



**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

In the Matter of Keya S. Williams  
Senior Community Program  
Specialist (S1495F), Statewide

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

CSC Docket No. 2025-2723

Eligibility Appeal

**ISSUED: January 21, 2026 (JM)**

Keya S. Williams appeals the determination of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services), which found that she did not meet the experience requirement for the open competitive examination for Senior Community Program Specialist (S1495F), Statewide.

The subject examination was announced with a closing date of October 25, 2024 and was open, in relevant part, to applicants who possessed six years of professional experience in program delivery experience in providing education, habilitative, or social services in programs for people with developmental disabilities. Applicants could substitute semester hour credits, with 30 credits being equal to one year of experience. The examination announcement noted that “[p]rofessional experience” refers to work that is creative, analytical, evaluative, and interpretive; requires a range and depth of specialized knowledge of the profession’s principles, concepts, theories, and practices; and is performed with the authority to act according to one’s own judgment and make accurate and informed decisions. Sixty-four of the 127 applicants were admitted to the written examination which was held on September 10, 2025. The current eligible list contains 24 names and was promulgated on October 30, 2025 and expires on October 29, 2027.

On her application, the appellant indicated that she possessed 252 semester hour credits. Specifically, she indicated that she possessed 78 semester hour credits from Thomas Edison State University, and 174 semester hour credits from Mercer

County Community College.<sup>1</sup> The appellant also indicated that she served as a Behavioral Specialist at the Center For Family Guidance from January 2024 to October 2024; as a Correctional Police Officer with Camden County Corrections from April 2023 to November 2023; as a Correctional Police Officer with Mercer County Corrections from December 2022 to April of 2023; as a Behavioral Specialist at the Center For Family Guidance from September 2022 to January 2023; as a Residential Counselor with Catholic Charities from September 2011 to November of 2021; and as a Classification Officer 1/Social Worker 2 at Garden State Correctional Facility from December 2004 to June of 2022.<sup>2</sup> The appellant indicated, in relevant part, that as a Residential Counselor she was responsible for providing support services and coordinating rehabilitation activities for residents and maintaining safety and security at the residential facility. As a Classification Officer 1/Social Worker 2, she was responsible for interviewing inmates at the beginning of their incarceration and providing information to the Institutional Classification Committee. As a Behavioral Specialist, she was responsible for training juveniles to function responsibly and independently, and developing and completing therapeutic and rehabilitative treatment plans. Finally, as a Correctional Police Officer, she indicated that she was responsible for the security and count of inmates and ensuring compliance with established safety procedures.

Agency Services (Agency Services) credited the appellant with possession of 105 college credits, the maximum allowable for an incomplete Bachelor's degree, or the equivalent of three years and six months of applicable experience. However, Agency Services did not credit any of appellant's listed experience, as it was determined that all of her listed experience was unrelated to program delivery experience in providing education, habilitative, or social services for people with developmental disabilities. Therefore, Agency Services deemed the appellant ineligible since she lacked two years and six months of experience.

On appeal to the Civil Service Commission (Commission), the appellant maintains that her positions as a Classification Officer 1/Social Worker 2 and as a Residential Counselor should be credited. In particular, she claims that as a Classification Officer 1/Social Worker 2, she implemented, monitored, and evaluated daily planning, operations of social activities and various programs and services; coordinated/facilitated the Successful Transition and Re-Entry Series Rehabilitative (STARS) program; planned, monitored, modified and evaluated various social service community programs for incarcerated individuals; provided habilitative and social services to inmates of Garden State Youth Correctional Facility, with developmental

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<sup>1</sup> A review of her transcripts reveals that she only possesses 93 semester hour credits; 77 from Mercer County Community College and 16 from Thomas Edison State University.

<sup>2</sup> Appellant received a regular appointment to the title of Social Worker 2, effective December 11, 2004. She was then provisionally appointed, pending promotional examination procedure, effective February 18, 2017, to the title of Classification Worker 1 and received a regular appointment to the latter title effective January 3, 2018.

and psychiatric diagnosis; completed thorough discharge planning and assessment interviews; processed inmate disciplinary infractions, appeals, administrative segregation time, or loss of comp time; organized relevant information and inmate histories to be presented at weekly meetings of the Institutional Classification Committee; and calculated sentence expirations by applied allowances for work performed, minimum credits earned, and other factors. The appellant also asserts that as a Residential Counselor she provided rehabilitative services, including but not limited to daily living skills, life skill development, and supportive residential counseling for residents with developmental and psychiatric diagnosis; coordinated habilitation services and medical appointments; organized therapeutic weekly program schedules and outside activities with residents; participated in the development and implementation of the Individual Behavioral Plan for each resident; and maintained accurate/current client documentation according to accrediting standards for medical billing. The appellant maintains that in both of these titles, she provided hands-on rehabilitative social service assistance; facilitated re-entry programs; and provided detailed discharge planning assistance with employment, community resources, medical benefits, and housing. Appellant also states in her appeal letter that she has “over 80 college credit hours” from Mercer County Community College and Thomas Edison State University, including an Associate’s Degree from Mercer County Community College. In support, she submits, among other things, an updated resume.

### CONCLUSION

*N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.3(b) provides that applicants shall meet all requirements specified in the open competitive examination 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.

Initially, Agency Services mistakenly credited the appellant with 105 semester hour credits, the most credits that are credited for an incomplete Bachelor’s degree. However, a review of the appellant’s transcripts reveals that she only possessed 93 semester hour credits. Therefore, pursuant to the substitution clause, the appellant possessed three years and one month of applicable experience.

On appeal, the appellant argues that her experience as a Residential Counselor and Classification Officer 1/Social Worker 2 should be credited. However, Agency Services correctly found that none of her listed experience had, as its primary focus, professional experience in program delivery experience in providing education, habilitative, or social services in programs for people with developmental disabilities. In this regard, although the appellant maintains she performed relevant duties as a Residential Counselor and Classification Officer 1/Social Worker 2, the programs she administered were not designed for people with developmental disabilities, but rather included people with developmental disabilities incidentally to their purpose in

rehabilitating juveniles and correctional inmates with behavioral health issues. 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). The amount of time, and the importance of the duty, determines if it is the primary focus. An experience requirement that lists a number of duties that define the primary experience, requires that the applicants demonstrate that they primarily performed all of those duties for the required length of time. Performance of only one or some of the duties listed is not indicative of comprehensive experience. *See In the Matter of Jeffrey Davis* (MSB, decided March 14, 2007). Considering the record, the best that can be said of the Classification Officer 1/Social Worker 2 and Residential Counselor positions is that each had some aspects of program delivery experience in providing education, habilitative, or social services in programs for people with developmental disabilities, but it was not the primary focus of either position. In this regard, although some of the clients may have had developmental disabilities, that was not the focus of the facilities or the programs being provided. As such, she was properly deemed ineligible. Accordingly, the record reflects that the appellant did not meet the announced requirements for the title under test and has not met her burden of proof.

### 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 21<sup>st</sup> DAY OF JANUARY, 2026




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