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**General Schedule
Position Classification Standards**



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**POSITION CLASSIFICATION
STANDARD
FOR
APPRAISING SERIES,
GS-1171**



**Workforce Compensation
and Performance Service**



Appraising Series

GS-1171

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SERIES DEFINITION

This series covers positions that involve supervising or performing work in appraising and reviewing the appraisals of real or personal property or property interests. These positions require technical knowledge and skill in the application of the principles, practices, and techniques of appraisal.

This standard supersedes the standard for the Appraising and Assessing Series, GS-1171, issued in June 1972 (TS-11).

EXCLUSIONS

1. Classify clerical or assistance work concerned with routine technical fact gathering, computational work, and other similar work, when such work does not require the application of a full range of appraising principles, theories, methods, and techniques, and is not part of a developmental assignment leading to an appraiser position, in the appropriate specialized clerical series (e.g., [Office Automation Series, GS-0326](#), [Statistical Assistant Series, GS-1531](#), [General Business and Industry Series, GS-1101](#), or [Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-0303](#)).
2. Classify positions that primarily require professional or scientific knowledge of fields such as mining, range management, range conservation, forestry, and soil conservation, when appraising is a secondary function, in the appropriate specialized series (e.g., [Range Conservation Series, GS-0454](#), or [Forestry Series, GS-0460](#)).
3. Classify positions that primarily require a professional knowledge of engineering theories and techniques to determine market values, costs, rates of depreciation, etc., of property in the appropriate specialized series. (See the [Valuation Engineering Grade Evaluation Guide, GS-0800](#).)
4. Classify positions that primarily require a professional knowledge of contracting regulations and business and industry practices to procure goods and services in the [Contracting Series, GS-1102](#).
5. Classify positions concerned with appraising in conjunction with other realty functions, such as acquiring, managing, and/or disposing of real property, in the [Realty Series, GS-1170](#).

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

This series covers positions that appraise and/or review the appraisals of real and/or personal property. Personal property includes any item, other than real property, requiring an appraised value. It includes, for example, works of art, furniture, jewelry, boats, cars, aircraft, stocks, and various kinds of securities. An appraisal is an estimate of the market value of an adequately described property or property interest as of a specific date. A variety of activities require appraisals including the assessment and collection of taxes, the issuance of loan insurance, and the acquisition, disposal, exchange, and lease of real property.

Appraisal Process

The basic appraisal process is essentially the same regardless of the mission and programs of the agency or nature of the transaction. The process follows the requirements and standards accepted and distributed by professional appraisal organizations and the Federal Government. This includes the appraisal guidelines issued by the Department of Justice for Federal land acquisitions. In addition, some agencies require appraisers to be licensed or certified by the States in which they perform or review appraisals.

Examples of real estate appraisal work predominate in this standard because the vast majority of Federal appraisers spend most of their time and effort on this type of work. Personal property appraisals, however, require application of a comparable body of rules, regulations, policies, and procedures, and are also covered by the criteria in the standard.

Before starting a case, appraisers define the appraisal problem and determine the steps to take for its solution. Appraisers gather, verify, and analyze many kinds of information that affect property values. They study the characteristics of the property such as its condition, size, boundaries, and topographical features; easements, rights-of-way, or encroachments; improvements; environmental conditions (e.g., the presence of hazardous material or endangered species); and mineral or water rights. They also research the history and nature of the property's ownership and its assessed tax value.

Appraisers gather and analyze data about the market area in which the property is located. This includes information on economic conditions, population and employment trends, recent comparable property sales, typical property uses and zoning controls (e.g., residential or commercial), and available transportation, school facilities, and public utilities. They also study the effects of different types of financing and tax structures on property values.

Appraisers obtain the information they use from a variety of sources. They inspect the property and surrounding area, search historical records stored in court houses and libraries, examine real

estate listings, and interview property owners and private sector appraisers and realtors. Appraisers use this information to arrive at the highest and best use of some types of property, i.e., the use of a property that can be achieved in a timely manner, is the most economically feasible, is physically possible, and provides the highest income return or results in the best utilization of the property considering all other practical alternatives.

Appraisers estimate property values using one or more of the following appraisal approaches:

1. Sales Comparison Approach--determines value by comparing the property with similar properties recently offered for sale or rent in the open market.
2. Income (Capitalization) Approach--determines value by estimating a property's expected monetary returns.
3. Cost Approach--determines value by estimating the current cost of reproducing a property (less depreciation from functional, economic, and physical deterioration).

