Office of the Personnel Commission
Job Family Studies
Frequently Asked Questions

This group of frequently asked questions and the corresponding answers were prepared in response to inquiries by employees within the Business Transaction job family regarding the studies initiated by the Personnel Commission.

Q: What is the purpose of the job family studies?
A: The primary purpose of the job family studies is to obtain accurate and descriptive information about the work performed by employees in classified positions. The goals of the studies are to:

- update job descriptions;
- clarify distinguishing characteristics;
- establish career pathways;
- verify internal alignment;
- maintain job families and job hierarchies;
- verify job exemption status; and
- ensure positions are properly classified.

Q: I've never seen the Personnel Commission conduct a study like this – why now?
A: Studies of this type have been conducted in the past. But it has been more than 10 years since the Commission has looked at all of the classifications within a job family at the same time to ensure they are up-to-date and properly aligned.

The Office of Personnel Commission conducted an agency-wide classification study from 2003 to 2005 to update job descriptions and resolve classification related issues.

The Office of Personnel Commission continued to update job descriptions whenever it ran a recruitment.

Q: Is the Office of Personnel Commission studying all job families or just those impacted by the BEST Project?
A: The Office of Personnel Commission will study all of LACOE’s job families. Initially, however, it will study those classifications most likely to be impacted by the BEST Project to meet the transitional needs of the organization.
Q: What are the steps of job family studies?

A: The following are the steps in the study process:

- PC sends class survey
- Employee completes and returns survey
- Individual or group interviews
- Verification with supervisors
- Summary of Duties
- Preliminary report
- Final Report

Q: What is the timeline of the job family studies?

A: The studies were divided into increments based on job family series, in order to make the project manageable and allow the organization to make changes as the studies progress.

We estimate each series to take up to six months to complete, depending on the number of positions, classifications, and other factors. Keep in mind, discussions between LACOE’s Administration and employee unions regarding potential changes can also add delays to the completion of some studies.

Q: What are the possible outcomes of the studies?

A: The studies’ outcomes will include:

- up-to-date job descriptions;
- stronger American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance;
- more accurate internal alignment;
- properly classified positions; and
- helpful data for BEST workforce transition.

Q: If I believe that I am performing duties that are out-of-class, will the job family studies address this issue?

A: The primary purpose of the study is to update job descriptions.

If Personnel Commission staff find that an employee is performing duties that are inconsistent with their classification, Personnel Commission staff will address the issue on case-by-case basis.

Q: If the job family studies determine that I am working below my classification, will I be able to bump the least senior position in my classification?

A: There are various resolutions to a situation where an employee has been assigned duties characteristic of a lower level classification. The following are some of the more common resolutions:

- LACOE’s Administration may choose to place an employee within his or her classification by giving the employee duties more appropriate to their classification;
- an employee may be offered a transfer to a vacant position within the same classification;
• an employee may be offered a lateral transfer to a vacant position into a sufficiently related classification;
• if no vacancy exists, the employee may choose to stay in the same position and take a demotion;
• an employee may choose to be demoted to any vacant position in a lower level classification that is determined to be sufficiently related to the classification; or
• an employee may be laid-off and all applicable bumping rights will be afforded to that person.

Q: Is my participation in the job family studies mandatory?

A: At this time, participation in the job family studies is voluntary, but highly encouraged.

Low employee participation may mean that the Office of Personnel Commission will not have the data needed to accurately update the job descriptions and achieve the many desired outcomes of the studies.

Employees who choose to not participate will not have the opportunity to provide input about elements unique to their position and may thus allow others to dictate the revisions of their classification.

It is possible that some positions may require further study based on information found in our analysis. If such a case were to arise, participation could become mandatory.

Q: Will the results of the study be used to create new classifications?

A: In some cases, LACOE’s Administration may use the data from the job family studies about current skills and responsibilities within a classification to determine if new classifications are necessary. This is especially relevant in the transition to the new BEST Advantage system.

However, this can only be determined after the Office of Personnel Commission has collected the needed data and has a clear understanding of the new BEST Advantage system and any potential new classifications.

