

April 29, 2008

TO: Teresa Parsons
Director's Review Program Supervisor

FROM: Kristie Wilson
Director's Review Investigator

RE: **Edward Harmon v. Tacoma Community College (TCC)**
Allocation Review Request No. ALLO-07-044

On March 25, 2008, a Director's Review meeting took place at the Department of Personnel (DOP), 2828 Capitol Boulevard, Olympia, Washington, concerning the allocation of Edward Harmon's position. Present during the meeting were you, Edward Harmon, Kurt Spiegel WFSE, Amy Achilles WFSE, and myself. On the telephone was Paula Sheldon Employment Manager of TCC and Julie Burton Director of Facility and Distribution Services.

Investigator's Finding

My review finds that Mr. Harmon's position should be reallocated to the Mail Processing - Driver Lead classification.

Background

On February 16, 2007 Mr. Harmon filed a Position Review Request (PRR) form to TCC Human Resource Office requesting that his position be reallocated to the class of Mail Processing Manager. Paula Sheldon, TCC Employment Manager, reviewed his request and issued her decision by letter dated May 11, 2007. In her letter Ms. Sheldon outlined the reasons and basis for her denial. Specifically, Ms. Sheldon determined that Mr. Harmon's position was not responsible for supervisory or managerial oversight of the mail services area.

In reaching her determination, Ms. Sheldon considered statements from the Director of Facility and Distribution Services, Julie Burton. Ms. Burton stated that Mr. Harmon's position did not handle hiring or establish job standards. Ms. Burton also stated that any duties related to staffing needs or expenditures were not a responsibility of Mr. Harmon's

position. Instead, Ms. Burton asserts that it is her responsibility to handle customer complaints, determine policies and procedures, lease or contract modifications, contracts and payment of invoices. Mr. Harmon's position is not responsible for these areas. Ms. Burton also indicated that Mr. Harmon's position is not a manager and does not have the authority to hire, has no budget authority and policies are determined by Ms. Burton. Ms. Burton did state that she seeks input from Mr. Harmon regarding operations, however the decision making authority rests with Ms. Burton.

On June 11, 2008, WFSE, on behalf of Mr. Harmon, filed a request to the Department of Personnel for a Director's Review.

Mr. Harmon's Perspective

Mr. Harmon asserts that he is responsible for scheduling, assigning, and overseeing the work of two employees. One employee is a work study student and the other is a part-time employee. Mr. Harmon asserts that he is responsible for all aspects of:

- Delivering and sorting mail
- Approving or denying leave time
- Reviewing the rules set by USPS or Federal Express
- Implementing and training staff on new procedures

Mr. Harmon believes he runs the mail department with little or no supervision from Ms. Burton. Mr. Harmon contends he is responsible for receiving potential employee applications, reviewing, and performing employee interviews. Mr. Harmon contends he is clearly working outside of his current classification.

TCC's Rationale

TCC agrees that Mr. Harmon oversees the daily work of the two employees. However, TCC disagrees with the fact that Mr. Harmon is responsible for hiring, establishing job standards, and taking corrective action on poor performance of staff. TCC asserts that Mr. Harmon's position does not have authority in these areas.

TCC states that Mr. Harmon is not responsible for setting policies and asserts the responsibility resides with Ms. Burton or the Vice President. During the Director's review conference, Ms. Burton explained that following the USPS rules are different than setting policies as these are regulations and procedures.

Ms. Burton further explained that Mr. Harmon processes voucher distributions and not purchase orders. She states that anyone can sign off on these but the final approval must be from the Budget Manager. Ms. Burton asserts that Mr. Harmon has no budget authority.

Reason and Basis for Finding

The definition for Mail Processing Manager states:

Positions allocated to this level provide supervisory and/or managerial oversight of a mail services unit or department. Incumbents develop and implement policies and procedures and assure internal policies, procedures, and practices comply with United States Postal Service and other mail and parcel vendor regulations and procedures. Incumbents monitor and account for expenditures and supervise various special mailing processes such as special rates, mail registration, vendor services, customer services, address systems and mail center inventory.

Mr. Harmon's position is responsible for overseeing the two employees' daily work, which includes scheduling and assigning work. Although Mr. Harmon is actively involved, he does not perform corrective action or complete evaluations; this task is performed by Ms. Burton. Mr. Harmon does not have budget authority; he enters postage using the monthly chargeback forms. This postage is determined within the college for chargeback to the department. Mr. Harmon's position does not meet the scope and level of responsibility described by the Mail Processing Manager class.

The definition for Mail Processing – Driver lead states:

Positions allocated to this level regularly assign, instruct, and check the work of others and independently oversee and perform mail services including sorting, processing, delivering, and collecting mail, and operating mail management system. Incumbents typically interpret department and institutional rules and regulations concerning mail operations, resolve complex customer problems, recommend cost effective mailing methods, and address other special or complex mailing requirements and needs.

Mr. Harmon works independently with little or no supervision. The majority of his time is spent overseeing the mail processing program at the college, including delivery, collection, and processing of mail. Mr. Harmon schedules the workflow and establishes priorities. He also monitors and accounts for mail expenditures. Although Mr. Harmon does not have authority to perform corrective action or employee evaluations, his input is important. Ms. Burton confirmed that Mr. Harmon assigns, instructs, and checks the work of two employees, including a part-time hourly employee. Mr. Harmon also trains employees on policies established by USPS.

The Washington State Classification and Pay Administrative Guide defines lead as follows:

An employee who performs the same or similar duties as other employees in his/her work group and has the designated responsibility to regularly assign, instruct, and check the work of those employees.

On the PRR, Ms. Burton has indicated that Mr. Harmon has the authority to schedule the work hours and work assignments for part-time staff. Mr. Harmon not only performs mail processing duties, he also regularly assigns, instructs, and checks the work of the other employees working in the mailroom. Therefore, Mr. Harmon's position clearly falls within the Mail Processing – Driver Lead classification.

Appeal Rights

RCW 41.06.170 governs the right to appeal. RCW 41.06.170(4) provides, in relevant part, the following:

An employee incumbent in a position at the time of its allocation or reallocation, or the agency utilizing the position, may appeal the allocation or reallocation to the Washington personnel resources board. Notice of such appeal must be filed in writing within thirty days of the action from which appeal is taken.

The address for the Personnel Resources Board is 2828 Capitol Blvd., P.O. Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911.

If no further action is taken, the Director's determination becomes final.

Enclosure: Exhibit List