



United States
Office of Personnel Management

FWS Job Grading Standard for

Meatcutter

7407

TS-71, 2/94

**Workforce Compensation and Performance Service
Classification Programs Division
June 1998, HRCD-5**

WORK COVERED

This standard covers nonsupervisory jobs involved in cutting, trimming, and removing bones from a variety of types of meat, including beef, pork, lamb, and veal. The meat is usually processed from a variety of forms such as boxed beef and pork primals and subprimals, and sides, quarters, primals, and subprimals of lamb and veal. The work includes cutting meat into steaks, roasts, chops, cutlets, ground meat, and other small cuts using powered equipment and handtools such as meat saws, slicers, grinders, tenderizers, knives, and scrapers. In some work situations, the work includes processing fish and poultry. The work may also include wrapping and displaying meat products for retail sale.

This standard cancels and supersedes the Job Grading Standard for Meatcutter, 7407, issued in February 1970.

WORK NOT COVERED

This standard does not cover work that primarily involves:

- Preparing meat, poultry, or fish for cooking in a food preparation facility by trimming, slicing, or dicing. (See [Job Grading Standard for Cook Series, 7404.](#))
- Food service work or simple food preparation work, including attending food counters, cutting meat into serving portions, and transporting food, equipment, and supplies. (See [Job Grading Standard for Food Service Worker Series, 7408.](#))
- Handling, marking, and preparing displays of merchandise or other food items for selection by customers. (See [Job Grading Standard for Store Worker Series, 6914.](#))

TITLES

Jobs covered by this standard below grade 7 are titled *Meatcutting Worker*. Jobs at grade 7 and above are titled *Meatcutter*.

GRADE LEVELS

This standard describes two levels of nonsupervisory work (grades 5 and 7). It does not describe all possible levels at which jobs may be established. If jobs differ substantially from the skill, knowledge, and other work requirements described in the grade levels of this standard, they may be graded above or below the levels described based upon sound job grading methods.

NOTES TO USERS

Changes in the wholesale meat packing industry have created changes in the way meat, fish, and poultry are handled at the local retail sales level (i.e., Federal commissaries). Some meat, particularly beef and pork, is sold by wholesalers primarily in boxed meat configurations in which several boxes contain the primals and/or subprimals that make up a whole or side of beef or pork. Depending upon the geographical area, veal and lamb are sold to retailers in carcass, side, or vacuum-packed quarter, primal, or subprimal form.

Another result of the change in the wholesale meat packing industry is how ground beef is prepared at the retail sales level. Previously, when meatcutters processed cuts by breaking down whole carcasses, there was enough trim to prepare ground beef with the required amount of fat content. With boxed beef, there is not enough trim to properly regulate the fat content when ground beef is prepared. Consequently, commissaries must now buy trim separately, generally sold by wholesalers in tubes, and add it to the meat in order to yield the proper percentage of fat for the finished product.

Another significant change in the industry is the processing of fish and poultry. In years past, wholesalers sold primarily whole poultry and fish. Retailers would then process the items locally by, for example, cutting fish into fillets and preparing various types of chicken parts packs. For safety and health reasons, commissaries and other Federal facilities typically buy prepackaged and prepriced fish and poultry. The exceptions are in those commissaries that have fresh fish markets. In these instances, the fresh fish operation is conducted on a contractual basis. Federal meatcutters generally do not cut fish and poultry, except when requested by commissary patrons. These duties have no grade level impact.

In addition to the retail sales environment, meatcutter positions are also found in various food preparation facilities such as Federal hospitals and military academies. The work of these positions involves preparing cuts of meat, poultry, and fish in ready-to-cook portions. Meatcutters in these environments perform their duties according to various dietary/nutrition and portion control requirements. Since the primary knowledge and skill used by meatcutters in food service operations are essentially the same as those used in retail sales operations, the grade level criteria in this standard applies equally to positions in either setting.

7407-5**Meatcutter, Grade 5****7407-5**

General: The work at this grade involves receiving, cutting, trimming, boning, grinding, traying, shaping, packaging, and displaying meat for retail sale. In some work situations, work at this level involves cutting, trimming, boning, and grinding meat in Federal hospitals or military academies. The work may also include receiving and stocking nonmeat items under the control of the commissary meat department such as prepackaged and prepriced fish, poultry, and processed cold cuts. When assigned display case stocking duties, grade 5 workers inform higher grade meatcutters on the rate of sale of various cuts of meat. They may also advise patrons on cooking methods for various cuts. Some workers at this level also participate in shop cleaning and sanitizing functions. Meatcutting workers at grade 5 receive instructions on work to be done and the tools and equipment that will be needed. Grade 5 workers may work as part of a team in operating meat saws and other processing equipment on a rotational basis. Through day-to-day assignments, workers at this level may develop skill in standard meatcutting techniques and broaden their knowledge of established methods.

Skill and Knowledge: Meatcutting workers at the grade 5 level must have basic knowledge of the muscle, seam, and bone structure of different kinds of animals. They must be able to memorize the various cuts of meat available for sale to customers. Grade 5 workers must have the ability to learn methods of processing meat when given detailed instructions, and must be able to recognize spoiled or questionable meat and nonmeat products.

Workers at this level must have the skill to use handtools such as knives, scrapers, and handsaws. They must also be skilled in operating powered equipment, for example, electric meat saws, slicers, grinders, tenderizers, and wrapping machines. Grade 5 workers must know how to sharpen and care for all tools and equipment used. In addition, they must be familiar with sanitary standards and safety regulations.

