

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

**FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

In the Matter of Cherina (Dean)
Gerheiser, Rehabilitation Counselor
Mental Health (S0846V), Statewide

CSC Docket No. 2019-174

Examination Appeal

ISSUED: MAY 3, 2021 (EG)

Cherina (Dean) Gerheiser¹ appeals the determination of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) which found that she was below the minimum requirements in experience for the open competitive examination for Rehabilitation Counselor Mental Health (S0846V), Statewide.

The subject examination was announced with pertinent requirements which had to be met as of the announced closing date of November 17, 2017. Applicants were required to have graduated from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree including or supplemented by 24 semester hour credits in a combination of any of the following areas: Vocational Counseling, Rehabilitation Counseling, Psychology, Sociology, Social Work, Vocational Guidance, Special Education or related areas. The experience requirements were one year of experience in vocational/rehabilitational guidance or counseling, other related guidance and counseling, or social or medical casework in a rehabilitation agency, facility or other social program designed to increase the employability or social productivity of clients. It was noted that a Master's degree in any of the above areas could be substituted for one year of the experience indicated above. It was also noted that applicants who possessed the 24 semester hour credits listed above but who did not possess the Bachelor's degree could substitute additional experience for the remaining education on a year-for-year basis with one year of experience is equal to 30 semester hour credits. A total of 89 individuals applied for the subject examination that resulted in a list of 22 eligibles with an expiration date of October 2, 2022. The list has been certified five times and resulted in seven appointments. There are four eligibles remaining the list.

¹ The appellant's name at the time the appeal was originally filed was Cherina Dean.

A review of the appellant's application reveals that she possesses a Bachelor's degree in Psychology. Additionally, in her application she listed positions as a Human Services Assistant with New Lisbon Developmental Center from October 2009 through the closing date of the examination, and as a Residential Counselor with Preferred Behavioral Health from October 2016 through the closing date of the examination. Agency Services reviewed the appellant's application and determined that she did not possess any applicable experience. Agency Services noted that no resume was attached to her application.

On appeal, the appellant argues that as a Residential Counselor she performed duties such as: providing rehabilitative services to patients transitioning from hospitalization to independent living; provided full supervision due to patients treatment needs, counseled disabled patients to develop vocational goals; trained in career search; provided support to increase social productivity; taught and supported independent living skills; transported clients to rehabilitation services in the community; and prepared reports and correspondence. Additionally, she states that she worked as a Training Coordinator for New Lisbon Developmental Center from December 2015 to August 2017 and provides the duties she performed in this position.

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. Additionally, *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.1(f) states that prior to the announced application filing date, an applicant may amend a previously submitted application. Further, *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-6.3(b) provides that an appellant has the burden of proof in examination and selection disqualification appeals.

Initially, the Civil Service Commission notes that the information the appellant provided on appeal concerning her experience as a Training Coordinator was not included in her application and is not considered clarifying information, which may be allowed, but rather amended information, which is not permitted after the closing date of the examination under *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.1(f). Thus, the information provided on appeal concerning this position cannot be considered for the present examination.

In the instant matter, Agency Services determined that based on the information the appellant submitted by the application's deadline, she did not possess any relevant experience to establish eligibility for the title of Rehabilitation Counselor Mental Health. On appeal, the appellant argues that as a Residential Counselor she performed duties relevant to the subject title and she possesses sufficient experience to be found eligible for the subject examination. It has been established that in order for experience to be considered applicable, it must have as its primary focus full-time responsibilities in the areas required in the

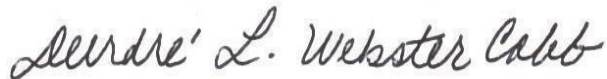
announcement. A review of the appellant's application and materials submitted on appeal reveals that the primary focus of the duties she performed in the positions listed did not meet the primary focus of the Rehabilitation Counselor Mental Health title as required. Specifically, the Human Services Assistant position is a direct care position and does not have as its primary duty the experience required for the subject examination. Further, the duties provided in the application for Residential Counselor clearly indicates that the primary duties of the position were not in guidance or counseling, other related guidance and counseling, or social or medical casework. Accordingly, based on the foregoing, the appellant has not met her burden of proof, and has not provided a basis to disturb the determination of Agency Services that she was ineligible for the title under test.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that the 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 28th DAY OF APRIL, 2021



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