



**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

In the Matter of Stephen DeCarlo,  
Parole Officer Recruit (S2403E),  
Statewide

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

CSC Docket No. 2025-469

List Removal Appeal

**ISSUED: September 10, 2025 (SLK)**

Stephen DeCarlo, represented by Amie E. DiCola, Esq, appeals the decision to remove his name from the Parole Officer Recruit (S2403E), Statewide eligible list on the basis of an unsatisfactory background report.

The appellant took the open competitive examination for Parole Officer Recruit (S0232D), Statewide, which had a March 31, 2023, closing date, achieved a passing score, and was ranked on the subsequent eligible list. His name was certified (OS240060), and he was ranked 15th. In seeking his removal, the State Parole Board (SPB) indicated that the appellant had an unsatisfactory background report.

Specifically, the SPB's background report indicates that the appellant had been denied employment by numerous local, State, and federal agencies as he did not progress past oral interviews five times, he was not selected to move forward in the hiring process eight other times, and he could not continue through the hiring process of a federal agency due to unfavorable polygraphs results. Additionally, the appellant was employed by the Clifton Police Department and had his post-academy period extended due to not being able to successfully navigate the City. Further, during this extended probationary period, he forgot to bring his duty weapon to work, which according to the appellant's own words, he was given options by the Clifton Police Department, and he chose to resign. Also, the appellant was hired by the State Police and then resigned part-way through the academy. Moreover, the North Plainfield Police Department did not move the appellant through the hiring process due to

issues with his State Police background investigation. Finally, the appellant had two other civilian jobs where he was terminated due to performance issues which involved abuse of time off and disrespect to supervisors. Based on the background report, this agency approved the SPB's request to remove the appellant's name from the subject eligible list. The list expired on November 11, 2024.

On appeal, the appellant states that the SPB removed him based on a hasty review of his written application, and he argues that it failed to adequately review what it thought were the relevant concerns. He claims that if he had been properly vetted, the "discrepancies and concerns" would not rise to the level that would be permissible for removal under the *N.J.A.C. 4A:4-6.1*. The appellant provides that the SPB has not provided any documentation to justify its removal. He asserts that despite the SPB's claim that it thoroughly interviewed the appellant and other witnesses, there is nothing in the record to support that his prior denials of employment by law enforcement agencies, including an unfavorable polygraph, without any other information, demonstrate that his background is adverse to the position sought.

Concerning North Plainfield, the appellant asserts that there is nothing in the record to support the SPB's claim that North Plainfield did not move the appellant forward through its hiring process due to issues with the State Police background investigation. On the contrary, the appellant highlights that the State Police hired him and ultimately accepted him into the academy. Similarly, regarding the appellant's civilian terminations, he argues that civilian terminations should have no bearing on list removals as he was an at-will employee and had no legal avenue to challenge those terminations.

Regarding the appellant's resignation from the Clifton Police Department, he claims that the SPB's justification that he resigned in lieu of discipline is false. The appellant explains that on his employment application, he indicated that he was provided with extended field training because he was unfamiliar with the City and not that he was unable to navigate the City. He presents that he specifically noted on his application that during the extension, he was demonstrating improvement. Additionally, the appellant acknowledges that he indicated on his application that he was subjected to discipline due to an incident where he forgot to take his weapon to work. The appellant emphasizes that he explained on his application that he realized his mistake, immediately reported the issue, obtained his weapon without incident, and returned for his shift, which resulted in a written reprimand being issued to him. The appellant contends that this incident did not form the basis of his resignation as alleged by the SPB. Instead, the appellant asserts that his resignation was a joint decision between himself and the Clifton Police Department that it was not a good fit for him, which led to his voluntary resignation. The appellant states that there is no evidence to suggest that he resigned to avoid disciplinary action.

Referring to the State Police, the appellant provides that he resigned while enrolled in the academy because he caught the flu shortly before the academy started, and he determined during the first week of the academy that he should not continue due to the impact that the flu was having on his health.

The appellant concludes that he properly explained his background beyond the cursory examination by the SPB and argues that there is nothing in his background that is adverse to being a Parole Officer Recruit. He highlights that he passed multiple background checks from other law enforcement agencies even if he did not remain in these positions due to personal reasons.

