managers and/or incumbents sign a management-initiated request. If the HR designate and Commissioner or appointing authority's signatures are missing when received by BHR, the FJA will be returned.
- For employee-initiated requests, there must be signatures from the incumbent or incumbents who submitted the request, the HR designate, and the Commissioner or appointing authority. If there are multiple incumbents, a separate sheet with their signatures is required. Managers should only sign an employee-initiated request if they are in agreement. If they disagree, they should not sign the request and should provide their agency HR personnel with a brief explanation as to why they disagree. This will be forwarded to BHR upon review of the request.

Both management and employees should utilize the same FJA form found on the forms page of the BHR site, found [here](#). If the incorrect form is filled out, the agency HR designate should not submit the form and guide the incumbent(s) or management to use the correct form.

Q: What is the difference between a management-initiated request vs. an employee-initiated request?

A: Management-initiated requests are prospective and initiated by management. These requests may be for positions currently filled by incumbents, or for vacant positions or new positions. These requests are funded when funding is identified through the Bureau of Budget.

Employee-initiated requests are retroactive and initiated by one or multiple employees. These requests involve positions filled by incumbents that see the work they currently perform as going outside of the duties outlined in their current classification. Incumbents in these positions may request reclassification into an existing classification they see as matching the work they perform; review and reevaluation of their current classification to take account of new duties, responsibilities, or knowledge, skills, and abilities; or

reclassification into a newly created classification to fit the specifics of their role. These requests are retroactive to the date of the employee's signature on the submitted FJA-1 and funded once funding is identified through the Bureau of Budget.

RECLASSIFICATION VS REALLOCATION

Q: What's the difference between a reclassification and a reallocation?

A: A reclassification moves existing positions in one classification to a different classification. This action assigns the positions an organized collection of duties and responsibilities driven by an overall core function that supports operational objectives. Reclassifications are initiated when the core function of positions has changed or will change and affect changes on the position level. Position specifications such as range, salary schedule, bargaining unit, and FLSA status may change as the result of reclassifications but are tied to the current designations of the new classification and not determined at the time the FJA is reviewed.

A reallocation changes the pay range of an existing classification based on significant changes to the duties and responsibilities; knowledge, skills, and abilities; degree of difficulty and complexity of work; and/or working conditions. The core function of the classification remains the same in this action but additional subfunctions are added or fundamental changes to the methodology used in executing the duties of the role occur. A reallocation will not occur without identifiable significant change. A reallocation impacts all positions within that classification. Position specifications outside of pay range such as salary schedule, bargaining unit, and FLSA status may also change as the result of a reallocation. Whether or not this happens depends entirely upon the nature of the changes to the classification that have occurred.

Both reclassifications and reallocations may be initiated to meet the operational needs of the agency or to accurately align positions with the work they actually perform.

Q: When will my reclassification/reallocation request be funded?

A: The Bureau of Human Resources is not responsible for identifying funding related to FJA requests of any kind. If you have questions regarding funding, please contact your agency's human resources personnel.

REWARDING INCUMBENTS THROUGH RECLASSIFICATIONS/REALLOCATIONS

Q: I have a high performing employee who deserves an increase in pay but is already at the highest step in their pay grade. Can I submit an FJA request for compensation purposes?

A: The reclassification process should not be used for the purpose of rewarding employees through increasing their compensation. The reclassification process is intended to ensure positions are appropriately classified. The classification system as a whole ensures each classification within the states classification system is assigned a pay grade through our job evaluation methodology (“hay”). Therefore, classification decisions are based solely on the duties and responsibilities of a position and the organizational structure, not an employee’s performance or qualifications. The FJA process should not be used to increase employees’ pay.

- If management feels an employee is performing duties outside of their current classification, this is when it would be appropriate to submit a reclassification request for that employee.

Q: Incumbents in this classification perform similar work to a job classification at a higher pay grade. Can I submit an FJA for pay parity to align them with this classification?