Appraisers keep up-to-date with new and varied techniques related to these approaches, such as discounted cash flow analysis, multiple regression analysis, and internal rates of return, to solve complicated or unique appraisal problems.

Some agencies hire contract or fee appraisers to estimate property values. In these agencies, Government appraisers write contract specifications, select fee appraisers based on experience and qualifications, provide training on agency appraisal requirements, oversee their work, evaluate their performance, and recommend or deny payment.

Review Process

Most appraisal reports completed by staff and fee appraisers require a review. Review appraisers analyze appraisal reports to ensure property values are estimated accurately, logically, objectively, and with adequate support. Some review appraisers check the reports for completeness and adherence to agency procedures. They also verify calculations and the accuracy of support data. They may request originating appraisers to correct obvious mistakes such as mathematical errors. More difficult problems, such as inappropriate comparison properties, are referred to supervisors or higher level review appraisers.

Other review appraisers study appraisal reports to ensure compliance with recognized appraisal practices and precedents, agency policies, Federal and State government regulations, and/or contract specifications. They verify the accurate use of appropriate appraisal approaches and techniques and the logical development of conclusions. If they disagree with the logic or conclusions in an appraisal report, they--

- request the originating appraiser to explain or justify estimates, submit additional information, or complete another appraisal;

- modify or reject the report;
- assign the case to a different appraiser; and/or
- prepare their own value estimates.

Some review appraisers study appraisal reports submitted to the Federal Government as evidence in condemnation or tax court cases. Property owners typically hire private sector appraisers to prepare these reports. Review appraisers examine the appraisal reports for strengths and weaknesses the Government may use to reach settlements or develop testimonies. They explain the appraisals to attorneys, assist with deposition and question preparation, and may testify in court as expert witnesses.

Other Appraising Functions

Besides estimating property values, appraisers also provide advice, information, and solutions for other real property problems. This includes:

- economic analysis to find the best solution for an agency's real or personal property requirements (e.g., calculating the cost and rate of return to lease, buy, and build office space to determine which is more economical);
- market analysis to estimate the probable future supply and demand of a specific piece of property;
- feasibility analysis to determine the cost-benefit relationship of a specific project by comparing current market trends and agency financial objectives to the project budget, time sequence of activities, type and cost of financing, yield expectations, and other issues such as environmental concerns; and/or
- analysis of lease proposals involving factors such as rental rates, rates of return, lease escalation clauses, tax benefits, and cash flow.

Impact of Automation

The use of automated systems supplements or replaces time-consuming tasks typically associated with appraisal work. For example, appraisers use--

- data bases to store and retrieve current and historical market data and other types of information;
- spreadsheets and other financial software to analyze data and calculate values; and
- word processing and graphic software to produce appraisal reports, charts, and graphs.

Most appraisers must have the knowledge to use and apply one or more of these automated systems. However, in this occupation, knowledge of automated systems is secondary to the primary requirement for knowledge of appraising principles, practices, and techniques. This standard focuses on the application and use of this appraising knowledge and skill.

TITLES

Appraiser is the title for all nonsupervisory positions in this series primarily responsible for appraising property.

Review Appraiser is the title for all nonsupervisory positions in this series primarily responsible for reviewing staff and fee appraisal reports.

Supervisory is prefixed to the titles of positions that meet the criteria in the appropriate [guide for evaluating supervisory positions](#).

Chief Appraiser is the title for positions that have responsibility for planning, organizing, and directing an overall appraisal program for an agency, bureau, or major military command, as defined below, generally subject only to administrative supervision and control. (Some policy and technical guidance may be provided by the Department of Justice or professional societies and associations.) There can be only one Chief Appraiser for an organization.

ORGANIZATION DEFINITIONS

Agency--An Executive or military department as specified by 5 U.S.C. 101, 102, and 5102, to which the President has delegated primary authority and responsibility for the administration of substantive national programs enacted by Congress, a comparable independent agency, or a large agency next below the Department of Defense with worldwide missions and field activities. The head of an agency is usually appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate (e.g., the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Justice, Housing and Urban Development, Army, Navy, or Air Force, or the General Services Administration).