In response, the SPB states that the appellant implies that it disqualified him for a position in the subject title without properly vetting him. However, it denies this accusation as it indicates that in addition to reviewing information provided by the appellant, it interviewed the appellant to allow him to explain discrepancies and concerns that were evident in his application. The SPB claims that the appellant's explanations supported the information contained in his application. It argues that for the reasons stated in its background report, the appellant does not meet the high standards for a law enforcement officer.

## CONCLUSION

*N.J.A.C. 4A:4-4.7(a)1*, in conjunction with *N.J.A.C. 4A:4-6.1(a)7*, allows the Civil Service Commission (Commission) to remove an eligible's name from an eligible list for having a prior employment history which relates adversely to the title.

*N.J.A.C. 4A:4-4.7(a)1*, in conjunction with *N.J.A.C. 4A:4-6.1(a)9*, allows the Commission to remove an eligible's name from an eligible list for other sufficient reasons. Removal for other sufficient reasons includes, but is not limited to, a consideration that based on a candidate's background and recognizing the nature of the position at issue, a person should not be eligible for appointment.

*N.J.A.C. 4A:4-6.3(b)*, in conjunction with *N.J.A.C. 4A:4-4.7(d)*, provides that the appellant has the burden of proof to show by a preponderance of the evidence that an appointing authority's decision to remove his or her name from an eligible list was in error.

In this matter, the SPB had a legitimate reason to remove the appellant's name from the subject eligible list. Specifically, as indicated on the appellant's application and/or appeal, concerning his employment with the Clifton Police Department and looking at it in the best possible light based on the appellant's appeal, the appellant stated that initially, the daily operation reports that he received on field training were below satisfactory due to his unfamiliarity with the City, which led to extended training operations. Additionally, during this extended training time, there was an

incident where he was counseled and written up for accidentally leaving his duty weapon at his residence. Finally, during the extended training time, the appellant provides that he resigned from the Clifton Police Department due to a mutual agreement that it was not a good fit for him. Moreover, the record indicates that he had two recent civilian positions where he was terminated for cause.

Therefore, even without considering the other issues in the appellant's background, such as his resignation from the State Police and the numerous other law enforcement agencies which did not appoint the appellant, including those that did not hire him because as indicated on his application he did not pass an oral interview, a written examination, or a polygraph test, which at minimum, are cause for concern, the record indicates that the appellant's aforementioned three unsuccessful employments are adverse to being a Parole Officer Recruit. In this regard, it is recognized that a Parole Officer Recruit is a law enforcement employee who must help keep order and adherence to the law. Parole Officers Recruits, like municipal Police Officers, hold highly visible and sensitive positions within the community and the standard for an applicant includes good character and an image of utmost confidence and trust. *See Moorestown v. Armstrong*, 89 N.J. Super. 560 (App. Div. 1965), *cert. denied*, 47 N.J. 80 (1966). *See also In re Phillips*, 117 N.J. 567 (1990).

Referring to the appellant's other arguments, it is noted that the appellant has not presented any authority to support his position that under Civil Service law and rules, adverse employment history from civilian employers cannot be considered for law enforcement employment. Additionally, while the appellant claims that the SPB did not provide any documentation to support its claims, the appellant's employment application is documentation. Moreover, concerning any claim that the SPB's investigation was insufficient because it only relied on his employment application, which the SPB denies, even if true, the appellant was responsible for submitting a complete application explaining his background. Moreover, the Commission has thoroughly reviewed the information submitted by both parties in this matter and finds that the record clearly establishes that the appellant's background supports his removal from the subject eligible list. Finally, the fact that other law enforcement agencies did not remove the appellant from employment consideration due to background concerns is unpersuasive, as each appointing authority has the right to make its own independent judgment as to whether a candidate's background meets its employment standards for the position sought.

### **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 10<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2025

*Allison Chris Myers*

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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: Stephen DeCarlo  
Amie E. DiCola, Esq.  
Nerryluz Velez  
Tamara Rudow Steinberg, Esq.  
Division of Human Resource Information Services  
Records Center