A: The FJA process is not meant to address pay parity. Questions about the duties and responsibilities of certain classifications can be addressed by either your agency’s human resources personnel or BHR. If you believe an incumbent is performing the same duties and responsibilities of a classification at a different pay grade, it would be appropriate to submit a reclassification request based on the change in duties.

WORK VOLUME AND RECLASSIFICATION/REALLOCATION

Q: Due to budget cuts and/or recruitment and retention issues, an incumbent at my agency is performing the work of a few people. Can this be addressed through a reclassification/reallocation?

A: An increase in work volume alone is not a reason to submit a reclassification/reallocation request. If the incumbent begins to perform higher level tasks with more responsibility, which may require additional knowledge, skills or abilities, it would be appropriate to submit an FJA request. If you are unsure if the incumbent is performing higher level duties, you should contact your agency’s human resources personnel to see if submitting an FJA is appropriate.

AGENCY DOES NOT AGREE WITH RECLASSIFICATION/REALLOCATION

Q: What happens if an incumbent submits a request for a reclassification or reallocation, but their agency feels they are appropriately classified?

A: Employees have the right to submit an FJA at any time. Management cannot withhold an FJA if they disagree with the incumbents reasoning for submission. If management does not agree and feels the incumbent is appropriately classified, they should submit their reasoning separately to their agency's human resources personnel. This will be forwarded to BHR as part of the review process for the incumbent's request.

- Management should forward the FJA and their reasoning to their human resources personnel as soon as possible. Employee-initiated FJA's are retroactive. If an FJA is held with management or with HR, back-pay is accruing should the request be granted. It is important to submit these requests in a timely manner.

UPDATING DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Q: When can I update the duties and responsibilities that a position is performing?

A: Management can update duties and responsibilities of a position if they have changed but are still within the core function of the job classification. To do this, management submits what's called an "Update Only" FJA. The same FJA form is used for this request as other requests. For example, if a position used to perform secretarial duties for one unit, but now performs similar secretarial duties for another unit, an Update Only FJA can be submitted to reflect the secretarial duties being performed in the new unit. Update Only FJA's have no budgetary implications.

- Management should not submit an Update Only FJA if there are new duties and responsibilities being performed outside of their classification. If this is the case, a reclassification request should be considered.

Q: If I want to make a change to the classification specification for a job specific to my agency, do I need to submit an FJA?

A: The answer to this question depends on how many agencies are utilizing the same classification:

- Some agencies have classifications specific to their agency only. If no other agencies are affected by the proposed changes to the class spec and the changes are minor (such as updating minimum qualifications; re-wording existing language, etc.) then no FJA is needed. An email to BHR outlining the proposed changes would suffice. However, if the agency wishes to add additional duties, responsibilities or knowledge, skills and abilities that are within the core function of that classification, an Update Only FJA should be submitted along with the proposed changes to the class spec, and the class spec can be updated accordingly. This is also applicable if the agency wishes to change the title of a classification. If that's the case, the agency should submit a "Title Change" FJA indicating they wish to change the title of the classification.
- If an agency wishes to make changes to a class spec but other agencies also utilize that classification, an Update Only FJA should be submitted along with the proposed changes to the class spec with the understanding that BHR will need to collaborate with the other agencies to ensure they are okay with the proposed changes.

SUBMITTING AN APPEAL OR A SECOND REQUEST

Q: I'm an employee who does not agree with a recent determination from the Bureau of Human Resources. What should I do next?

A: Employees have a right to appeal decisions made by BHR in accordance with their respective Union's contract if they are a bargaining unit employee. Employees should contact their union representative to move forward with an appeal. If an employee is unsure who their union representative is, they should contact their agency's human resources personnel.

If an employee is not covered by a bargaining unit agreement, they may appeal to the State Civil Service Appeals Board (CSAB). A notice of appeal should be sent directly to the clerk of the CSAB at csab.bhr@maine.gov. An employee or agency may be represented during this appeal process, however, in the case of an employee that representation is at the employee's expense.