Bureau--An organizational unit next below agency level which is normally headed by an official of the Executive Level IV or V or Senior Executive Service (SES) rank or the equivalent. It is a component of a civilian agency directed by an appointed executive who reports to the agency director or the director's immediate staff (e.g., the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service or Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management).

Major Military Command--A military organization next below the Departments of Army, Air Force, or Navy and headed by a flag officer who reports directly to the agency headquarters. It is the bureau equivalent in a military department (e.g., the Department of Army's Corps of Engineers).

EVALUATING POSITIONS

Evaluate full performance level positions (i.e., GS-9 and above) using the factor level descriptions and assigned point values in this standard. For those few positions that may warrant factor levels above the levels provided in this standard, use the criteria in this standard in conjunction with the Factor Evaluation System (FES) [Primary Standard](#). Agencies may establish trainee and developmental level positions using the FES Primary Standard for factor levels falling below those described in this standard, and related classification standards.

Evaluate supervisory positions using the criteria in the appropriate [guide for evaluating supervisory positions](#).

GRADE CONVERSION TABLE

Total points on all evaluation factors are converted to GS grade as follows:

GS Grade	Point Range
9	1855-2100
10	2105-2350
11	2355-2750
12	2755-3150
13	3155-3600
14	3605-4050

FACTOR LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

FACTOR 1, KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION

Level 1-6 -- 950 points

Employees at this level use a knowledge of commonly applied appraisal practices, principles, and methodologies. The work requires skill in interpreting established appraisal standards and real estate, tax, and environmental regulations, and analyzing property data using the basic valuation approaches. Employees use this knowledge and skill to appraise properties where boundaries, ownership, use, and other characteristics are clear. Some employees also complete specified segments of complex appraisal reports or projects, similar to those described at Factor Level 1-7.

Employees use knowledge of property data sources to research, gather, and interpret readily available information, such as property descriptions, zoning laws, and sales figures, to determine their effect on value and arrive at logically supportable value estimates.

In addition, some employees use knowledge of appraisal review procedures and practices to study the information, recommendations, and logic of conclusions in appraisal reports. They assure compliance with instructions, validate deviations from accepted appraisal procedures, and identify errors in computations.

The work requires skill in preparing clear, concise, and defensible reports that reflect how the data were used and the analytical techniques applied.

Illustrations:

- Employees directly apply one or more of the basic valuation approaches to appraise a variety of properties such as single-family homes, standard office space, or unimproved vacant lots. They estimate values of properties, under stable economic conditions, that have many comparable sales or rental rates, obvious uses, and few encumbrances (e.g., liens, easements, and permits) and other legal concerns.
- Employees prepare segments of complex appraisals. This may include:
 - researching and compiling data;
 - describing the property;
 - determining the highest and best use of properties with obvious uses by analyzing each use for its physical possibility, economic feasibility, imminence, and potential income return; or
 - calculating final value estimates by applying basic valuation techniques.

- Employees review appraisal reports written by fee appraisers covering properties with well-defined boundaries and uses. Properties are clearly comparable with others in terms of type, location, use, and other similar characteristics. Employees advise appraisers on agency procedures and, if necessary, request further justification or additional data.
- Employees assign appraisal cases to fee appraisers based on geographic proximity and workload. The cases involve appraisals of individual single-family residences under application for mortgage insurance. The residences typically have clear cut boundaries and uses and readily available comparable properties. Initially, the mortgage companies review completed appraisal reports and accept or reject values as part of the mortgage application process. Then, the employees review the accepted reports to monitor the overall quality of work performed by the fee appraisers and the accuracy of the review made by the mortgage companies. For example, they review appraisal reports to identify errors, such as the use of inappropriate comparable properties or inaccurate adjustments, and to note when mortgage companies do not detect or attempt to correct these problems. For easily resolved errors, such as miscalculations or misunderstood instructions, they advise fee appraisers and mortgage companies either individually or as a group on the proper procedures to follow for future cases. Recurring or significant problems typically are referred to supervisors or higher graded employees for further action.
- Employees research, evaluate, and advise realty specialists on specific aspects of properties, such as estimating standard construction costs or rental rates, or conducting highest and best use studies for properties with limited, readily apparent uses.

