

Reclassification FAQ's for Supporting Services Employees

What does classification mean?

Classification is a process used to determine the salary grades of positions. The classification or salary grade is determined by looking at ten factors which help evaluate the level of work required to perform the responsibilities and duties. These ten factors include: knowledge and skill requirements; direction received, mental demands, communications, product or service, resources, work environment/hazards, physical demands, unusual demands and supervision exercised. A more detailed explanation about each of these factors may be found on the [Classification Brochure](#) posted on the MCPS website.

What is a reclassification study?

A reclassification study may be considered when at least two significant changes in the duties and responsibilities are identified, which impact the nature of the work and require additional knowledge, skills, abilities, experience or other qualifications, detailed in the ten factors referenced above.

How is a reclassification study initiated?

In December of each year the Office of Human Resources and Development (OHRD) sends out a memorandum to executive staff initiating the next study year. The memo includes an attachment that lists all supporting services positions by job family and study year that may be considered for possible study that year. SEIU and MCBOA positions are scheduled for consideration over a seven-year period or cycle. Executive staff members inform directors and supervisors, who may request positions be studied based on at least two significant changes that have occurred in the position's duties, responsibilities or required experience and/or qualifications. All study requests must be approved by the appropriate director or officer.

What if a position is not scheduled to be considered for study for that study year?

While supervisors and directors are encouraged to submit only scheduled positions, they may still request a study if two significant changes can be identified. This is called an "out-of-cycle" request. Typically such out-of-cycle requests would be submitted if the changes have occurred recently or are the result of a reorganization or restructuring of an office and waiting for the scheduled year is not reasonable. All executive staff members are encouraged to be vigilant about communicating with their directors/supervisors when the new study year is initiated and the importance of reviewing and submitting requests for the positions scheduled for possible study.

If a study is requested, will it be approved?

Not necessarily. When an office requests a reclassification study, the request is reviewed based on the changes communicated in the request and the position history to determine whether or

not the changes are significant enough to substantially impact the nature of the work for that position.

If a study is approved, does that mean the position will be reclassified?

Not necessarily. The purpose of a reclassification study is to look carefully at substantial changes that have occurred in the position's duties and responsibilities that impact the nature or level of work and the ten factors used to determine the classification of the position. (For details about these factors, see the [Classification Brochure](#) posted on the MCPS website.) If the study findings show that the identified changes are not significant enough to warrant a change in the classification, the position will not be reclassified; the position grade will not be changed.

What are the possible outcomes of a reclassification study?

In accordance with Regulation GHA-RA, [Maintenance of the Position Classification Plan](#), the following outcomes are possible: no change in the classification of the position; a change in salary grade; a change in the title; a revised job description; a reclassification of an existing position; an establishment of a new position or a combination of these.

How long does a reclassification study take?

The study year is initiated in December and the approved actions are not effective until the next fiscal year. For example, the FY 2023 study is launched in December 2021 and approved actions are effective July 1, 2023. Many positions may be submitted for study each year; and the study process is an intensive and time-consuming process.

Who and what is involved in the study process?

Once a position is approved for study, the employee(s), the requesting supervisor and the [Service Employees International Union \(SEIU\), Local 500](#) are notified. Employees in the position being studied and their supervisor complete and submit questionnaires that are designed to gather detailed information about the nature of the work, relative to the identified changes and how that impacts the ten factors previously referenced. Additional research may be conducted and may include: observations of the work; desk audits, focus groups; interviews of the incumbent(s) and/or the supervisor(s); comparative analyses of other similar MCPS positions or classifications or positions from other districts. Once the research and study process has been completed, the classification coordinator presents recommendations, along with supporting documentation, to the chief/head of OHRD. The Office of Human Resources and Development affirms, revises or denies the recommendations based on the substantial review and consideration of all information presented. Employees, supervisors and SEIU are notified of the decisions. Appropriate actions are approved by OHRD and any resulting changes are implemented in the upcoming fiscal year.

What is a desk audit?

A desk audit may be conducted during a reclassification study and involves interviewing the incumbent. It is a way to gather additional information and clarify the duties and responsibilities of the position being studied and provides the incumbent with an opportunity to share examples and details about the work he or she performs. The incumbent's supervisor will also be contacted separately and will be asked to share information about the position and duties. A desk audit is not used to evaluate an employee's performance.

Is a reclassification study used to evaluate work performance?

A reclassification study is not used to review the performance (either good or bad) of an employee, but rather the work, responsibilities and duties required by that position. It is important to understand that the reclassification of a position cannot be used to reward or penalize an employee for poor or excellent performance, nor can it be used in place of a supervisor's evaluation of the employee.

Who approves the decision to reclassify or not reclassify a position?

The head of the Office of Human Resources and Development brings recommendations based on the research conducted forward to MCPS leadership and the MCPS leadership team approves or denies the reclassification or other related actions for the position studied.

If the position is reclassified to a higher grade will the employee get a raise?

It is important to understand that a reclassification action is not a promotion or demotion. If a reclassification is approved, the incumbent is placed on the salary step of the new grade that is closest to the current rate of pay without going below the current salary.

What if the supervisor doesn't request a reclassification study but the employee believes the position has undergone significant changes and should be studied?

While an employee may not submit his or her own reclassification study request, OHRD encourages employees to speak to their supervisor about a possible study prior to the initiation of a new study year (prior to December). In addition, Regulation GHA-RA, [Maintenance of the Position Classification Plan](#) states that bargaining unit representatives may submit recommendations for consideration through their joint collaboration committee by submitting a written request that includes the current position classification, title and pay grade, the name(s) of incumbents, the name of the immediate supervisor, work location(s), and the justification for the request.

If the current position in an office no longer meets the needs of the office, can the position be reclassified to a lower or higher grade?

If an office no longer has need of a position and the work performed by that position, the director of that office may request that the current position be abolished and that a new position be reconstituted. This process does not involve reclassification, but rather it is a Budget request that typically follows the established Operating Budget process and timeline. If the

proposed abolished position has an incumbent, the employee must be given notice and advised of this action in accordance with Regulation GHA-RA, [Maintenance of the Position Classification Plan](#); and GFA-RA, [Establishment and Abolishment of Positions](#) and the current [SEIU agreement](#).

If the incumbent disagrees with the outcome of the reclassification study, what can he or she do?

If an incumbent's position has been studied for reclassification and he/she does not agree with the outcome, an appeal may be submitted within ten working days after being notified of the reclassification study outcome. Appeal instructions are included in the notification memo sent to incumbents.

For more information about classification and the reclassification process:

Talk to your supervisor;

Contact your [SEIU Local 500](#) representative;

Reach out to Human Resources or visit the following links:

[Classification/reclassification webpage](#)

[FY 2023 Reclassification Schedule](#)

[Agreement between SEIU and the Board of Education](#)

[OHRD staff page](#)

[Job descriptions page](#)

[Classification/Reclassification Brochure](#), including the 10 factors

[Regulation GHA-RA, Maintenance of Position Classification](#)

[GHD-RA, Wages and Salaries for Supporting Services Employees](#)