



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

In the Matter of Claude Bernard,
Assistant Training Supervisor
County Welfare Agency (PC4277F),
Essex County

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

CSC Docket No. 2025-1084

Examination Appeal

ISSUED: August 13, 2025 (SLK)

Claude Bernard appeals the determination of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) that he did not meet the experience requirements for the Assistant Training Supervisor County Welfare Agency (PC4277F), Essex County promotional examination.

The closing date of the examination was August 21, 2024.¹ The applicable requirements were a Bachelor's degree and four years of professional experience in determining training needs, developing training plans and materials and conducting training programs. A total of 31 candidates applied, seven were admitted to the test, and six were determined eligible after the test. No certifications have been issued, and the subject eligible list expires on July 30, 2027.

¹ The subject examination announcement was initially issued on August 1, 2024, with an August 21, 2024, closing date. The appellant applied and was determined to lack the required experience. The appellant appealed, and this agency wrote him a letter explaining why he did not meet the experience required. However, upon review, it was determined that there was an error with some of the experience requirements in the announcement. Accordingly, a revised announcement was issued correcting the eligibility requirements and advising employees that if they had filed an application for the subject announcement during the original posting period, they could supplement their original applications by May 21, 2025, which the appellant did. It is noted that the candidates still needed to demonstrate that they met the subject examination requirements by the original August 21, 2024, closing date.

On the appellant's application, he indicated that he possessed a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree in Educational Technology. The appellant also listed that he was a Family Service Worker from July 2005 to the closing date and an eight hour per week Adjunct Professor for Essex County College. Agency Services credited the appellant for his Bachelor's degree² but determined that he lacked one year of experience.

On appeal,³ the appellant highlights that he possesses a Bachelor's degree in Computer Information Systems, a Master's degree in Technology, and a Doctorate degree in Health Information (Data Analytics Track).⁴ He notes that he has over 20 years of experience with the appointing authority. The appellant emphasizes that he has taught mathematics and information systems classes at Essex County College for over 22 years, regularly delivering a full instructional load.

Regarding determining training needs, the appellant presents that at Essex County College, he continually assesses a diverse student body's knowledge gap and learning needs, including adult learners and future public-sector professionals. He states that he conducts informal and formal needs assessments, tracks student performance dates, and updates teaching strategies accordingly. As a Family Service Worker, the appellant indicates that he routinely collaborates with teams to identify staff development needs resulting from policy changes or system upgrades.

Concerning developing training plans and materials, the appellant provides that he led curriculum design projects integrating emerging technology, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and health informatics, into traditional science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses. He presents that he creates training modules using digital platforms like Moodle and UCertify and adapted instruction for varied learning styles and accessibility needs. The appellant highlights that he hosts the CyberClinic Podcast, which delivers public-facing educational content on cybersecurity, AI, and digital health. Further, he states that he presented on AI's role in healthcare as part of a Community Education Forum broadcast on New Jersey's public education channel. The appellant believes that these efforts demonstrate his ongoing work in developing and delivering professional-level training programs that promote digital literacy and health equity.

Referencing conducting training programs, the appellant indicates that he has provided professional instruction at the college level and within public service for over two decades. He presents that he teaches full-time loads (up to 24 credits per year), leads community education panels, and has launched the CyberClinic Podcast. which

² In order to get credit for possessing a Master's degree, the degree needed to be in Social Work.

³ This decision shall focus on the appellant's supplemental submission which was submitted after the subject announcement was amended.

⁴ The appellant's resume indicates that he is expected to earn the Doctorate degree in Health Information in May 2026.

delivers structured public education on cybersecurity, AI, and digital health, extending his instructional reach to a broader audience.

The appellant argues that this blend of teaching, technical training, and applied public service education aligns with the definition of professional experience in training, as it involves planning, executing, and evaluating complex educational initiatives using both digital and traditional tools.

CONCLUSION

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:4-6.3(b) provides that the appellant has the burden of proof in examination appeals.

In this matter, Agency Services correctly determined that the appellant lacked the required experience for the subject promotional examination. The appellant is claiming that his experience teaching as an Adjunct Professor should be considered applicable experience. The subject examination requires *training* experience and not teaching experience, which while they may be similar, are considered different, and the subject announcement only references applicable training experience. Teaching courses focus on theoretical knowledge and concepts, while training courses focus on practical skills and specific task performance. Teaching encourages exploration and questioning, while training emphasizes repetition and mastery. Similarly, hosting podcasts, leading community education panels, television broadcasts, and other public presentations are not the same as conducting formal training sessions. Moreover, to the extent that the appellant is claiming that providing training was his primary focus, he would have to demonstrate that he has the equivalent of four years of full-time training experience, *i.e.*, at least 35 hours per week or more for 48 months, determining training needs, developing training plans and materials, and conducting training programs, which has not done. 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).⁵ Further, the appellant's advance degrees cannot substitute for the required experience.⁶

ORDER

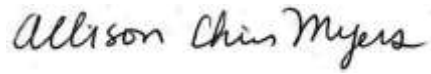
Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied.

⁵ Based on the original announcement, the appellant was determined ineligible by Agency Services as his experience was in teaching and not training. The amended announcement did not change any criteria as far as what is considered applicable training experience.

⁶ The appellant's pursuit of a Doctorate degree is in Health Informatics, while the announcement only indicates credit for an advance degree in Social Work. Regardless, the appellant did not earn this degree by the closing date, and even with a Master's degree in Social Work, a candidate would still need two years of full-time experience performing the applicable training duties.

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 13TH DAY OF AUGUST, 2025



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