Level 1-7 -- 1250 points

Employees use knowledge of a wide range of appraisal concepts, principles, and practices to appraise and/or review the appraisals of properties with complex characteristics and to analyze complicated valuation problems. This may include resolving value problems for properties with limited comparable sales, multiple or questionable ownerships, numerous encumbrances (e.g., easements and rights of ways that conflict with the proposed uses), various possible highest and best uses that may be entirely different from the current use, unusual physical constraints, sensitive environmental concerns, partial takings whose use will have a negative impact on the remainder of the property, and other equivalent characteristics. Employees use this knowledge to devise strategies and plans for resolving property value problems; modify, adapt, or depart from established appraisal techniques and procedures; and/or assess, select, and make use of appraisal precedents.

Employees use data gathering skill and ingenuity to locate information that is not readily available. This may include acquiring data about comparable sales when few, if any, exist, extensively searching public records for obscure data, or finding sources of information about properties with uncommon characteristics.

They use appraising knowledge and skill to analyze and interpret the effects of unstable social, economic, and political trends on property uses and values. Such trends include changing market

conditions, zoning problems, and conflicting public and private interests. They also use knowledge of advanced financing techniques and complicated tax, real estate, and environmental laws and regulations to determine their effect on property values.

Employees use a comprehensive knowledge of the valuation approaches and various appraisal techniques to adapt and apply the most appropriate appraisal methods for analyzing the available data. They use skill to detect differences in comparable properties and adjust data to make defensible value estimates. Employees use knowledge of how the approaches and techniques interrelate to weigh and reconcile the differences of each method, correlate the different value estimates, and derive a final value.

In addition, some employees use knowledge of one or more of the following:

- engineering principles; architectural or construction techniques; timber, mineral, soil, and crop types and values; or other specialized data to determine their effect on the use and value of property;
- one or two areas of art history, such as the Pre-Columbian period or the history of life styles in the colonial period in America and Europe, to determine the authenticity and value of pieces of art or antique household items;
- appraisal review standards and policies to review complex, controversial, or problematic reports;
- condemnation and taxation policies and regulations to review and analyze appraisal reports for court cases;
- procurement policies and procedures to write contract specifications, select fee appraisers based on expertise and experience, counsel and oversee their work, and recommend or deny payment based on performance and compliance with contracts; and/or
- appraisal laws, policies, and procedures to advise property owners and private sector builders, contractors, and realtors on Federal appraisal requirements.

Illustrations:

- Employees appraise various types of real property ranging from small, unimproved tracts through highly developed commercial, industrial, and multi-family complexes; agricultural lands and timberlands; and personal property with complex characteristics. Properties include complications such as mineral, water, and sewer rights; severance damages due to partial takings; multiple ownerships; easements; handicapped accessibility requirements; environmental or historic preservation issues; timber values or rights; many different potential uses of subject property and surrounding properties; or the presence of advanced or unusual financing techniques. Employees apply and correlate the basic valuation approaches and modify and adapt

standard appraisal techniques to estimate property values. At times, employees must validate and justify their appraisals in court.

- Employees review appraisals prepared by staff and/or fee appraisers for various property types with complex or unique characteristics, including properties that may be involved in condemnation or tax court cases. They counsel and negotiate with appraisers on problems in their reports such as inappropriate uses of the valuation approaches and concepts, missing or irrelevant data, and questionable conclusions. Employees provide guidance to appraisers on policies, procedures, standards, and methods. If the reports do not comply with appraising standards, employees may modify or reject the value estimates.
- Employees define parameters of fee appraiser assignments, review qualifications of appraisers, and recommend appraisers for specific assignments. They provide expert advice, instruction, and/or assistance to fee appraisers on technical, procedural, and administrative matters, including work requirements, methods, and resolution of unusual, controversial, or sensitive issues. Employees also accept or reject final appraisal reports and recommend payment and future hiring of appraisers based on performance.
- Employees study and analyze a broad range of real property problems and projects and prepare reports and recommendations. These reports include feasibility and economic analyses of properties with complex characteristics, highest and best use analyses when several different uses for the properties are possible, analyses of nonstandard rental rates such as for public housing projects, and analyses of the risks involved in insuring, acquiring, building, leasing, or disposing of property. The recommendations assist realty specialists and functional managers with project and program planning.
- Employees evaluate established appraisal techniques, practices, and programs and recommend a variety of policy and procedural changes based on recurring problems and questions and use of modified techniques. They develop appraisal procedures for policy changes and prepare instructions for their implementation. They advise and guide staff and fee appraisers on the interpretation, use, and implementation of appraisal policies, procedures, methods, and techniques.

