

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW APPEALS

Middlesex, ss.

Jayson Griffin,
Petitioner,

Docket No.: CR-25-0517

v.

State Board of Retirement,
Respondent.

Appearances:

For Petitioner: Jayson Griffin (pro se)

For Respondent: Jacqueline J. Sullivan, Esq. and Alison K. Eggers, Esq.

Administrative Magistrate:

Karen T. Guthrie

SUMMARY OF DECISION

The petitioner, a Youth Service Program Officer (Detention Coordinator), is not entitled to Group 2 classification because he did not prove that his regular and major duties involved the care, custody, instruction or other supervision of youth committed to the Department of Youth Services.

DECISION

Petitioner, Jayson Griffin, timely appealed the decision of the State Board of Retirement (“Board”) that denied Group 2 classification for his position as a Youth Service Program Officer (Detention Coordinator). I conducted an evidentiary hearing on July 7, 2026 via Webex at the Division of Administrative Law Appeals in Malden, MA. I admitted into evidence five exhibits (Exs. 1-5) referenced in the Joint Pre-Hearing Memorandum, and an additional two exhibits (Exs. 6 and 7) filed by Respondent on June 25, 2026. Mr. Griffin testified at the evidentiary hearing. The parties submitted closing memoranda, and on August 27, 2026, the record closed.

Findings of Fact

Based on the evidence presented by the parties, I make the following findings of fact:

1. Mr. Griffin became a member of the state retirement system in December 1989 when he began working for the Department of Youth Services (“DYS”). (Ex. 3.)
2. In September 2016, he began his current position as Youth Services Program Officer C (Detention Coordinator). (Ex. 6.)
3. He worked at a facility, located in Middleton, MA, which is “hardware secure,” as opposed to “staff secure”.¹ (Testimony.)
4. Mr. Griffin’s work schedule was Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Testimony.)
5. According to the job description, Detention Coordinators “determine the placement of juveniles in detention facilities, assess the necessity of medication and transportation for all detainees, escapees, and parole violators, and disseminate gang information.” (Ex. 6.)
6. Specific job duties of a Detention Coordinator are described as follows:
 - Assigns and monitors juveniles at the various detention locations to determine appropriate detention placement; makes decisions concerning the need for relocation or changes in program/facility placement, service plans or referrals.

¹ A “hardware secure” facility is a DYS residential facility “characterized by locked entrances and exits and other physically restrictive construction and procedures designed to prevent a youth from physically leaving the program without the Department’s approval.” 109 CMR § 2.02; *Commonwealth v. Terrell*, 486 Mass. 596, 598 n. 6 (2021) (the Department may place committed juveniles fourteen years of age or older in residential facilities that are either “hardware secure” or “staff secure”). A “hardware secure” facility resembles jail or prison but is for youth committed to DYS. *Id.* at 599-600. A “staff secure” facility is a DYS residential facility “characterized by unlocked entrances and exits where staff personnel provide the primary security to prevent a youth from physically leaving the program without the approval of the Department.” 109 CMR § 2.02.

- Obtains information, from all available sources, about juveniles referred to DYS, to include data from the Criminal/Juvenile Justice network, Social Service and Mental Health Agencies, interviews, observation, review of records and visits to various facilities. Information gained is used to determine appropriate placement.
 - Ensures quality control, coordinates the gathering of information, maintains accurate records, prepares reports and enters into the Juvenile Justice Enterprise Management System (JJEMS) data regarding clients, placements, referrals, statistics and all other information deemed necessary.
 - Attends departmental training and information sessions and implements such procedures and policies which relate to detention services.
 - Supervises transportation officers and coordinates transportation to and from various facilities. (Ex. 6.)
7. In addition, sometimes the following duties were required of a Detention Coordinator:
- provide transportation of clients
 - supervise a client in an office setting prior to transportation
 - physically and mechanically restrain a youth. (Ex. 6.)
8. Mr. Griffin oversaw the facility's "safe and secure intake operations," including transportation of the youth at the facility. (Ex. 6; Testimony.)
9. He was responsible for coordinating placement of the youth released by juvenile and adult courts into custody and ran the intake office as the senior staff member. (Testimony; Ex. 6.)

10. He was responsible for direct communication with the courts and transportation officers to ensure custody was maintained and transfers were completed safely.

(Testimony.)
11. He also was responsible for direct communication with facility personnel to ensure the youth were safely and securely transferred. (Testimony).
12. Each day Mr. Griffin was responsible for assigning duties to five transportation officers, regarding their schedule for transporting “clients” (the youth at the facility) to courts or hospitals, or to meetings with police or attorneys. (Testimony.)
13. If one of the transportation officers was absent, he would fill in for them. He did not know how often this occurred; he estimated that at least one transportation officer was absent “60% of the time.” He did not know how much time he spent on these tasks. (Testimony.)
14. If he was covering for a transportation officer, he sometimes worked overtime hours because of the time necessary to travel. (Testimony.)
15. For transport, two staff members were assigned to a client. One would act as the “observer” of the client, and the other would do the actual searching, cuffing, and shackling before the client went into the van. Mr. Griffin did not know how often he acted in each role, while filling in for an absent transportation officer. (Testimony.)
16. When Mr. Griffin assisted in transporting clients to meet with police or attorneys, he waited outside the room during the meeting. (Testimony.)
17. When he was in the office, he would field phone calls all day from the courts and police. About 10% of the time, he had phone calls from the youths about their belongings, as he oversaw the room where property was secured. (Testimony.)

18. Phone calls and related paperwork comprised at least four hours of his workday.

(Testimony.)

