



**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

In the Matter of Marcella Traina,  
Assistant Planner (C1062D), Hudson  
County

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

CSC Docket No. 2023-801

Examination Appeal

**ISSUED:** January 18, 2023 (SLK)

Marcella Traina appeals the determination of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) that she did not meet the education requirements for the open competitive examination for Assistant Planner (C1062D), Hudson County.

The subject examination’s closing date was August 22, 2022. The education requirements were a Bachelor’s degree with 21 semester hour credits in professional planning subjects such as the principles of land use planning, history of city planning, planning project design, and planning law and administration. The experience requirements were one year of professional experience in municipal, county, regional, or state planning. Possession of a current and valid license as a Professional Planner in New Jersey issued by the State Board of Professional Planners could have been substituted for the education requirement. Possession of a Master’s degree in Planning could have been substituted for one year of experience. A total of three applicants applied and two were found eligible. Certification OL221196 was issued containing the names of the two eligibles and was disposed of on January 18, 2023, with one eligible receiving an appointment. The list expires on October 12, 2025.

On the appellant’s application, she indicated that she possessed a Bachelor’s degree in Planning and Public Policy. She also indicated that she provisionally served in the subject title from November 2020 to the closing date, and was a Seasonal Planner for Bayonne from May 2018 to August 2018. Agency Services determined that she met the experience requirements, and had a Bachelor’s degree with six

credits in professional planning, but it determined that she lacked 15 required credits.

On appeal, the appellant asserts that she meets the education requirements. She indicates which colleges courses that she believes meets the requirements, and she submits her college transcript and course descriptions for these classes.

### 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. 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.

In this matter, Agency Services correctly determined that the appellant was not eligible as her college transcript does not clearly indicate that she has 21 credits in professional planning. However, it cannot be ignored that her degree is in Planning and Public Policy and she completed 21 credits in her major. Therefore, even if all her classes in her major were not strictly professional planning classes, these courses were part of a curriculum which provided her a planning degree. Further, the list is incomplete as there is one remaining eligible and she continues to successfully provisionally serve in the subject title. 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 under *N.J.A.C.* 4A:1-1.2(c) to relax the provisions of *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.3(b)2 and accept the appellant's education, for eligibility purposes only, and admit her to the subject examination.

This determination is limited to the instant matter and does not provide precedent in any other matter.

### ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be granted, and the appellant's application 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 18<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF JANUARY, 2023

*Allison Chris Myers*

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Allison Chris Myers  
Acting Chairperson  
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