Level 1-8 -- 1550 points

Employees at this level apply a mastery of appraisal concepts, principles, and methodologies. They function as technical authorities requiring the application of new theories and standards to appraisal problems or assignments--

- not susceptible to treatment by accepted and established appraisal procedures;
- for which no accepted or established appraisal procedures exist; or
- where conflicts exist between policy and program objectives.

For example, employees use their knowledge and technical expertise to--

- appraise and/or review the appraisals of a broad range of properties with extremely complex characteristics similar to those of a military base or a large forest with a variety of diverse, and often conflicting, recreational, mining, timber, commercial, industrial, or residential uses;
- appraise and/or review the appraisals of properties that may involve controversial condemnations or whose values have significant impact on the economy of a community or budget of an agency; and typically involve intense, public, or Congressional scrutiny;
- review and analyze very complex appraisal reports for the impact of recommendations and estimated values on agency policies, goals, and objectives;
- review two or more complex appraisal reports for the same property to determine which provides a legal and more statistically defensible value to use as evidence in controversial or sensitive condemnation or tax court cases;
- evaluate the impact of new or modified appraisal, real estate, tax, and environmental legislation on current and projected appraisal standards and programs and prepare important policy changes based on the impact; and/or
- provide guidance to staff and fee appraisers on the interpretation and implementation of new or modified policies.

Illustrations:

- Employees complete extremely complex or controversial appraisal projects that require highly specialized experience or broad policy interpretation or deviation. For example, a project may involve an exchange of a series of properties each (1) consisting of unique, highly mixed, or conflicting uses, complex legal considerations, and/or extensive and innovative financing, and (2) requiring extensive coordination between several Federal agencies with competing objectives, State and local governments, and/or individual property owners.
- Employees review extremely complex or controversial appraisals for compliance with laws and procedures, proper use of advanced methods, and impact on current policies. This includes reports for highly controversial condemnation or tax cases that may involve different appraisals for the same property from both the property owner and the Federal Government. They evaluate each report for general strengths and weaknesses, validity of values, areas of possible settlement, or usefulness in court proceedings. Employees also advise attorneys on appraisal interpretation and testify as expert witnesses, if required.
- Employees evaluate current and projected appraisal programs for adherence to legislation, policies, and agency missions. They develop new or modified policies and programs based on new appraisal legislation, standards, and techniques; changing technology; and evaluations of

agency needs. Employees provide expert advice and guidance to staff and fee appraisers about the (1) impact of new legislation and policies on current and projected appraisal and realty programs, (2) implementation of new programs and procedures, and (3) use of new or diverse appraisal methods and techniques to appraise properties with very complex or unique characteristics.

FACTOR 2, SUPERVISORY CONTROLS

Level 2-3 -- 275 points

Supervisors define the objectives, priorities, and deadlines of the appraisal or review assignment and assist employees with situations that have no clear precedents such as uncommon locations of data, nonstandard uses of appraisal techniques, or methods for analyzing property types unfamiliar to the employee. They identify the kinds of problems to anticipate in carrying out the appraisal or review assignment.

Employees plan and carry out the successive steps and handle problems and deviations in the work assignment in accordance with instructions, policies, previous training, or accepted appraisal or review practices.

Completed work is evaluated for technical soundness, appropriateness, and conformity to policies and procedures. Appraisal reports are reviewed for adequate, relevant, and logical presentation of data, accurate calculations, and valid conclusions based on the information in the report.

Level 2-4 -- 450 points

Supervisors set the overall objectives and identify the resources available. Employees and supervisors, in consultation, develop the deadlines, projects, and work to be done such as ways to appraise or review the appraisals of properties with complicated or unusual characteristics.

Employees plan and carry out the assignment, resolve conflicts that arise, coordinate the work with others, and interpret policy on own initiative in terms of established objectives. The employees keep supervisors informed of progress and potentially controversial matters such as probable condemnation cases.

Review appraisers and/or supervisors review the work for overall feasibility, compatibility with other appraisals, and effectiveness in meeting program goals and requirements. Completed appraisals are reviewed for adherence to appraisal standards, clarity of presentation, and soundness of conclusions. Supervisors oversee the work of review appraisers to ensure they use review plans and procedures effectively to fulfill review objectives and requirements and accomplish appraisal program goals.