19. If there was a security breach within the facility, he would assign an employee to handle it. Sometimes he would handle the situation instead, by securing the youth in their rooms and physically restraining them if necessary. Breaches occurred approximately three times per week, but Mr. Griffin did not know how frequently he directly handled the security breaches, or how much time this entailed. (Testimony.)

20. Mr. Griffin applied for Group 2 classification for his position as Youth Services Program Officer C (Detention Coordinator). (Ex. 6.)

21. On August 29, 2025, the Board denied his request. (Ex. 1.)

22. Mr. Griffin timely appealed.² (Ex. 2.)

Analysis

For retirement purposes, each public employee is assigned to one of four groups. G.L. c. 32, § 3(2)(g). Group 1 consists of “general employees including clerical, administrative and technical workers, laborers, mechanics and all others not otherwise classified.” *Id.* Group 2 includes, among other employees, those “whose regular and major duties require them to have the care, custody, instruction or other supervision of wayward children. . . .” *Id.*

The position of Youth Service Program Officer (Detention Coordinator) is not among the specific job titles included in Group 2 under G. L. c. 32, § 3(2)(g). Therefore, to qualify for Group 2 classification, Mr. Griffin must prove by a preponderance of the evidence that his “regular and major duties require him to have the care, custody, instruction or other supervision of . . .

² In December 2025, the Board approved requests of Mr. Griffin for pro-rated Group 2 classification of three other positions, which are not the subject of this appeal. (Agreed fact.)

wayward children.” *Id.* Mr. Griffin may satisfy this burden by showing that he spent more than half of his time engaged in providing such services to these children. *Forbes v. State Bd. of Ret.*, No. CR-13-146, at *6 (Contrib. Ret. App. Bd. Jan. 8, 2020). The population of children who have been committed to the Department of Youth Services falls within the category of “wayward children”. *Id.*, at *5-6.

To determine an employee’s “regular and major duties,” the responsibilities listed in the written job description may be considered. *Id.* Actual duties performed by the employee are also important factors in the group classification. *See Desautel v. State Bd. of Ret.*, CR-18-0080, at *3 (Contrib. Ret. App. Bd. August 2, 2023). Individuals who serve in a supervisory capacity but are required to provide direct care on a regular basis for more than half of their working hours are eligible for Group 2 classification even though their job involves supervision and administration. *Id.*, at *3. The interactions must be direct and substantive. *See McKinney v. State Bd. of Ret.*, CR-17-230, CR-17-868 (Div. Admin. Law App. Sep. 29, 2023).

Instructing and disciplining youth may constitute care, supervision or instruction of youth. *See Ryan v. State Bd. of Ret.*, CR-22-0038 (Aug. 16, 2024). To qualify, the contact must be personal and direct. *Id.*

As a Youth Service Program Officer (Detention Coordinator), Mr. Griffin served in a supervisory capacity, and oversaw the facility’s safe and secure intake operations, including transportation of the youth at the facility. He was responsible for coordinating placement of the youth released by courts into custody and ran the intake office as the senior staff member. He was responsible for direct communication with the courts and transportation officers to ensure custody was maintained and transfers were completed safely. He assigned duties each day to a staff of five transportation officers. His role involved fielding phone calls to staff and the courts

throughout the day and completing paperwork. These are all supervisory and administrative duties, not duties involving “care, custody, instruction or other supervision” of the youth.

At times, he had contact with the youth at the facility. Specifically, when a transportation officer was absent and he filled in, he prepared the youth for transport or observed them during transport to another location. During security breaches at the facility, sometimes he participated directly in securing or restraining the youth. On this record, it is difficult to say whether his contact was “care, custody, instruction or other supervision.” However, this is irrelevant, as the contact did not comprise more than fifty percent of his time.

Mr. Griffin did not provide evidence of the frequency or amount of time this contact occurred. He testified that “60% of the time” he was required to fill in for a transportation officer. This involved either preparing the youth for transport or observing them during transport. However, he did not quantify the amount of work time this entailed. He did not ultimately prove that his care, supervision, or instruction of the youth constituted over fifty percent of his work time, as required for Group 2 classification.

Mr. Griffin also seems to argue that as the Detention Coordinator, present at the facility and overseeing intake operations, he had custody of the clients, even through his administrative duties. This is incorrect. “Custody in the correctional context has been interpreted to involve the exercise of physical control over prisoners and control over the doors and gates of secure areas.” *McKinney v. SBR*, CR-17-230 (Div. Admin. Law App. Sep. 29, 2023). This is illustrated in *Long v. SBR*, CR-21-0616 (Div. Admin. Law App. Mar. 29, 2024), where the petitioner worked in a DYS “staff secure” facility, in which he and the staff “were solely responsible for maintaining custody of the committed youth around the clock, whether they [were] physically with them or sitting in a different building,” and he was found to have custody over the youth “100% of the

time he [was] working.” *Id.* The petitioner in *Long* clearly met Group 2 classification because his duties involved custody of the youth more than fifty percent of the time. In contrast, Mr. Griffin worked in a hardware secure, “locked down” facility monitored by institutional security officers, so he did not similarly maintain custody of the committed youth. *See Id.* While his time transporting youth to another facility may constitute having custody of the youth, Mr. Griffin did not prove that this occurred more than fifty percent of his work day.

Conclusion and Order

For the foregoing reasons, the decision of the Board is hereby AFFIRMED.

Dated: September 18, 2026

/s/ Karen T. Guthrie
Karen T. Guthrie
Administrative Magistrate
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