

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY  
PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL**

<b>Topic:</b> CLASSIFICATION <b>STUDIES: WHEN NEEDED AND HOW TO INITIATE.</b>	<b>Date Issued: Nov. 15, 1990</b> <b>Date Revised: Dec. 1992</b> Sept. 1994 Jan. 1995 Dec. 1997 May 2023 Oct. 2023
<b>Section:</b> CLASSIFICATION	
<b>Number:</b> III.1.	

**PURPOSE:**

To assist departments in determining when a class study is needed, and define the procedures for requesting a study, reallocating positions to different classes, or allocating new positions to appropriate classes.

**LEGAL BASIS:**

County Code Chapter 3.16

Civil Service Rules 130.III - Classification

**POLICY:**

**I. ALLOCATION OF POSITIONS TO CLASSES AND WORK  
ASSIGNMENTS**

- A. Under the Santa Cruz County Civil Service Commission rules section III. J. allocation of positions to appropriate classifications is the delegated responsibility of the Personnel Department. The Civil Service Commission retains final jurisdiction over appeals of proposed allocations under this authority.
- B. Department heads are responsible for the assignment of appropriate work to each position allocated to the classifications in their department. It is the County Administrative Office's policy that departments notify the County Administrator (CAO) or their delegate (Assistant County Administrator or County Budget Manager) and the Personnel Department prior to assigning "out of class" work to any position.

## II. STAFFING LEVELS

- A. Staffing levels and organizational structure of County operations are usually:
  - 1. Proposed by department heads;
  - 2. Recommended by the County Administrative Officer; and
  - 3. Approved by the Board of Supervisors.
- B. Changes in staffing levels occur through:
  - 1. Board of Supervisors approval during Budget Hearings, or throughout the year during the Board of Supervisors regular meeting process for the addition, funding, or deletion of positions or when the CAO Office determines necessary for a change that results in a position cost increase.
  - 2. County Administrative Officer approval of mid-year actions to split or combine positions with no change in cost or the authorized full time equivalent staffing levels. These changes are ultimately reviewed and adopted annually by the Board of Supervisors during Budget Hearings.
- C. All changes in staffing levels require Personnel Department classification review and approval for proper position allocation prior to implementation.
- D. When a proposed change in staffing, through an add/delete action, moves the duties performed by a position in one bargaining unit to a position in another bargaining unit, the Personnel Department will consult with each impacted unit on the implications of the proposed change prior to the action being submitted to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

## III. THE NEED FOR CLASSIFICATION STUDIES

- A. The classification study process is used to:
  - 1. Allocate all new positions approved by the Board of Supervisors to an appropriate class; or
  - 2. Reallocate an existing position(s)
    - a. When an appointing authority believes that the duties and responsibilities of any position under their jurisdiction warrants allocation to a different class; or
    - b. When an employee under the provisions of a memorandum of understanding makes a written request for a classification study on the basis that duty assignment warrants allocation to a different class; or

- c. When the Personnel Director determines that a classification study is needed. In all instances the Personnel Director has the authority to determine if a study is warranted.
- B. Classification studies are warranted when:
  - 1. New positions are approved by the Board of Supervisors; or
  - 2. There is a reorganization resulting in a significant reassignment of duties; or
  - 3. There is a significant change in duties due to program requirement changes or changes in technology; or
  - 4. When evolving, incremental program changes over a long period of time have caused a position to become misclassified.
- C. If one or more of the above conditions do not exist, a classification study is not warranted.
- D. There are four possible outcomes of a classification study:
  - 1. It is determined that the position(s) remain properly allocated to their existing classification(s) with no changes to the class specifications.
  - 2. Class specifications are updated with current information and the position(s) are allocated to the appropriate classe(s). This may or may not result in the reallocation of positions from one class to another.
  - 3. Class specifications are updated with current information, positions are allocated to the appropriate classe(s) and the item is referred to Employee Relations Salary Administration (ERSA) for a salary review. This occurs only if the changes to the class are so substantial that a salary adjustment may be warranted. This may or may not result in the reallocation of positions from one class to another.
  - 4. A new class is developed to make a proper position allocation and the item is referred to ERSA to establish the salary for the new class.

#### IV. REQUESTING AND OBTAINING BUDGETARY APPROVAL FOR A CLASSIFICATION STUDY

- A. Approvals for classification studies occur through:
  - 1. BOARD OF SUPERVISOR APPROVAL:

- a. With the submission of their budget to the County Administrative Office, departments discuss each new

position being requested or funded and the fiscal impacts with the CAO Analyst and County Budget Manager. Departments shall also consult with their Agency Personnel Officer or Classification Analyst to ensure consistency with the County's classification plan. While this discussion neither takes the place of the formal study to be completed after Board approval nor is an indication of concurrence with the classification being requested, it will help mitigate problems with the study.

b. Mid-year actions for new programs, grants or reorganizations approved by the Board:

2. DELETE/ADD: If the position is vacant, approval for the study is accomplished through the department submitting a letter to the Board to delete the vacant position and add the appropriate level of position.
  - a. Departments shall discuss the fiscal impacts of such requests with their CAO Analyst and County Budget Manager prior to final submission of the Board letter. Departments shall also consult with their Agency Personnel Officer or Classification Analyst as needed on any such items prior to Board letter submission to ensure consistency with the County's classification plan. While this discussion neither takes the place of the formal study to be completed after Board approval nor is an indication of concurrence with the classification being requested, it will help mitigate problems with the study.
  - b. Departments must contact Personnel on any action which proposes deleting a position from one representation unit and adding it to another unit.
  
3. COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE APPROVAL:
  - a. CLASSIFICATION STUDY WITHOUT A SALARY REVIEW.

If the position is filled, approval for a class study can be requested by the department submitting a completed Request for Classification Study form (PER3116) to the Personnel Department. If the request meets one of the previously described conditions warranting a class study, it will be forwarded to the CAO with a recommendation to approve the study. If approved by the CAO, the study will commence within 15 working days of CAO approval. If the request does not meet one of the conditions which warrant a study or is disapproved by the CAO an explanatory memorandum detailing the reasons for not undertaking the study will be sent from the Personnel Director to the affected department head. This will generally occur within 15 working days from receipt of the request.

b. CLASSIFICATION STUDY WITH A SALARY REVIEW.

When a salary review is requested in conjunction with a class study for an existing class, the department must submit a PER3116 with justification for the salary study also submit a Salary Review Request form (PER1801). This form is not needed when a new class is established as the salary is automatically established with the creation of the new class. (See Salary Review In Conjunction with a Classification Study Section IX.7.)