

Iowa Department of Administrative Services – Human Resources Enterprise
Classification Series Guidelines

Program Manager Series

Classes in the Series

<u>Class Code</u>	<u>Class Title</u>
00710/80710/90710	Program Manager 1
00711/80711/90711	Program Manager 2
00712/90712	Program Manager 3
00713/90713	Program Manager 4
00714/90714	Program Manager 5 – <i>Class is suspended from further use</i>

Series Concept

Positions in this series perform program management work. In the public sector, a program is a formally-established set of coordinated activities designed to deliver a specific public service, regulatory function, or policy objective. Programs have designated funding sources, staffing resources, and measurable outcomes that align with an agency's mission. A program is distinct from an individual process, project, or function and must operate as a standalone entity with defined structure, resources, and accountability.

A program typically has the following characteristics:

1. Defined Mission
 - Exists to achieve a specific government function, service, or regulatory oversight.
 - Addresses a clear public need, legislative mandate, or policy priority.
2. Dedicated Funding & Budget
 - Has a designated funding source (e.g., state/federal appropriations, grants, fees).
 - Includes financial planning, expenditure tracking, and resource allocation.
3. Distinct Resources & Administration
 - Requires staff (direct or indirect), contracts, or partnerships to function.
 - Has its own procedures, service delivery methods, and administrative framework.
4. Authority & Accountability
 - Operates under a defined legal, regulatory, or policy framework.
 - Has performance measures, reporting requirements, and oversight mechanisms.
5. Ongoing Operations
 - Functions continuously, rather than being a short-term project.
 - Evolves over time to meet changing policy, regulatory, or service needs.

If the entity qualifies as a program, the position must be thoroughly evaluated to ensure it exercises true program management authority rather than serving in an advisory, planning, or support role.

Program management work involves the strategic planning, implementation, oversight, and evaluation of a program or initiative to achieve defined objectives. Program managers are responsible for ensuring the program's effectiveness, compliance, and continuous improvement. Positions classified in this series do not have direct supervisory authority over staff, but generally have a lead work responsibility over the program's other staff.

Program Manager Series

Key Responsibilities of a Program Manager:

1. Program Strategy & Planning
 - Develops program goals, objectives, and work plans in alignment with agency priorities.
 - Identifies risks, challenges, and opportunities, proposing solutions as needed.
 - Establishes performance measures and success criteria.
2. Resource & Budget Management
 - Coordinates program budgets, funding allocations, and financial planning.
 - Secures and manages grants or external funding, if applicable.
 - Ensures efficient use of program resources (staff, technology, contracts).
3. Stakeholder & Policy Coordination
 - Engages with internal and external stakeholders, including other agencies, community organizations, and legislators.
 - Interprets and applies laws, regulations, and policies to guide program decisions.
 - Represents the agency in public meetings, committees, or advisory groups.
4. Operational Oversight & Compliance
 - Ensures the program meets legal, regulatory, and policy requirements.
 - Determines the need and develops specific plans for organizational/operational changes.
 - Collects and analyzes data to track program performance and outcomes.
5. Program Evaluation & Continuous Improvement
 - Assesses ongoing program effectiveness and recommends process improvements.
 - Prepares reports, data analyses, and presentations for agency leadership.
 - Implements changes based on feedback, performance trends, and policy shifts.

Each program should have only one designated Program Manager who is responsible for its overall operation, strategic direction, and performance. A Program Manager role is only justified if:

1. The position is the principal decision-maker responsible for managing the program.
2. The program operates independently within an agency's structure (not merely a process or a function within another program).
3. The role requires direct oversight of program policies, budgets, stakeholder engagement, and compliance—not merely support or advisory tasks.

Note: Practically speaking, a single program cannot have multiple Program Managers unless it is large enough to be formally structured into separate, distinct sub-programs that operate independently, each with its own authority, funding, and objectives. However, such an arrangement inherently dilutes the scope and impact of each program manager's role, which must be accounted for when classifying positions within this series.

