

To: Clerical/Administrative Staff AFSCME Local 3336

From: Issa Simpson, AFSCME Council Representative

Greetings:

As most of you have heard the Department of Administrative Services has undertaken a classification and compensation study of clerical/support staff. This study is being conducted as a result of a letter of agreement reached between DAS and SEIU during 2009-2011 negotiations. I have included the language and affected DEQ classifications below.

LETTER OF AGREEMENT 80.00-09-181

**Article 80--Change in Classification Specifications
Classification Study**

This Letter of Agreement is between the State of Oregon, acting through its Department of Administrative Services (Employer), and the SEIU Local 503, OPEU (Union).

1. The Department of Administrative Services agrees to perform a study to include the following classifications during the 2009-2011 biennium and will complete the study no later than 4/1/11. The Parties will negotiate salary ranges and implementation language during the 2011-2013 successor negotiations.

Office Assistant 1 and 2

Office Specialist 1 and 2

Administrative Specialist 1 and 2

Executive Support Specialist 1 and 2

Public Service Rep 1, 2, 3 and 4

**AFSCME 3336 and DEQ Contract language: ARTICLE 18 - CLASSIFICATION AND
CLASSIFICATION CHANGES**

Section 2. Revision of Classification Series.

a. Prior to implementation of new classifications, or major revisions of existing classifications, the parties will negotiate rates of pay, effective date and method of implementation.

b. Should the Agency establish a new classification or materially revise an existing classification during the life of this Agreement, the parties shall meet and negotiate the salary range for the new or revised classification.

c. Employees shall be informed of their allocation into the new classification system by the Employer. Appeals to position allocation in the new classification system shall be filed by the employee with the Human Resources Manager. Such appeals shall be forwarded to a Department of Administrative Services Review Committee consisting of two (2) members designated by the Employer, and two (2) members designated by the Union. All allocation appeals shall be resolved in the manner which has been established for all AFSCME allocation appeals during recent negotiations at the State central table.

DAS has developed a timeline for this classification study that may be helpful. It is on their website at http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/HR/docs/GTC_Timeline.pdf. The link for general information about DAS classification and compensation information is <http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/HR/classcomp.shtml>

Where are we now?

The Agency submitted position descriptions for a representative sampling of each of these classifications to DAS in mid June. Those PDs are being used to help determine if the current classification descriptions for each of these classifications reflects the type of work being done and the level of duties assigned to each classification. The nature of duties assigned to support staff has changed in many agencies and programs. One function of a classification is to determine if the current classifications are appropriate to the work being done. For instance it

might be determined that Administrative Specialists (1 and 2) should be in a classification reflecting more technical duties than clerical duties and a new classification could result. It could also result in fewer of a series such as all AS's doing similar duties being placed in one classification. The examples above are not a reflection of any discussion or plan-they are simply arbitrary scenarios I came up with.

As you see in the timeline, DAS will offer proposed classification changes to agencies for comment sometime in July. After the agencies have provided comment, the unions are provided with the proposed changes and given a period of time to offer comment. This is a point where union leadership will want to get feedback from members in affected classifications about DAS' proposed changes. It will be important for us to be as organized as possible to gather the comments from you and follow up with questions prior to providing written comment to DAS.

Next Steps?

The next step is for the agencies to allocate positions into the new classifications. Agencies initially make the determination of placement of employees into the new or revised classifications. DAS reviews those determinations. There is an opportunity at this point also for employees to appeal their allocation to a new or revised classification. For instance if you are currently an AS1, issuing permits and responsible for extensive database management and you are allocated to the equivalent of an Office Specialist 2 (OS2) which does not have those duties contained in the classification specifications, you would want to appeal that decision. Those appeals are handled according to Article 18 (above).

The salary ranges for the new or revised classifications will occur during Central Table bargaining as specified in the SEIU letter of agreement (above). We will be looking at the market studies we have available to us as well as information offered by DAS as the comparables they use when determining proposed salary ranges. As many of you also know, the union's data does not always match DAS' for various reasons. A good number of support staff have assisted bargaining teams in the past by gathering market data and we have kept that information and expect it to be helpful going forward.

At this time there is no way that any manager or human resources staff would know what the outcome of the study is going to be. There have been several reports of managers stating or suggesting that a member will be "downwardly reclassified" as a result of this study. Again-no one knows information of that nature at this point. DAS is still working on the general question of whether to revise classifications, develop entirely new ones or leave them as they are (not likely).

We anticipate that DEQ Human Resources will also communicate with you about this process. The information we are offering should very closely align with that communication.

One difference is that the union will need your input to move forward in the best way possible for our members. We urge you to reach out to the steward in your area to let them know who you are and that you are part of this study. Dana Huddleston is working with our webmaster to update our website and our hope is to have a secure area or blog devoted to this classification study available for you to provide comments and ask questions. We know this can be stressful and the waiting difficult.

What can you do?

Make sure your position description (PD) is up to date. If it isn't, remind your manager that it needs to be done. If you go to the DAS class/comp website and look at the classification specifications for the classification you are currently in, you will see a section labeled "Distinguishing Features". It will describe what sets your class (OS1 from OS 2 and so on) apart from the others in your series. Those are the levels of duties you need to pay attention to in your PD. It is not the volume of work you perform-it is the level of responsibility and complexity involved in your job that determines which classification you will land in. If you do not agree with the duties and responsibilities listed in your PD do not hesitate to ask your manager to review and revise it. If you run into problems with that do not hesitate to contact your steward, Regina Cutler or Issa Simpson for assistance.

