

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION  
OF THE  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of Robert Hornby,  
Agricultural Resource Specialist 2  
(C0419A), Hunterdon County

Examination Appeal

CSC Docket No. 2020-1045

ISSUED: November 12, 2019 (RE)

Robert Hornby appeals the determination of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) that he did not meet the education requirement for the open competitive examination for Agricultural Resource Specialist 2 (C0419A), Hunterdon County.

The examination at issue had a closing date of May 6, 2019 and was open to residents of Hunterdon County who met the announced requirements. These requirements included graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree including or supplemented by twelve semester hour credits in one or any combination of the following: agricultural science, natural resource management, environmental science, environmental planning, or land use planning, and two years of experience in reviewing, developing, implementing, and maintaining agricultural, environmental, or land use management programs in the public or private sector. Applicants who did not possess the Bachelor's degree, but who possessed the credits outlined above could substitute experience for the remaining education (years necessary to complete the degree) on a year-for-year basis. Also, a Master's degree in Agricultural Science, Natural Resource Management, Environmental Science, Environmental Planning, Land Use Planning, or other related field may be substituted for one year of required experience. As there were no admitted candidates, the examination was cancelled on October 11, 2019.

The appellant indicated that he graduated with a Bachelor's degree in English, and he listed four positions on his application; provisional Agricultural Resource Specialist 2; Open Space Coordinator with Delaware Township (part time, 12 hours per week); Open Space Liaison with Delaware Township (part time, 6 hours per week); and Open Space Advocate with Delaware Township (part time, 4

hours per week). He was credited with two years of applicable full-time experience in all of his positions, and was credited with 2 college credits in International Agriculture. He was found to be lacking ten applicable credits.

On appeal, the appellant indicates that his classes in Domestic Animal Biology 1 and 2 (8 credits) and in Biological Sciences lectures and labs (8 credits) were necessary for a degree in Agriculture and Life Sciences. They support the study and practice of animal husbandry. In support, the Director of Human Resources states that this background makes him uniquely qualified to serve the agricultural community.

### CONCLUSION

*N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.3(b)2 requires applicants to possess all the requirements specified in an announcement for an open competitive examination by the closing date. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.12(a) provides that, for titles requiring specific coursework or major fields of study, the successful completion of the coursework or fields of study shall be required. Further, *N.J.A.C.* 4A:1-1.2(c) states that the Civil Service Commission (Commission) may relax a rule for good cause in order to effectuate the purposes of Title 11A, New Jersey Statutes.

Initially, Agency Services correctly determined that the appellant lacked ten credits in agricultural science, natural resource management, environmental science, environmental planning, or land use planning. However, the appellant meets the experience requirements, and his credits in biology and animal science, while not in the required fields, is related. Further, he remains in his provisional position and there were no other applicants for the examination. Therefore, the Commission finds that the totality of his college education and experience in the subject title are acceptable to meet the education requirements for the subject examination. It is noted that this remedy is limited to the particular circumstances of this matter and does not set a precedent in any other matter.

### ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be granted, the exam cancellation be rescinded, and the appellant's application be processed for current employment opportunities.

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 6<sup>th</sup> DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2019



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