Technical Skill-Based Career Paths;
Obsolete, Duplicative, and Unnecessary Job Classifications

Report to the Iowa Legislature, 83rd General Assembly
Iowa Department of Administrative Services

January 15, 2010

Introduction

The 83rd General Assembly amended Section 8A.402, subsection 2, code 2009, by requiring that the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) complete two studies and one report, as follows:

- Evaluate the executive branch job classifications "to ensure the existence of technical skill-based career paths . . . which do not depend upon an employee gaining supervisory responsibility for advancement, and which provide incentives for such employees to broaden their knowledge and skill base."

- Evaluate "options for eliminating obsolete, duplicative, or unnecessary job classifications."

- Provide "interim reports to the general assembly on or before January 15, 2010, and January 14, 2011, concerning the department's progress in completing the evaluation and associated outcomes."

This report establishes a general outline of DAS's approach to completing these mandates, and provides progress to date.

Technical Skill-Based Career Paths

This mandate directs DAS to evaluate the State's classification system "to ensure the existence of technical skill-based career paths . . . which do not depend upon an employee gaining supervisory responsibility for advancement. . . ."

In light of the budget cuts and the goal of increasing the span of control, DAS recommends suspension of this requirement. Currently, there are career-path opportunities within state government either within the department in which an employee works, or between departments.

Currently, there are nine hundred and twelve (912) job classes in the State's classification system, which include one hundred and sixty-six (166) different job class groupings constituting a series. These job

class groupings are defined as those classes in which natural movement/progress exists within the series. There are approximately six hundred and twenty-five (625) job classes included in one (1) or more of the class groupings.

Adding additional layers of non-supervisory classes will result in greater cost to the State with the movement of people into those new classes. Generally, when salary surveys are done, we find that state employees are adequately compensated.

There also exists a provision in the rules for compensation of lead workers. Departments will be encouraged to address the need for technical guidance and leadership through lead work rather than supervisory positions. As the needs of departments change, DAS has been working with the departments to develop new classes and class series to address the needs through its existing programs, including the development of technical career paths within departments.

Obsolete, Duplicative, or Unnecessary Job Classifications

It is not uncommon for DAS to eliminate job classes in these categories. During the past five (5) years (January 2005 – December 2009), DAS inactivated forty-two (42) job classes.

Obsolete, duplicative, or unnecessary job classifications are considered by DAS to have the same meaning. Two queries of the State's database were conducted, as follows:

- List of all positions in the Executive Branch, excluding Regents and Community Based Corrections, with five (5) or less persons without regard to whether the positions were filled or vacant.

- List of all job classes with no full-time equivalent positions.

DAS discovered that thirty-three (33) job classes have no incumbents, four hundred and forty-two (442) have fewer than five (5) incumbents, and two hundred and four (204) job classes have only one (1) incumbent. An evaluation of the job classes will be undertaken during 2010.

Finally, when a job classification is inactivated, it results in a modification of the State's Classification and Pay Plan. When changes to the plan occur, the impacted unions are notified consistent with the terms of the appropriate collective bargaining agreement and given an opportunity to comment on the action.