



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

In the Matter of Loretta Giddens and Leighann Mathis, Social Worker 2 (PS6270K), Vineland Developmental Center	:	FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
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CSC Docket Nos. 2022-1601 and 2022-1344	:	Examination Appeals
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ISSUED: APRIL 11, 2022

Loretta Giddens and Leighann Mathis appeal the determinations of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) that they did not meet the experience requirements for the promotional examination for Social Worker 2 (PS6270K), Vineland Developmental Center. As these matters contain similar issues, they have been consolidated herein.

The subject examination had a September 21, 2021, closing date. The education requirement was a Bachelor’s degree. The experience requirements were one year in social case work, which shall have the responsibility for gathering and analyzing social information from clients, the determination of their needs, and the planning and administration of treatment plans geared toward the needs of individual clients. A Bachelor’s degree in Social Work including or supplemented by a supervised field placement accredited by the Council on Social Education could have been substituted for the above education and experience requirements. Possession of a Master’s degree in Social Work from an accredited college or university could have been substituted for one year of indicated experience. The appellants were the only two applicants and the examination was cancelled due to a lack of qualified candidates.

On Giddens’ application, she indicated that she possessed a Bachelor’s degree in Social Work, which included an internship as part of the curriculum. She also indicated that she was provisionally serving in the subject title from December 2020

to September 2021. Personnel records indicate that she was provisionally serving in the subject title from December 2020 to the September 21, 2021, closing date, a Cottage Training Supervisor from February 2000 to December 2020, a Cottage Training Technician from November 1997 to February 2000, a Human Services Assistant from October 1996 to November 1997, a Therapy Aide from January 1996 to October 1996, and a Human Services Assistant from May 1992 to January 1996. Agency Services credited her with having met the education requirement, but determined that she lacked one year of the required experience.

On Mathis' application, she indicated that she has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology. She also indicated that she was provisionally serving in the subject title from August 2019 to the September 21, 2021, closing date, a Therapy Program Assistant from September 2011 to August 2019, a Human Services Assistant from November 2010 to September 2011¹, and a Direct Care Professional for Elwyn New Jersey from August 2007 to February 2009. Agency Services credited her with having met the education requirement, but determined that she lacked one year of the required experience.

On appeal, the appellants explain in detail how they perform the required duties while provisionally serving in the subject.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.1(g) provides that the Civil Service Commission (Commission) can accept clarifying information in eligibility appeals. For example, information submitted on appeal pertaining to duties in a given position that expands or enlarges information previously submitted is considered clarifying and is accepted.

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.6(a) provides that applicants shall meet all requirements specified in the promotional announcement by the closing date. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:1-1.2(c) states that the Commission may relax a rule for good cause in order to effectuate the purpose of Title 11A, New Jersey Statutes. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-6.3(b) provides that the appellant has the burden of proof in examination appeals.

Initially, Agency Services correctly determined that the appellants were not eligible as they did not clearly describe how they were performing the required duties while provisionally serving in the subject title.² However, on appeal, Giddens clarifies how she performed the required duties for the required time, which includes time

¹ Personnel records indicate that Mathis was a Therapy Program Assistant from August 2013 to August 2019, a Therapy Aide from September 2011 to August 2013, a Human Services Assistant from January 2011 to September 2011, and a Direct Care CWA from November 2010 to January 2011.

² Giddens potentially could have been found eligible based on her internship that was part of her Social Work college curriculum. Agency Services indicated that it reached out to her to clarify if her internship met the requirements to substitute for the required education and experience; however, it indicated that it did not receive a response.

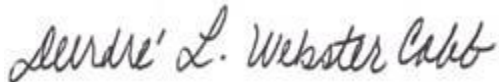
after the September 21, 2021 closing date, and Mathis clarifies how she performed the required duties for the required time by the September 21, 2021, closing date, while provisionally serving in the subject title. Moreover, the appellants continue to successfully perform the required duties after the closing date and the examination has been cancelled due to a lack of qualified candidates. The Commission notes that the dual purpose of the Civil Service system is to ensure efficient public service for State and local governments and to provide appointment and advancement opportunities to Civil Service employees based on their merit and abilities. These interests are best served when more, rather than fewer, individuals are presented with employment opportunities. *See Communications Workers of America v. New Jersey Department of Personnel*, 154 N.J. 121 (1998). Therefore, the Commission finds good cause accept Giddens' and Mathis' clarified experience, as well as to relax the provisions of N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.6(b) and accept Giddens' experience gained after the closing date, for eligibility purposes only, and admit them to the subject examination.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that the appeals be granted, the examination cancellation be rescinded, and Loretta Giddens' and Leighann Mathis' applications be processed for prospective employment opportunities only.

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 6TH DAY OF APRIL 2022



Deirdré 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: Loretta Giddens (2022-1601)
Leighann Mathis (2022-1344)
Lois Robinson
Division of Agency Services
Records Center