



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

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

In the Matter of Isaac Toney Jr.,
Customer Service Representative
(M0585B), Trenton

CSC Docket No. 2021-1584

Examination Appeal

ISSUED: AUGUST 6, 2021 (RE)

Isaac Toney Jr. appeals the determination of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) which found that he did not meet the minimum requirements in experience for the open competitive examination for Customer Service Representative (M0585B), Trenton.

The subject examination had a closing date of August 21, 2020 and was open to residents of Trenton who possessed one year of experience in receiving and handling of customer complaints and inquiries. The appellant was found to be ineligible based on a lack of experience. Five candidates appear on the eligible list which has been certified once, resulting in one appointment and two removed candidates.

The appellant listed eight positions on his application and resume, yet did not indicate in any position that he was handling complaints and/or did not indicate experience in receiving and handling customer complaints and inquiries. These positions included Training Technician; Senior Research Representative/Customer Services Representative with Cenlar FSB; Client Services Representative with Quest Diagnostics; Credit Specialist with Verizon Communications; Customer Services Representative with CASCI; Customer Services Representative/Certification Specialist/Financial Counselor with Princeton Healthcare Systems; Customer Services Representative with New Jersey CAR; and Customer Services Representative/Workflow Coordinator/Support Specialist with Aetna U.S. Healthcare. None of this was accepted and the appellant was found to be lacking one year of required experience.

On appeal, the appellant provides a resume and argues that he should be eligible based on his duties as a Customer Services Representative/Certification Specialist/Financial Counselor with Princeton Healthcare Systems, Senior Research Representative/Customer Services Representative with Cenlar FSB, and as a Training Technician. It is noted that the appellant was removed from his Training Technician title in January 2021, and he argues that he had a hearing at the Office of Administrative Law on July 14, 2021, when he submitted a federal bonding letter.

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.

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-6.1(a)5 provides that a person may be denied examination eligibility or appointment when he or she has been removed from the public service for disciplinary reasons after an opportunity for a hearing.

A review of the appellant's application reveals that the decision by the Agency Services, denying the appellant's admittance to the subject examination due to the fact that he does not possess the required experience, was correct.

At the outset, it is noted that the application is not a formality used to schedule examinations as this agency makes official determinations for eligibility for all prospective candidates for position in State or local Civil Service jurisdictions since only those applicants who meet the minimum eligibility requirements are then evaluated through the testing process in order to determine relative merit and fitness. Eligibility for a given examination is determined based on the information provided on the application. The announcement states, "You must complete your application in detail. Your score may be based on a comparison of your background with the job requirements. Failure to complete your application properly may lower your score or cause you to fail." The Online Application System User Guide repeats, "Failure to complete your application properly may cause you to be declared ineligible or may lower your score if your application is your test paper." The guide asks candidates to carefully review the application to ensure that it is complete and accurate before submitting, and states, if supplemental documents are required, they should be uploaded with the application or submitted within five business days of submitting the online application. To proceed to the payment section, candidates must certify that their application is complete and accurate.

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. *See In the Matter of Bashkim Vlashi* (MSB, decided June 9, 2004). The amount of time, and the importance of the duty, determines whether it is the primary focus. In

addition, an experience requirement that lists a number of duties which define the primary experience requires that the applicants demonstrate that they *primarily* performed *all* those duties for the required length of time. Performance of only one or some of the duties listed is not indicative of comprehensive experience. The appellant listed eight positions on his application. In this respect, for three employers, he listed multiple titles with one set of duties. For Cenlar FSB, he was a Senior Research Representative/Customer Services Representative. These are two different titles with two different sets of duties, although on another application, the appellant entitled this position "Mortgage Loan Service." For Princeton Healthcare Systems, the appellant was a Customer Services Representative/Certification Specialist/Financial Counselor, and for Aetna U.S. Healthcare, he was a Customer Services Representative/Workflow Coordinator/Support Specialist. While Customer Services Representative is in each set, it is not clear whether this was a separate position from each of the other titles. None of this experience is acceptable as it cannot be determined when Customer Services Representative duties were performed, nor which of the duties listed pertain to this title. None of these descriptions are acceptable.

The primary focus of the appellant's Training Technician title was clearly training; as a Credit Specialist he was determining credit "worthiness" and providing information; and as a Client Services Representative he reported laboratory results, documented information, maintained records, resolved patient testing issues, and reported client concerns. These descriptions do not have the announced experience requirement as the primary focus.

As a Customer Services Representative with CASCI, the appellant explained and verified insurance benefits, provided claim status and information, explained services and forwarded claims payments to appropriate areas for resolution. As a Customer Services Representative with New Jersey CAR, the appellant handled daily phone calls dealing with benefit issues, processed claims, corresponded regarding claim payments, and coordinated with provider relations. Neither of these descriptions included receiving and handling of customer complaints. Based on the information as given, the appellant does not meet the experience requirements.

In any event, the record indicates that at the closing date, in August 2020, the appellant was serving as a Training Technician with Mercer County. However, prior to receiving his Notification of Ineligibility and filing his appeal for the current examination, the appellant was separated from service on January 14, 2021 for disciplinary reasons and after a hearing with the appointing authority. The appellant filed an appeal with the Office of Administrative Law, has had a hearing, and the results of this hearing are not yet available. At this time, the appellant is ineligible as he failed to meet the experience requirements.

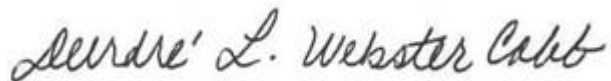
An independent review of all material presented indicates that the decision of the Agency Services that appellant did not meet the announced requirements for eligibility by the closing date is amply supported by the record. The appellant provides no basis to disturb this decision. Thus, the appellant has failed to support his 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 4TH DAY OF AUGUST, 2021



Deirdre L. Webster Cobb
Chairperson
Civil Service Commission

Inquiries
and
Correspondence

Allison Chris Myers
Director
Division of Appeals and Regulatory Affairs
Civil Service Commission
Written Record Appeals Unit
P. O. Box 312
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0312

c: Isaac Toney Jr.
Division of Agency Services
Records Center