

customers, cooking food, stocking shelves, cleaning the establishment or other non-exempt work. Performance of such non-exempt work by a supervisor in a retail establishment does not disqualify the employee from the exemption if the requirements of § 541.100 are otherwise met. Thus, an assistant manager whose primary duty includes such activities as scheduling employees, assigning work, overseeing product quality, ordering merchandise, managing inventory, handling customer complaints, authorizing payment of bills or performing other management functions may be an exempt executive even though the assistant manager spends the majority of the time on non-exempt work.

Subpart C—Administrative Employees

§ 541.200 General rule for administrative employees.

(a) The term “employee employed in a *bona fide* administrative capacity” in section 13(a)(1) of the Act shall mean any employee:

(1) Compensated on a salary or fee basis at a rate of not less than \$425 per week (or \$360 per week, if employed in American Samoa by employers other than the Federal Government), exclusive of board, lodging or other facilities;

(2) With a primary duty of the performance of office or non-manual work related to the management or general business operations of the employer or the employer’s customers; and

(3) Who holds a position of responsibility with the employer.

(b) The term “salary basis” is defined at § 541.602; “fee basis” is defined at § 541.605; “board, lodging or other facilities” is defined at § 541.606; and “primary duty” is defined at § 541.700.

§ 541.201 Related to management or general business operations.

(a) To qualify for the administrative exemption, an employee must perform work related to the management or general business operations of the employer or the employer’s customers. The phrase “related to management or general business operations” refers to the type of work performed by the employee. To meet this requirement, an employee must perform work related to assisting with the running or servicing of the business, as distinguished, for example, from working on a manufacturing production line or selling a product.

(b) Work related to management or general business operations includes, for example, work in areas such as tax, finance, accounting, auditing,

insurance, quality control, purchasing, procurement, advertising, marketing, research, safety and health, personnel management, human resources, employee benefits, labor relations, public relations, government relations and similar activities. Some of these activities may be performed by employees who also would qualify for another exemption. For example, a tax attorney and an accountant likely are performing work that qualifies for the professional exemption.

(c) An employee may qualify for the administrative exemption if the employee performs work related to the management or general business operations of the employer’s customers. Thus, for example, employees acting as advisers and consultants to their employer’s clients or customers (as tax experts or financial consultants, for example) may be exempt.

§ 541.202 Position of responsibility.

To qualify for the administrative exemption, an employee must hold a position of responsibility with the employer. The phrase “position of responsibility” refers to the importance to the employer of the work performed or the high level of competence required by the work performed. To meet this requirement, an employee must either customarily and regularly perform work of substantial importance or perform work requiring a high level of skill or training. The phrase “customarily and regularly” is defined at § 541.710.

§ 541.203 Work of substantial importance.

(a) The phrase “work of substantial importance” means work that, by its nature or consequence, affects the employer’s general business operations or finances to a significant degree.

(b) Work of substantial importance includes activities such as formulating, interpreting or implementing management policies; providing consultation or expert advice to management; making or recommending decisions that have a significant impact on general business operations or finances; analyzing and recommending changes to operating practices; planning long or short-term business objectives; analyzing data, drawing conclusions and recommending changes; handling complaints, arbitrating disputes or resolving grievances; representing the company during important contract negotiations; and work of similar impact on general business operations or finances. Work of substantial importance thus is not limited to employees who participate in the formulation of management policies or in the operation of the business as a

whole. It includes the work of employees who carry out major assignments in conducting the operations of the business, or whose work affects general business operations to a significant degree, even though their assignments are tasks related to the operation of a particular segment of the business.

(1) For example, an employee who is a buyer of a particular type of equipment in an industrial plant or who is an assistant buyer for a retail or service establishment may have a significant impact on the business, even though the work may be limited to purchasing for a particular department. Similarly, although comparison shopping by an employee who merely reports findings on a competitor’s prices is not work of substantial importance, the buyer who evaluates such reports to set the employer’s prices does perform work of substantial importance.

(2) Insurance claims adjusters also generally perform work of substantial importance, whether they work for an insurance company or other type of company, if their duties include activities such as interviewing insureds, witnesses and physicians; inspecting property damage; reviewing factual information to prepare damage estimates; evaluating and making recommendations regarding coverage of claims; determining liability and total value of a claim; negotiating settlements; and making recommendations regarding litigation.

(3) An employee who leads a team of other employees assigned to complete a major project for the employer (such as purchasing, selling or closing all or part of the business, negotiating a real estate transaction or a collective bargaining agreement, or designing and implementing productivity improvements) performs work of substantial importance, even if the employee does not have direct supervisory responsibility over the other employees on the team.

(4) Other employees that perform work of substantial importance, even if their decisions or recommendations are reviewed for possible modification or rejection at a higher level, include: a human resources manager who formulates employment policies; a management consultant who studies the operations of a business and proposes change in organization; a purchasing agent who is required to consult with top management officials when making a purchase commitment for raw materials in excess of the contemplated plant needs; or an executive or administrative assistant to a proprietor or chief executive of a business if such