

The Civil Service Commission has established the Civil Service Adviser to enhance delivery of information on important employment issues and policies affecting the merit system of the City and County of San Francisco.

SPECIAL ASSISTANTS

Civil Service Adviser



WHY WAS THE SPECIAL ASSISTANT CLASSIFICATION ESTABLISHED?

The Civil Service Commission, in 1993, created Special Assistant classes to address newly established unique positions, to provide a common framework to classify and compensate employees, and to reduce the overall number of classifications Citywide. The Commission also began employing the Special Assistant series to reduce the use of one person "A" classes.

The series was designed to be used to perform a wide variety of professional policy making duties for the offices of the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and Chief Administrative Officer and by all operating departments to staff special projects or unique functions that are not reflected within the level and scope of existing classes.

Hiring flexibility was considered critical to the creation of new programs and operations, and the broad series, with multiple levels, was expected to meet the diverse and fluid needs of operating departments and to respond to priorities voiced by the San Francisco citizenry. Additionally, use of the series provided the ability to offer benefits for prospective employees, which is essential for successful recruitment and retention in a competitive labor market.

CONSOLIDATED THIRTY THREE CLASSES AND ELIMINATED ONE-PERSON CLASSES

The creation of the Special Assistants resulted in the consolidation of 33 existing classes (Assistant to the Mayor, Assistants to the Chief Administrative Officer, Staff Aides/Staff Assistants, Special Projects, etc.) into a broad series of classes thereby facilitating the classification and hiring processes.

Utilization of Special Assistants also resulted in correcting salary, classification and benefit inequities existing in 183 one-person "A" classes by transitioning incumbents to 18 Special Assistant classes.

USE OF SPECIAL ASSISTANTS REQUIRES REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Special Assistant positions must be justified. Departments present information on the scope and complexity of the duties that are to be performed; organizational impact; skills and abilities required to perform the job; and the duration to the project. Jobs are evaluated to determine the appropriate level and class.

Upon approval by the Human Resources

Director, departments must meet the City's policies on hiring.

SPECIAL ASSISTANTS AND EXEMPT APPOINTMENT

The City Charter provides for positions that do not fall under the competitive civil service merit system for examination, selection, appointment and removal. These positions are called exempt positions. The person serving in an exempt position serves at the pleasure of each appointing or hiring authority. Most Special Assistants have been associated with exempt appointments.

CATEGORIES AND LIMITATIONS OF EXEMPT APPOINTMENTS

The voters approved the 1996 Charter expanding the use of exempt employment. The Charter provides for 19 categories of exempt employment. The categories of exempt appointments include a variety of on-going positions critical to departmental operations such as deputies of department heads, executive assistants, confidential secretaries, legislative analysts/assistants. The Charter put a limit or "cap" on exempt appointments of 2% to the total number of full-time City work force that existed on July 1, 1994. The Civil Service Commission must approve appointments in these categories going over the 2% "cap".

The Charter also allowed the continuation of exempt appointments that had been approved under the 1932 Charter; temporary and seasonal appointments that do not exceed part-time; replacement of civil service employees on leave (limit of 2 years); special projects (limit 3 years) and professional services with limited term funding. Department of Human Resources is not required to obtain Civil Service Commission approval, but reports monthly to the Civil Service Commission on these appointments. These exempt appointments are not subject to the 2% "cap".

See the Civil Service Adviser No. 013/2001 for a more detailed description on appointments.

QUESTIONS:

Department of Human Resources:

- Merit System Services 557-4923
- Employee Relations Division 557-4990
- Internal Services 557-4829
- Equal Employment Opportunity 557-4832

Civil Service Commission 252-3247

Civil Service Commission

- Rosabella Safont, President
- Donald A. Casper, Vice President
- Morgan R. Gorrano, Commissioner
- Adrienne Pon, Commissioner
- Linda Richardson, Commissioner
- Kate Favetti, Executive Officer

The Civil Service Commission
wishes you and yours the best of the
Holiday Season!!

The information provided in this Adviser is for information purposes only and does not constitute or intend to provide legal advice.