

A Master's degree in Public Administration, Business Administration, Social Work Administration, Personnel Administration, Psychology, or Guidance and Counseling could be substituted for one year of nonsupervisory experience. Applicants who did not possess the required education may substitute four years of additional nonsupervisory experience of the type indicated in the experience section. The appellant was found to be below the minimum requirements in experience. It is noted that 24 candidates have been admitted to the examination, and the examination results are not yet available.

The appellant indicate on her application that she possessed a Bachelor's degree, and a Master's degree in Forensic Psychology. Accordingly, the appellant needed six years of applicable experience, including three years of supervisory experience. She listed experience in eight positions: Personnel Assistant 1, Personnel Assistant 2, three positions as a Personnel Assistant 4, Education Program Assistant 1, Directories Editor with American Lawyer Media, and Human Resources Representative with Bally's Park Place Casino/Hotel. She was credited with three years, two months of experience in the first two positions, which included supervisory experience, and was found to be lacking two years, ten months of applicable non-supervisory experience.

On appeal, the appellant states that she accrued applicable experience in her three positions as a Personnel Assistant 4, and she provides a resume with highlighted duties. She states that while portions of her jobs included filing, checking forms and routine processing of actions in PMIS, she also interviewed candidates, ran the schedule for the State ID credentialing system, established a new Human Resources field office, ran human resource orientation and administered a reduction in force. This was in addition to providing guidance to staff on various issues from recruitment to FMLA, conducting research for her superiors and providing reporting.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.3(b) provides that applicants shall meet all requirements specified in the open competitive examination announcement by the closing date.

For experience to be acceptable, it must have as its primary focus full-time responsibilities in the areas required in the announcement. The amount of time, and the importance of the duty, determines if it is the primary focus. *See In the Matter of Bashkim Vlashi* (MSB, decided June 9, 2004). The appellant was deemed to be ineligible for the subject examination since she lacked two years, ten months of qualifying non-supervisory experience. A review of her application indicates that this determination is correct.

When an applicant indicates extensive experience in titles established under the State Classification Plan for an open competitive examination, it is appropriate to utilize the job specifications to determine the primary focus of the duties of incumbents serving in career service titles. In the eligibility screening process for open competitive examinations, reliance on the job specifications to determine the primary focus of duties for incumbents of a particular title or title series provides a standardized basis on which Agency Services can evaluate what an applicant indicates on his or her application to what incumbents in a particular title series generally perform. *See In the Matter of William Moore* (MSB, decided May 10, 2006). The job specification for Personnel Assistant 4 defines that title as:

Under the close supervision of a supervisory official in a state department, institution, or agency, assists in the work of the overall personnel program by performing routine personnel work pertinent to one or more major personnel program areas; does other related duties.

Due to the nature of the title, as the first entry of the title series, it is by definition the lowest title and therefore incumbents perform the routine or the least difficult work in the series. The Personnel Assistant 4 title is professional, requiring a Bachelor's degree, and is not a "super-clerical" or paraprofessional title. The focus of the duties of a Personnel Assistant 4 is to assist with the basic professional duties of administering an overall personnel program. This may include assisting with reviewing and evaluating workloads, systems and procedures; installing, using and changing reporting systems; providing advice, information and assistance; reviewing forms; maintaining liaisons for personnel services; research and assembly of information for studies and investigations; performing technical work including handling problems requiring review and analysis; answering questions regarding the interpretation and application of rules and regulations, policies and procedures; recruiting and interviewing prospective employees; assisting with an orientation program and conducting exit interviews; and conducting surveys and studies. As the announced experience requirement specified that qualifying experience does not include routine processing of personnel transactions, completion and checking of forms, filing or data entry as a primary function, clearly experience in the lowest level of the series was not intended to be acceptable.

In this case, the appellant listed three positions as a Personnel Assistant 4. While she provided some examples of non-routine duties, such as establishing a human resource office and streamlining procedures to increase productivity and efficiency, these types of duties are interspersed throughout routine activities. As such, it is not persuasive that routine activities were not the primary function of these positions. In sum, the appellant's Personnel Assistant 4 experience is not qualifying for this manager level position. Her remaining positions, as Education Program Assistant 1 and Directories Editor with American Lawyer Media had no applicable duties, and Human Resources Representative with Bally's Park Place

Casino/Hotel had routine processing of personnel transactions as the primary focus. The appellant possesses three years, two months of applicable experience in her positions as Personnel Assistant 1 and Personnel Assistant 2 as of the June 2018 closing date, and possession of a Master's degree equals one year of non-supervisory experience. Therefore, the appellant lacks two years, ten months of qualifying non-supervisory experience.

The appellant was denied admittance to the subject examination since she lacked the minimum requirements in experience. An independent review of all material presented indicates that the decision of Agency Services, that the appellant did not meet the announced requirements for eligibility by the closing date, is amply supported by the record. The appellant provides no basis to disturb this decision. Thus, the appellant has failed to support her burden of proof in this matter.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied.

This is the final administrative determination in this matter. Any further review should be pursued in a judicial forum.

DECISION RENDERED BY THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION ON
THE 9th DAY OF JULY, 2019



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