In some work settings, grade 5 workers must be familiar with standard receiving and inventory procedures used by the meat department. They must understand display case stocking procedures for meat, prepackaged fish, poultry, and other items. Other grade 5 workers must be familiar with practices involved in cutting meat according to proportion specifications.

Responsibility: The supervisor assigns work orally and gives instructions on the kinds and quantities of meat to be processed and the methods to be used. Grade 5 meatcutting workers receive specific, complete, instructions on new procedures and processes. Some work is done on a production line basis such as operating electric machines to cut, slice, or grind specific weights and quantities of meat. These duties need little supervision during progress. Otherwise, work is subject to spot check during progress and upon completion for compliance with instructions. The operation of electric saws and slicers requires the practice of safety measures to prevent worker injury or machine damage.

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Physical Effort: Grade 5 meatcutting workers walk or stand continuously while working. They frequently lift, push, and pull pieces of meat and boxed portions weighing approximately 18 kilograms (40 pounds) unassisted and occasionally handle heavier whole, side, or quarter carcasses with assistance from other workers.

Working Conditions: Grade 5 meatcutting workers work in cold temperatures of 13 degrees Celsius (45 degrees Fahrenheit) or less and are exposed to temperatures of minus 22 degrees Celsius (10 degrees Fahrenheit) or colder when receiving or storing meat in lockers and freezers. The majority of work is performed in areas that are well lighted and ventilated. Employees are subject to cuts and injuries from knives, powered cutting saws, and blades, and work on wet, slippery floors. Workers at this level use safety devices such as cold weather clothing, hard hats, metal aprons and gloves, and safety shoes.

7407-7**Meatcutter, Grade 7****7407-7**

General: In addition to the work described at the 5 level, work at this level includes performance of the full range of meatcutting tasks to prepare all types of meat for retail sale or for cooking in Federal hospitals or military academy dining halls. The full range of meatcutting tasks includes converting beef, veal, lamb, and pork primals and subprimals into the full range of standard and specially-ordered cuts available at the commissary or for various portion-controlled environments (e.g., menus prepared by nutritionists and/or dieticians). Grade 7 meatcutters estimate and process primals and subprimals into the greatest number of desirable retail pieces or ready-to-cook portions with a minimum of waste. Some examples of primal cuts are chuck, rib, hind shank, fore shank, round rump, and flank. Some examples of retail and ready-to-cook cuts are round steak, cube steak, blade chuck roast, arm chuck roast, rib roast, loin roast, short ribs, chops, stewing beef, lamb roasts, and veal roasts. Grade 7 meatcutters may be rotated periodically to all work stations in the department, e.g., the beef saw, pork saw, boning table, trimming table, and grinder.

At this level, meatcutters perform the cutting portion of cutting tests. Some grade 7 meatcutters may also record data for the tests. They operate all types of grinding equipment to produce ground beef, sausage, ground veal, and ground lamb. They may instruct lower grade employees in cutting and processing meat.

Skill and Knowledge: Grade 7 meatcutters apply knowledge of a wider range of procedures and perform more exacting cuts than grade 5 meatcutting workers. At this grade meatcutters must have knowledge and skill to perform the full range of established meatcutting processes typical of either the retail sales or meal preparation environments. They must have skill in the cutting techniques for different animals using handtools and powered equipment such as knives, electric saws, slicers, grinders, and tenderizers. Grade 7 meatcutters must have full knowledge of processing methods used for different kinds of meat. They must have skill in meatcutting techniques such as cutting at proper angles to yield the greatest number of desirable cuts with a minimum of waste. This includes skill in making the initial cut on primals and subprimals to establish the proper cutting angle to produce the highest yield of retail or ready-to-cook cuts. They must know classes and grades of meat, and have knowledge of muscle, cell, and seam structure of meat in order to cut a palatable, identifiable, quality product with minimum waste. In some work situations, meatcutters at this level may have skill in meat merchandising techniques such as converting slow-moving retail items into more popular, faster-selling items with little or no lost revenue. Grade 7 meatcutters must have skill in the actual cutting and weight recording portions of cutting tests. They must also be able to perform fat percentage tests using fat measuring kits. They must have knowledge of the storage and shelf life of meat, temperature requirements, and length of thawing time for meat. They must have full knowledge of sanitary standards and safety precautions. In some settings, grade 7 meatcutters have full knowledge of and skill in recommending to patrons cooking techniques for all types of cuts of meat sold at the commissary.

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At this grade meatcutters have the ability to determine different grades and types of meats when checking deliveries of these products against requisitions.

In comparison with some grade 5 meatcutting workers who may prepare less complex special orders such as a large number of steaks cut thinner or thicker than usual, grade 7 meatcutters have skill in preparing the more complex special orders such as crown roasts, or breaking down a specially ordered whole, side, or quarter carcass into ready-to-cook portions according to a customer's specifications.

Responsibility: The supervisor assigns work orally or through written instructions such as periodic work station assignments or reminders of special days, e.g., holidays or paydays. From these instructions and from knowledge of the previous day's sales, grade 7 meatcutters determine independently, on a day-to-day basis, the kinds and quantities of meat to cut and the methods to use. They plan their work, selecting the proper sequence, tools, and equipment needed to do the work and, after deciding the best processing techniques, carry out assignments with little or no supervision during progress. Although their work is subject to spot checks, grade 7 meatcutters are relied upon to complete all required work processes. They exercise care in cutting and handling meat to minimize waste and avoid contamination.

Physical Effort: Physical effort at this grade level is the same as [grade 5](#).

Working Conditions: Working conditions at this grade level are the same as [grade 5](#).