Level 2-5 -- 650 points

Supervisors provide administrative direction with assignments in terms of broadly defined missions or functions.

Employees plan, design, and carry out appraisal or appraisal review programs, projects, and studies. They may also independently prepare extremely complex or highly controversial appraisals.

Supervisors consider the work technically authoritative and normally accept results without change. They evaluate recommendations for new projects and alterations of objectives for such considerations as availability of funds and other resources, broad program goals, or national priorities. Review appraisers and/or supervisors review extremely complex or highly controversial appraisals for their impact on policies, conflicts with legal premises, and whether the processes used or conclusions made set precedents.

FACTOR 3, GUIDELINES*Level 3-3 -- 275 points*

A number of guidelines are available, but may not be completely applicable to the work. Guides include appraisal policies, regulations, and standards, real estate and tax regulations, and other procedures. The guides cover most requirements, problems, circumstances, or data-gathering and analysis techniques used in the appraisal process.

Employees use judgment to interpret and adapt the guides and to modify the information available to fit the situation. Appraisal methods and techniques normally applied require some adaptation to the peculiarities of the assignment.

Level 3-4 -- 450 points

Guidelines are agency policies, precedents, and appraisal standards and laws that provide a general outline of the concepts, methods, and goals of appraisal programs. Guides are of limited use and inadequately cover complex, controversial, or unusual appraisals.

Employees use initiative and ingenuity to deviate from standard appraisal processes and review procedures. They conduct research to identify and develop new sources of unusual or hard to obtain data, devise innovative methods and techniques for estimating the value of properties with unique and complex characteristics, and propose new or revised policies.

Level 3-5 -- 650 points

Guidelines are broad, nonspecific policies and objectives that require extensive interpretation, judgment, and ingenuity. Employees interpret appraisal and other related Federal and State legislation (e.g., real estate and tax laws) or agency objectives and develop specific procedures and

plans to implement them. They evaluate existing appraisal and appraisal review programs and procedures for needed changes.

Employees are considered technical authorities in the development of appraisal guidelines, procedures, and programs. They use judgment and expertise to interpret policies, plans, and instructions for appraisal staffs and in preparing or reviewing extremely complex or highly controversial appraisals.

FACTOR 4, COMPLEXITY

Level 4-3 -- 150 Points

The work includes duties involving different and unrelated appraisal processes and methods. Assignments usually consist of valuing property for a variety of acquisition, disposal, loan insurance, or taxation transactions. At this level, employees--

- gather property data from familiar, readily available sources;
- make estimates of values, under stable economic conditions, for--
 - real property with few legal or environmental concerns and readily apparent uses, or
 - art work or other personal property of readily apparent authenticity and few questions of ownership; and/or
- review staff and fee appraisal reports to check for completeness and adherence to agency procedures and to verify the accuracy of calculations.

Employees study each case to identify the characteristics of the property being appraised (e.g., type, location, description, and ownership), sources of comparable sales data, degree of similarity between the subject property and the comparable sale properties, permitted uses of real property, and other conditions that may be present. They select and apply the appropriate valuation methods and techniques from several established alternatives.

Employees analyze the impact, interrelationships, and relevancy of the data on property values. They apply, without modification, the most suitable appraisal approach to estimate values.

Level 4-4 -- 225 Points

At this level, the work involves the use of many different and unrelated appraisal processes and methods. Employees appraise properties and evaluate real property projects or plans (e.g., affordability of a property) for a wide variety of property types with complex characteristics.

Properties to be appraised typically involve one or more of the following aspects:

- few comparable sales or rental rates;
- comparable sales or rental rates requiring extensive value adjustments between the subject property and the property used for comparison;
- a wide variety of legal, environmental, and policy concerns;
- diverse or unclear uses; and
- questionable ownerships.

Properties are located in a variety of different market areas that may involve changing or unstable economic or social conditions. Data collection may be complicated by uncooperative sources or obscure procedures for deed or other legal document recordation for which the employee may be unfamiliar. Properties also may include atypical art forms or business operations. Some employees review completed property appraisals characteristic of those performed at the next lower level of complexity to determine, for example, whether the methods and techniques used are consistent with accepted appraisal practices and precedents; whether the conclusions are logical, supported by, and consistent with the data in the report; and/or what the strengths or weaknesses are in the data or analysis.

