



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

In the Matter of Esperanza Gonzalez
Matinez, Program Development
Specialist Community Service
(C1557F), Bergen County

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

CSC Docket No. 2025-1896

Examination Appeal

ISSUED: August 13, 2025 (SLK)

Esperanza Gonzalez Matinez appeals the determination of the Division of Agency Services that she did not meet the experience requirements for the Program Development Specialist Community Service (C1557F), Bergen County open competitive examination.

The closing date of the examination was November 21, 2024. The applicable requirements were a Bachelor's degree and one year of professional experience in the development of programs designed to solve the socio-economic needs of residents of the State and/or local communities which shall have included responsibility for research, negotiation, and/or writing of proposals for community service programs. A total of four candidates applied and all were determined ineligible. Thus, the examination was cancelled due to a lack of qualified candidates.

On the appellant's application and/or resume, she indicated that she possessed a Bachelor's degree. Additionally, the appellant listed that she was a Program Development Specialist Community Service for the Alternatives for Domestic Violence from September 2024 to the closing date, a 25 hour per week Crisis Hotline Specialist for the Alternatives for Domestic Violence from September 2023 to August 2024, a Residential Assistant for the Center for Hope and Safety from January 2023 to November 2023, an Activities Assistant for the Emerson Health and Rehabilitation Center from August 2022 to May 2023, an Admissions Counselor for Rowan University from November 2021 to May 2022, and a Store Associate for Burlington from November 2020 to January 2022. Personnel records indicate that she was

provisionally serving in the subject title for the appointing authority from September 2024 to the closing date. Agency Services credited the appellant for her Bachelor's degree but determined that she lacked one year of experience.

On appeal, the appellant presents that from September 2024 to November 21, 2024, as a Program Development Specialist, she was responsible for researching and negotiating community service programs to address socio-economic needs by identifying challenges through engagement with relevant groups. She provides that she facilitated connections throughout Bergen County and New Jersey, aiming to establish stable support systems for survivors and coordinating with Statewide coalitions and other programs to enhance available resources. The appellant explains that her efforts focused on fostering collaborations and building partnerships for both the agency and the individuals it supports.

Upon starting this position, the appellant indicates that she received guidelines for conducting research and preparing presentations. Subsequently, she presents that she refined the original template, incorporated key factors, information, and data analysis that was tailored to the specific demographic that she serves. The appellant states that she maintained daily monitoring to improve the system's performance in addressing the needs of domestic violence survivors, which was supported by extensive weekly data collection and review. Over time, she notes that she has significantly expanded the initial template with various additions that highlight the assistance provided and its beneficiaries. Additionally, she facilitates, reviews, and assesses the allocation of funds to support relevant groups and organizations. With the approval and support of her supervisor, the appellant emphasizes that she successfully assisted over 300 survivors since assuming this position, while concurrently representing the County at meetings and in public forums.

Before her current role, the appellant presents that she served as a Hotline Specialist for the same agency, Alternative to Domestic Violence. She indicates that her responsibilities included daytime hotline coverage, conducting comprehensive intake sessions, and meticulously documenting data to give a clear overview of individuals requiring assistance in Bergen County. The appellant states that her duties included guiding victims to secure environments and orchestrating comprehensive survivor care. As the primary community liaison, she provides that she responded to over 200 calls per month, not only within her immediate network but also by actively reaching out to other communities, groups, and organizations to extend assistance. She notes that she continued to offer occasional support in this capacity. Building on this foundation, the appellant explains that her advocacy journey began at the Center for Hope and Safety as a Residential Assistant, where she performed similar coordinated survivor care and served as a public liaison. In this role, she indicates that she contributed to State reporting documentation, providing detailed daily service and event information, and responding to over 400

calls monthly. She notes that her duties encompassed both shelter-based support and critical mobile advocacy within the community.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.3(b) requires applicants to possess all the requirements specified in an announcement for an open competitive examination 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, with her Bachelor's degrees, the appellant needed one year of experience where her position primarily focused on research, negotiation, and/or writing proposals for community service programs by the closing date. A review of the appellant's application and resume indicates that before her provisional service in the subject title, her positions focused on working with individuals and was not program development work. Further, the appellant only provisionally served in the subject title for three months prior to the subject examination closing date. Therefore, even if the appellant received credit for her provisional service, she would still lack nine months of experience as of the closing date.


Concerning the appellant's provisional service, on the appellant's application, she was to list her major duties in order of performance. The appellant indicated that her most important duty was "navigating victims to desire space while orchestrating survivor care." Further, although on appeal she states that she researched and negotiated for community service programs, her description as to what her duties entail, still does not clearly indicate that her position was primarily engaged in the research, negotiation, and/or writing of proposals for community service programs as opposed to assisting individuals or other duties that may not squarely fit the required duties. 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). As such, it appears that the appellant's provisional position may be misclassified.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied. It is further ordered that the matter of the proper classification of the appellant's position be referred to Agency Services for a classification review. Upon determination as to the appellant's appropriate title, a corresponding announcement for an examination for that title shall be issued.

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



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: Esperanza Gonzalez Matinez
Ellen Busteed
Division of Agency Services
Records Center