



# CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

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| Subject: <b>Position Descriptions</b>         |                                  |
| Department: <b>Staff Human Resources</b>      | Reference No.:                   |
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## WHO PREPARES AND APPROVES?

The appropriate manager prepares position descriptions for vacant or new positions. For positions with incumbents, managers are encouraged to work closely with the incumbent to ensure that the position description is an accurate reflection of duties and responsibilities. It is important to note that **responsibility for the final assignment of duties rests with management**. When complete, the form is signed by the employee, immediate supervisor, Administrative Services Manager, the appropriate administrator, and forwarded to Staff Personnel.

## WHEN ARE THEY PREPARED?

Position descriptions are prepared for all new and vacant positions. Whenever the duties and responsibilities of an existing position change significantly, a revised position should be prepared. Significant changes would include:

- Reorganization/expansion of a program resulting in new position
- Reassignment of duties (duties added or removed)
- Change in supervisors/supervisees (more or less supervision given or received)
- Change in physical facilities/surroundings (e.g., hazard or fatigue factors)
- Technological change (e.g., new equipment requiring special licensing, or specialized knowledge)

## FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN PREPARING POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

### NATURE AND VARIETY OF WORK

- What is the purpose of the position?
- What are the major areas of responsibility and percentage of time spent in each?
- What tasks are performed in each major area of responsibility?
- What machines, equipment, instruments are operated, for what purpose and in what context?
- What work methods are used for each task? What steps are involved? Are the steps repetitive? Non-routine?
- To what extent is work self-planned?
- What errors is it possible to make and what are the consequences of the errors?

### NATURE OF SUPERVISORY CONTROL EXERCISED OVER THE POSITION

- Who assigns the work and sees that it gets done? At the time work is received, what has already been done with it and what happens next?
- When an assignment is received, are detailed specific instructions given showing how the work is to be done, or are there general expectations and procedures to follow? Give examples.
- How and by whom is the work check and at what point in the performance of duties?
- How is work reviewed and by whom?
- What are the major problems that may arise and how are they handled?
- What kind of problems are referred to the supervisor and how does one decide what is to be referred?

### AVAILABILITY AND NATURE OF GUIDELINES CONTROLLING DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

- What regulations, procedures, manuals, precedents or other guidelines are used to complete work?
- Do these guidelines indicate clearly what is to be done and how it is to be done, or are they in need of interpretation? Give examples.



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- If something comes up that is not covered by these guidelines, what actions are taken?
- Does one refer frequently to the guidelines, or must they be read and memorized?

### **NATURE AND SCOPE OF AUTHORITY**

- What actions can be taken and what decisions can be made that are binding on the office or agency? How extensive is the effect of these actions or decisions?
- Do actions taken affect only the particular case involved, or will these actions and decisions impact future cases or situations.
- What regulations, office policies, or statutes limit authority in making such actions?
- Are these actions and decisions subject to review? If so, by whom?

### **ORIGINALITY OF THINKING REQUIRED**

- What parts of the work performed are not covered by rules, established procedures, precedents or reference to others?
- What are the most difficult assignments?
- What are examples of instances in which imagination, inventiveness, or creativity is needed to perform the work?
- To what extent does the work require the development of new or revised work techniques?
- To what extent does the incumbent plan work projects or establish policies?

### **NATURE AND PURPOSE OF PERSON-TO-PERSON WORK RELATIONSHIPS (not including those with the supervisor or those supervised)**

- What is the purpose and nature of the position's person-to-person contacts? Examples: Giving or receiving information; explaining policies or operations; persuading others concerning the benefits of a program; settling problems.
- With whom are these contacts made?
- What problems arise in the course of work with these contacts?

### **NATURE AND EXTENT OF SUPERVISORY CONTROL OVER THE WORK OF OTHERS**

- Is staff divided into smaller units? If so, what are the units, and to whom do the unit supervisors report?
- Does the incumbent plan the work to be done by the staff supervised or is the incumbent primarily concerned with the way in which work is accomplished?
- Is the incumbent primarily concerned with making sure that the orders issued by someone else are carried out, or is the incumbent responsible for originating and issuing orders?
- Does the incumbent determine the work methods and to whom work is to be assigned?
- What responsibilities does the incumbent have with respect to determining the need for, selecting and training new employees?
- How does the incumbent review the work of employees supervised?
- How many employees are directly or indirectly supervised? What are their working titles and classifications? Does the incumbent prepare or review the performance evaluations for these employees?
- Is the incumbent responsible for corrective action and discipline? Give examples?

### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

- What essentially different skills, knowledge, personal attributes, or special techniques are needed to do the work?
- What are the minimum education level and experience requirements of the position?
- What hazards or unusual working conditions exist?
- Are any licenses or certificates required to do the work?

**FORMS:** Position Description