



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

In the Matter of Miriam Abreu,
Human Services Specialist 1,
Bilingual in Spanish and English
(C1492D), Hudson County

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

CSC Docket No. 2023-1469

Examination Appeals

ISSUED: August 2, 2023 (SLK)

Miriam Abreu appeals the determination of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) that she did not meet the experience requirements for the promotional examination for Human Services Specialist 1, Bilingual in Spanish and English (C1492D), Hudson County open competitive examination.

The closing date of the examination was October 21, 2022. The education requirements were 60 college credits. Experience involving any combination of the following could have been substituted for the education requirements on a year-for-year basis with 30 semester hour credits being equal to one year of experience: securing/verifying information and making determinations or recommendations relating to eligibility or qualifications of applicants for loans, insurance, credit, employability, and/or job training services, or entitlement to cash awards, financial benefits or adjustment and settlement of insurance claims; investigations involving the collection of facts and information by observing conditions, examining records, interviewing individuals, and preparing investigative reports of findings; or investigating, establishing, and/or enforcing support obligations in a welfare board or agency, court system, or related agency. Additionally, candidates were required to be able to read, write, speak, and communicate in English and Spanish sufficiently to perform the duties of the position. Candidates were to be tested at the time of certification for the ability to communicate effectively in both English and Spanish. A total of 61 employees applied for the open competitive examination, 44 were admitted and 20 were determined eligible after the test. Certification OL230304 was

issued containing the name of 19 eligible and its disposition has not yet been returned. The list expires on March 22, 2026.

On the appellant's application, she indicated that she possessed no college credits. Additionally, she indicated that she was a Clerk 1, Bilingual in Spanish and English from August 2001 to the closing date and a Security Guard for L.M.C. Security Company from February 1998 to July 2001. Agency Services determined, per the substitution clause for education, that she lacked two years of experience.

On appeal, the appellant states that she applied for the subject examination based on her many years of experience with the appointing authority. She indicates that she has performed the duties of a Clerk 1, Bilingual in Spanish and English and has worked under an Assistant Administrator. Additionally, the appellant describes her duties as interviewing applicants, verifying application information for the Division of Youth and Family Services cases, advising and informing clients regarding protocol, completing applications, and following up on cases until they go to court. Further, she provides that she translates applications for non-English speaking clients and workers who are not bilingual to accelerate the application process for various financial benefit programs and she knows the systems for these programs.

The appellant also submits a letter from an Assistant Administrator, CSP Unit. The Assistant Administrator indicates that the appellant, under minimal supervision, records, evaluates, and assists in the collection of data pertaining to cases to determine eligibility for financial benefits programs. Further, he presents that the appellant contacts customers to explain the necessary forms for applicants' eligibility. Also, he indicates that the appellant explains the process to complete an application for child support and paternity program qualifications. Additionally, the Assistant Administrator highlights that the appellant assists other workers within the department with the application process for non-English speaking applicants, refers applicants to other departments as needed, and acts as a liaison between departments to accelerate the application process by providing necessary forms for child support. Finally, he provides that she answers phones, verifies data, inputs data, and reviews information and documents to ensure that they are accurate and complete.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.3(b) provides that applicants shall meet all requirements specified in the open competitive announcement by the examination closing date. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-6.3(b) provides that the appellant has the burden of proof in examination appeals.

In this matter, a review of the record demonstrates that Agency Services correctly determined that the appellant did not meet the examination requirements. Specifically, as she did not indicate on her application that she possessed any college credits, she needed two years of applicable experience. In that regard, to substitute one year of experience for 30 college credits, the experience needed to involve **making eligibility determinations for financial benefits programs** or other experience as indicated in the announcement. However, although the appellant indicated that she secured and verified information for financial benefits programs, she did not indicate on her application that she makes eligibility determinations for these programs. Further, on appeal, neither the appellant nor the Administrator Assistant indicate that she makes eligibility determinations for financial benefits programs. In that regard, she presented duties on her application and appeal which appear to be consistent with her current title. 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).

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 2ND DAY OF AUGUST, 2023



Allison Chris Myers
Chairperson
Civil Service Commission

Inquiries
and
Correspondence

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

c: Miriam Abreu
Division of Agency Services
Records Center