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Conversion Manual Guide

The State Auditor's Office's State Classification Team partners with the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts (Comptroller's Office) to produce a document, called the conversion manual, to assist agencies with changes the Legislature makes to the State's Position Classification Plan each legislative session. The conversion manual outlines those changes and provides guidance on the necessary payroll actions agencies must make prior to the start of each biennium. To assist agencies with using the conversion manual, the State Classification Team has developed this guide.

The State's Position Classification Plan

The State's Position Classification Plan (Plan) provides the salary structure for classified employees in state agencies (excluding legislative agencies and higher education institutions). Each biennium, the State Auditor's Office's State Classification Team has a statutory responsibility to review the Plan to determine its competitiveness and make recommendations to the Legislature. Those recommendations help to maintain the Plan by adding new job classifications, updating job classification titles, deleting existing job classifications that are not used or rarely used, and reallocating job classifications to maintain market competitiveness.

Texas Government Code, Chapter 654, gives the State Auditor's Office statutory responsibility to:

- Maintain and keep the Plan current.
- Make recommendations that are necessary and desirable about the operation of the Plan and for improvement of the Plan to the Governor and the Legislature.
- Make periodic studies of salary rates in other governmental entities and in industries for similar work performed in state government, and report that information to the Governor and the Legislative Budget Board.

The recommended changes to the Plan are outlined in the biennial reports that the State Auditor's Office releases prior to the beginning of each legislative session. However, legislative action is required to implement any recommended changes to the Plan, which is part of the General Appropriations Act; therefore, agencies must wait until after each legislative session to review and implement any potential changes. The approved Plan is located in Article IX, Section 2.01, of the General Appropriations Act.

Changes to the Plan

Changes to the Plan include the following actions, and in some situations more than one change will affect a job classification (for example, a title change and a reallocation can affect the same job classification). Agencies are responsible for reviewing all changes to the Plan and ensuring that employees are appropriately classified.



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Reallocation:

Occurs when a specific classified position is assigned to a salary group that differs from the previously designated salary group. For example, a position moves from A09 to A10.

For reallocated positions, employees' pay must be brought to the minimum of the new salary group. Agencies do not have the authority to pay employees below the minimum of their salary group. If there is a cost to bring an employee's pay up to the minimum of the new salary group, agencies are responsible for funding that cost.

Deletion:

Occurs when a job classification is underused or not used at all and is deleted from the Plan. Deletions also may be made if the salary range is significantly behind the market and is no longer competitive with similar jobs. If a position is being deleted, agencies are responsible for reviewing the work of employees in those positions and for taking action to move them to an appropriate job classification.

Title Change:

Occurs when the title of a job classification is updated to provide a better description of the functions of the job or to reflect current industry terminology. Title changes may also occur if a level within the job classification series is added or deleted and the job classification series needs to be renumbered. In general, those changes will not require action from an agency, and they are completed through changes in the Comptroller's Office's automated system.

When a job classification series is being renumbered because of the addition or deletion of a level, agencies have the flexibility to keep an employee at the same level, reclassify the employee within the same job classification series, or reclassify the employee to another job classification series within the Plan.

New Job Classification:

Occurs when a new job classification series or level of a job is added to address gaps in the current Plan and provide agencies with positions that more closely distinguish the work being performed. Agencies should review employees they have listed in other titles (for example, Program Specialist) or levels and determine whether those employees would be more appropriately classified in one of the new job classifications. It is the State Auditor's Office's position that occupationally specific job titles should be used, rather than more general job titles. New job descriptions are developed for those types of positions.

New Classification Number:

Occurs when the job classification number has changed to address the addition of new job classification series or changes to an existing job classification series. In general, changes to job classification numbers will not affect how an employee is classified.



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Summary of Changes for the 2016-2017 Biennium

The 84th Legislature adopted the following changes applicable to the 2016-2017 biennium. Details on the changes can be found in the conversion manual. When new job classifications were added, new job descriptions also were added to the Plan.

Summary of Plan Changes

Total job classifications for the 2014-2015 biennium	947
Job classification deletions	7 ¹
Reallocations	38
New job classifications	94
Job classification title changes	14
Total job classifications for the 2016-2017 biennium	1,034

The Conversion Process

The Comptroller's Office uses the following steps during the Plan conversion process. Specific questions on keying and coding changes should be directed to the Comptroller's Office.

- The Comptroller's Office will apply changes that resulted when the Legislature adopted the job classification listing; that is done either by reallocations or reclassifications (based on the salary schedules as of August 31, 2015).
- Following the reallocations and reclassifications, the Comptroller's Office will then establish the fiscal year 2015 roll-over record for the 2016-2017 biennium.
- After making the changes described above, the Comptroller's Office applies any pay actions an agency makes. For example, agencies may implement reclassifications, promotions, demotions, merit increases, or equity adjustments.

¹ The job title "Chief Inspector - Office of the Inspector General (more than 12 years of service)" was deleted from the Plan; however for the purposes of the conversion process, that change was categorized as a title change and an automatic conversion.