This is another example of the value that your participation can have in identifying potential new roles related to the BEST Advantage system.

Q: Will there be any training available to us if there are new classifications?

A: The BEST Workforce Transition Team is looking at providing opportunities for employees to increase or improve their skills wherever it is possible.

However, some new classifications may require specialized knowledge that involves advanced learning in a particular field. Those classifications may have certification or degree requirements that cannot be met by targeted training.
One of the goals of the job family studies is to establish career pathways. Therefore, we encourage all staff to have ongoing career development conversations with their managers.

Q: What’s the Commission’s role with the BEST Project?

A: The Office of Personnel Commission’s role is to work with the BEST Workforce Transition Team to develop solutions to BEST-related transition issues.

Specifically, the Office of Personnel Commission is responsible for assisting LACOE’s Administration with the revision of current job descriptions as the future state of the BEST Advantage system becomes more defined. It is also responsible for establishing new classifications that are required to support the new system, and working with management to offer solutions to transition positions.

These contributions will ensure that roles are properly classified, compensated and in compliance with regulations governing temporary positions.

Q: How much do you know about the new jobs needed for the BEST Project’s implementation of the new BEST Advantage system?

A: The Office of Personnel Commission does not have enough information to fully identify the future roles needed at this time.

Personnel Commission staff are working closely with management and the BEST Workforce Transition Team on positions the new BEST Advantage system will require.

In the short-term, there are roles needed for the BEST Project’s implementation team. These roles are published through our regular process as they become available.

Once the future state of the BEST Advantage system is defined, Personnel Commission staff will work with LACOE Administration to determine additional roles needed to support the system.

The Personnel Commission is actively involved in the BEST Workforce Transition Team where representatives from across LACOE are helping define new processes and roles.

This information will be incorporated as input into the Personnel Commission’s job family studies. The job family studies will be able to provide some of the data needed to help determine the additional roles.

Q: Will I have to compete for my own job during the BEST Project’s implementation?

A: It depends on the degree to which a position changes. If minor changes are made to the classification, the incumbents will not be impacted.

If new roles and responsibilities lead LACOE’s Administration to make structural changes to a unit to meet the new needs, it could result in the closing of some positions and the creation of new positions under new classifications.
If such a situation were to occur, an examination may be run and any interested party could apply and compete for the new role.

Other ways positions may be filled include lateral transfers, reinstatements, or voluntary demotions.

If at any time, during or after the study, you have concerns regarding your position and where you stand in the process, we encourage you to contact us at (562) 803-8360, or email Shirley Chang at Chang_Shirley@lacoe.edu.

Q: Will my experience at LACOE be taken into consideration when new jobs open up?

A: When setting minimum qualifications, Personnel Commission staff will ensure that the amount and kind of education and experience that are minimally required to perform the duties of a classification do not present an unreasonable or artificial barrier to employment.

Every position requires a level of specialization for the proper utilization and application of professional/technical expertise to perform the duties of the job.

Although, Personnel Commission staff do ask for input from management when setting minimum qualifications, ultimately Personnel Commission staff are required to perform an independent analysis and recommend the most appropriate level of minimum qualifications relevant to the job.

Also, keep in mind that experience cannot be a substitute for education, but Personnel Commission staff will make every effort to ensure that education requirements are set at the appropriate level for every classification.

Staff may want to consider speaking with their manager about opportunities to gain experience with the new BEST Advantage system through participation on the BEST Project’s implementation team.

Along with the possible FTE roles that are available on the BEST Project Team, we do expect that there will be opportunities for temporary roles and multiple ways for interested staff to contribute to the project and in so doing, gain valuable experience.

Q: Will those impacted by RIF be informed of new job opportunities?

A: The Office of Personnel Commission provides exit interviews and individual consultations.

Employees may contact the Office of Personnel Commission anytime regarding job opportunities and related processes and procedures.

Employees may also submit interest cards so that they will be notified when a job related to their area of interest opens for recruitment.

To complete an interest card visit: https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/lacoe/jobInterestCards/categories