Appraisers plan appraisal projects, determine the types and sources of data needed, select and apply the appropriate valuation approach (or combination of approaches), and recommend a value or solution to a property valuation problem. When using more than one approach, they weigh and correlate the different value estimates derived from each method. Valuation requires extensive interpretation and evaluation of a wide variety of property data.

Employees use originality in planning the scope and direction of appraisal assignments and in deciding how to extend and modify existing methods and techniques for application to complex property valuations or difficult review cases. For example, employees may devise methods for locating obscure data, adjust limited or out-of-date sales comparison information, apply different combinations of valuation approaches or variations of appraisal techniques to appraise a typical property types which may involve complex financial or risk analysis, or recommend new or revised policies based on problems encountered in applying modified techniques. Employees may also negotiate with uncooperative sources, such as property owners, fee appraisers, and/or State and local officials, to accept value estimates, comply with agency appraisal policies, or avoid costly court action.

Level 4-5 -- 325 Points

The work involves various duties, projects, or studies requiring many different and unrelated processes, substantial depth of data and value analysis, and significant departures from established

appraisal practices and procedures to estimate values or to develop and implement new methods and analysis techniques. At this level, employees appraise properties involving a broad range of unusual or controversial characteristics; sensitive condemnations or other controversial legal issues; or a large variety of diverse, little known, or undefined market areas and conditions. Assignments may include valuations of properties:

- involving a mixture of conflicting potential uses and values such as in a military base;
- involving unique uses such as in:
 - a bridge, for which established appraisal methods and techniques do not apply or comparable sales data do not exist due to geographic isolation or other factors, or
 - a nursing home, requiring an analysis of its future income and investment potential from factors such as the level and type of services provided, condition of the facility, quantity and quality of staff, and operation expenses such as staff salaries;
- involving characteristics that are intangible such as air rights, historic building facades, or undeveloped subdivisions. The latter requires extensive research and analysis of architectural designs and plans, land surveys and descriptions, homeowner's association plans and policies, and environmental factors including the presence of hazardous material and wetlands and the quality of air, water, and soil;
- involving certain kinds of Federal Government use on one portion of the property causing severe damage or loss in value to the remainder; and/or
- involving unique commercial uses and extensive income analysis such as in a multi-division corporation.

Some employees review completed property appraisals characteristic of those performed at the next lower level of complexity.

Employees decide what to do by considering appraisal theories, concepts, and practices where guidelines, precedents, or policies may be lacking and/or data may be unavailable or nonexistent. For example, information may be lost or invalid; data concerning the future demand and potential income of properties may not exist; or properties may not have comparable sales data. They study valuation theories and concepts to identify and develop new or unique appraisal techniques or criteria for estimating values. Employees also evaluate new or changed techniques and procedures for conflicts with existing requirements.

Assignments require significant departures from established appraisal practices and procedures to--

- plan, organize, and conduct valuation projects for properties with unusual combinations of diverse characteristics, requiring the use of highly modified appraisal techniques;

- review the methodology used and conclusions made in staff and fee appraisal reports for their impact on existing appraisal program policies and goals;
- consider the effect of new standards on existing appraisal programs and prepare policy and procedural changes; and/or
- develop instructions and guidelines for new methods, including anticipating problems that may arise.

FACTOR 5, SCOPE AND EFFECT

Level 5-3 -- 150 Points

The purpose of the work is to resolve a variety of conventional problems, questions, or situations. Employees appraise properties clearly comparable with others in kind and value, independently review staff and fee appraisal reports, or recommend actions based on valuation studies of specific property characteristics. They use well-established appraisal standards, criteria, methods, techniques, and procedures.

Completed reports and recommended values affect the efficient completion of real property transactions. Recommendations also affect the adequacy of activities such as real or personal property value negotiations, loan insurance issuance, or tax law application. Value estimates may affect the economic well-being of property owners, lessees, or permit holders.

Level 5-4 -- 225 Points

The work involves planning and completing complex valuation projects. Employees develop new or modified techniques and methods to appraise and review the appraisals of properties with diverse or unusual characteristics. They may investigate and analyze a wide variety of problems and questions to provide guidance on specific appraisal standards, methods, and techniques, and to recommend new or modified policies.