Exclusions

The following are excluded from classification within this series:

1. Staff positions (e.g., accountants, auditors, examiners; budget, fiscal & policy, and management analysts; human resources, procurement, information, information technology, business systems, and training specialists; education, rehabilitation, and safety/health consultants; investigators; etc.) for which a specific job class or class series exists in the classification plan.
2. Program managers for which a more specific job class or class series exists in the classification plan.

Program Manager Series

3. Program planners and program assistants, who are responsible for the planning and execution of the day-to-day operations of a program and do not have a responsibility for the program's overall operation, strategic direction, and performance.
4. Supervisory positions which are "supervisory exempt" from collective bargaining (e.g., Public Service Leaders, Social Work Supervisors, Utility Administrators, etc.).

Class Distinctions

It is important to understand that, while positions in this series do not perform full supervisory duties, they should manage programs/organizational segments with staff, budgets, and clients served. Level classification factors include:

1. Supervision received (i.e., responsibility for determining program resources, organizational structure, goals, priorities, and the freedom to make changes).
2. Scope and impact (i.e., operations managed in comparison to a department's total operations, as measured by the number of employees directed, dollars expended, clients served, and variety of programs).
3. Policy-making authority (i.e., decision-making authority for all agency programs and policies), which is further defined as follows:
 - Primary – highest decision-making authority in a department; subject only to laws, regulations, and policies issued by the Governor, Legislature, or statewide regulatory agency. This level is typically found only at the agency director or similar statutory role.
 - Secondary – second highest decision-making authority in a department, with an assigned responsibility for developing/adapting policies, goals, priorities, and work standards for the entire department within framework established at the primary level.
 - Operating – decision-making authority of all other management positions in a department with an assigned responsibility for directing program operations in conformance with policies, goals, and priorities established at either the primary or secondary policy level.

Organizational segments referenced below are set forth in Iowa Code section 7E.2(3), and are defined as follows:

- Division – the principal subunit of a "department," headed by an "administrator."
- Bureau – the principal subunit of a "division," headed by a "chief."
- Section – a subunit of a "bureau," headed by a "supervisor."
- Unit – a subunit of a "section," headed by a "unit manager."

Program Manager 1

Employees in this class work within parameters/guidelines established by higher levels of management and operations managed are subject to periodic, after-the-fact review for accomplishment of goals/priorities. The organizational segment (unit) managed represents a limited part of the department's total operations and employees function at the operating policy level, with final decision-making authority confined to the unit. Positions are typically close to the mainstream of production/service delivery and the unit managed is either auxiliary to or a part of a program or group of programs. Incumbents usually have a substantial knowledge of the unit's technical work processes, often to the point of being an authoritative source of information on the subject.

Program Manager Series

Program Manager 2

Employees in this class work within parameters/guidelines established by higher levels of management and operations managed are subject to periodic, after-the-fact review for accomplishment of goals/priorities. The organizational segment (section) managed represents a moderate part of the department's total operations and employees function at the operating policy level, with final decision-making authority confined to the section. Positions are somewhat removed from the mainstream of production/service delivery and the section managed is normally an organizational segment of a program or group of programs. Incumbents usually have considerable knowledge of the technical work processes, sometimes to the point of being an authoritative source of information on the subject.

Program Manager 3

Employees in this class establish program goals and develop organizational plans with limited input from higher levels of management. They determine program resource needs and allocate them within financial parameters set at the secondary policy level. The organizational segment (bureau) managed represents a moderate or larger part of the department's total operations and employees function at the operating policy level, with final decision-making authority confined to bureau operations. Positions are removed from the mainstream of production/service delivery, and incumbents, unless promoted from within, possess only a limited knowledge of technical work processes.

Program Manager 4

Employees in this class determine program resource needs and allocate them within financial parameters set at the primary or secondary policy level. The organizational segment (bureau or division) managed represents a major part of the department's total operations and employees function at a major operating or secondary policy level, with decision-making authority often extending beyond the boundaries of the operations managed. Positions are removed from the mainstream of production/service delivery and incumbents typically have a limited knowledge of technical work processes.

Program Manager 5

This job class is suspended from further use, pursuant to the Department of Administrative Services administrative rule 52.1(2). This job class is not available for general use. Positions currently classified in this job class will be reviewed and reclassified when vacancies occur.

Effective date: 09/26 SA