Q: If I am a manager who has an employee that submitted an employee-initiated FJA that has not been reviewed yet, can I submit a management-initiated FJA to speed up the process?

A: FJA's are reviewed in order of the date they are received by BHR. Submitting a management-initiated FJA will not speed up the review process for the employee-initiated FJA and should not be a remedy utilized by management. It's important to remember that employee-initiated FJA's are retroactive, meaning the incumbent states the changes to their position have occurred since the date of signature. Management-initiated FJA's are prospective, meaning they assert these changes will be made to a position but are not happening currently.

Q: Can I submit a second request if I disagree with the outcome of the first request? If so, how long do we have to wait before submitting the second request?

A: If you are an employee who disagrees with the determination from BHR, you have the right to appeal that determination. However, as an employee, you have the right to submit an employee-initiated FJA at any time. It is important to note that if the second request that is submitted is the same as the first, the determination will likely be the same unless additional information is provided that was not considered with the first determination.

AGENCY REORGANIZATIONS

Q: I am an HR professional and one of our agencies has proposed a reorganization. This will involve creating new classifications, reallocating existing classifications, reclassifying positions, and creating new positions. What advice can you give me on where to start and how to go about this?

A: When an agency is requesting a reorganization and you are unsure where to start, the first step should be to discuss management's needs, then set up a meeting with BHR to go over the proposed reorganization. The compliance analysts can give directions on what request should be submitted first and any suggestions they may have regarding the request. Here are some points to follow when submitting a reorganization within an agency:

- Discuss management's needs. Why does the agency need a reorganization? Is it to meet operational needs, create a career ladder, etc.? Have management provide you with a current organizational chart and proposed organizational chart within their agency reflecting the reorganization. Management should also provide you with reasoning for the reorganization, which includes a statement of need for change, impact on agency program goals (if any), and impact on day-to-day program management. Once management's needs have been discussed and an organizational chart is provided, this is when you can reach out to BHR for next steps.

- After meeting with BHR, there should be an identified plan of action for the reorganization detailing what types of FJA requests will be needed. All FJA requests for the reorganization should be submitted as a packet to BHR so they can be completed and distributed simultaneously. If there is a need to distribute one FJA as part of the reorg before another, this will be discussed in your meeting with BHR.
 - If you are a member of management and want to propose a reorganization, your first step should be to meet with your agency's human resources personnel to discuss your needs and the next steps.

Q: What documents will I need to submit for my agency's reorganization request?

A: The documents you need will depend on the type of FJA requests that will be involved in the reorganization. When submitting a reorganization, a memorandum should be provided at the beginning of the packet outlining the request/need for a reorganization, the FJA actions that are included, adjustments and analysis of cost increase or savings, and proposed method of funding and justification for increased costs. You should also note if any other agencies may be impacted as a result of the request. Below is a breakdown of what is needed for each FJA request:

- New Classification
 - FJA with appropriate signatures; title of new classification; desired pay grade of new classification; organizational chart with incumbent names and position numbers.
 - If able, the agency should provide a proposed class spec for the new classification.
- Reallocation
 - FJA with appropriate signatures; desired pay grade of the classification; title change if applicable; organizational chart with incumbent names and position numbers; PDR's for all positions within the classification.
- Reclassification
 - FJA with appropriate signatures; desired classification the position(s) will be reclassified to; organizational chart with incumbent names and position numbers; PDR's for all positions being reclassified.
- New Positions

- FJA with appropriate signatures; desired classification the new position(s) will be assigned; organizational chart with incumbent names and position numbers; PER51's for the new position(s) being created; first 5 numbers the agency wishes to use for the position number (on the PER51).

Have questions not addressed in this list? Please contact Sophia Spiller, Lead HR Analyst, or Lucas Sieb, Policy Development Specialist.

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