Recommendations and advice affect a range of agency activities, including the efficient completion of appraisal projects to meet program objectives and the effective management and use of real property. New or modified techniques used in appraisal reports and property analysis set precedents for future valuation projects. Results of the work may affect the economic well-being of the agency, client agencies, taxpayers, or other entities such as wildlife refuges, national parks, or State or local governments.

Level 5-5 -- 325 Points

The purpose of the work is to resolve critical or unusual problems for a broad range of complex appraisal projects, determine the validity and soundness of appraisal policies and programs, and develop policy and guidance to improve appraisal methods for solving unusual valuation problems. Employees analyze appraisal theories and standards to determine the data and appraisal approaches and techniques to use for unique or controversial projects.

Appraisals are the basis for terms agreed to in the acquisition, management (e.g., lease renewals), disposal, and taxation of property. The work significantly affects the use of new methods, standards, and precedents by appraisers within the agency, fee appraisers, and often appraisers in other agencies. The work also affects the economic well-being of entire communities or market areas.

**FACTOR 6, PERSONAL CONTACTS
AND
FACTOR 7, PURPOSE OF CONTACTS**

Determine the appropriate level of personal contacts from levels 1 through 3 below and the corresponding purpose of the contacts from levels a through d. Credit the point value found where the selected levels intersect on the chart below.

Persons Contacted

1. Contacts are with employees within the immediate organization, office, project, or work unit, and in related or support units.
2. Contacts are with employees in the same agency but outside the immediate organization, usually appraisers, realty specialists, and functional experts (engineers, surveyors, attorneys, etc.) from various organizational levels.
3. Contacts are with individuals or groups from outside the employing agency in a moderately unstructured setting (e.g., the contacts are not routine, the purpose and extent of each is different, and the role and authority of each party is identified and developed during the course of contact). Typical contacts include private sector appraisers, brokers, attorneys, property owners, lenders, tax assessors, real estate developers, and builders. Employees may also contact representatives from professional organizations, the news media, civic and public action groups, congressional committees, or State and local governments (e.g., mayors, librarians, record clerks). In some cases, contacts may be on an ad-hoc basis with program officials several managerial levels above the employee.

Purpose of Contacts

- a. The purpose of contacts is to obtain, clarify, or give facts or information regardless of the nature of those facts (i.e., the facts or information may range from easily understood to highly technical).
- b. The purpose of contacts is to plan, coordinate, or advise on work efforts and resolve operating problems by influencing or motivating individuals or groups who are working toward mutual goals and who have basically cooperative attitudes.
- c. The purpose of contacts is to influence, motivate, or question persons or groups to provide property data, accept recommended values, and/or comply with policies. At this level the persons contacted may be fearful of the intent of the questions or results of the recommendations, skeptical about trusting Government employees, unwilling to provide the information, or, at times, dangerous. Employees must have the skill to establish rapport with uncooperative contacts and to approach and persuade individuals or groups to obtain the desired effect.
- d. The purpose of contacts is to justify, defend, negotiate, or settle matters involving significant or controversial topics. Work at this level usually involves active participation in conferences, meetings, hearings, or presentations involving problems or issues of considerable consequence or importance. The persons contacted typically have diverse viewpoints, goals, or objectives, requiring employees to achieve a common understanding of the problem and a satisfactory solution by convincing them, arriving at a compromise, or developing suitable alternatives.

P U R P O S E

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	a	b	c	d
1	30	60	130*	230*
2	45	75	145	245
3	80	110	180	280

*These combinations are probably unrealistic.

FACTOR 8, PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Level 8-1 -- 5 Points

The work is sedentary and requires no special physical demands. It may involve some walking, standing, bending, or carrying of light items.

Level 8-2 -- 20 Points

The work regularly requires some physical exertion such as long periods of standing; walking over rough, uneven, or rocky surfaces; recurring bending, crouching, stooping, stretching, or reaching; or similar activities. Site inspections may require such exertion.

FACTOR 9, WORK ENVIRONMENT

Level 9-1 -- 5 Points

Employees perform work in office or similar settings involving everyday risks or discomforts requiring normal safety precautions. The work area contains adequate light, heat, and ventilation. It may involve occasional travel.

Level 9-2 -- 20 points

The work regularly involves moderate risks or discomforts associated with visiting construction sites, sites with limited access, or remote areas, that require special safety precautions such as wearing protective hardhats, boots, masks, goggles, or gloves.