



**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

In the Matter of Fabienne Debe  
Family Service Worker (C0159G),  
Essex County

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

CSC Docket No. 2025-2805

Examination Appeal

**ISSUED: March 18, 2026 (JM)**

Fabienne Debe 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 Family Service Worker (C0159G), Essex County.

The subject examination was announced with a closing date of February 21, 2025 and was open, in relevant part, to applicants who possessed four years of professional experience in gathering social and other information from clients, determining their needs, and planning and carrying out a prescribed treatment plan or service and referral program designed to meet needs of individual clients, or in examining, adjusting, determining, reconsidering, or authorizing eligibility or entitlement for cash awards or benefits in a public or private agency such as a welfare board or agency, Social Security Administration, Veterans Administration, a social service agency, or similar agency or organization, or in coordinating a public welfare program or in the review, analysis, evaluation, revision, and implementation of such programs. Applicants could substitute 30 semester hour credits for one year of the indicated experience. Ninety-six out of 134 applicants were admitted to the written examination, which is yet to be scheduled.

On her application, the appellant indicated that she possessed 114 credits from Berkeley College. The appellant also indicated that she had served as a Keyboarding Clerk 1 at the Essex County Division of Family Assistance and Benefits since July

2021, a position in which her primary responsibilities were assisting applicants for benefits at a kiosk, answering telephone calls, and creating tickets based on customer requests. On her resume, the appellant stated that she had served as a Healthcare and Patient Assistant at Saint Barnabas Medical Center from September 2018 to July 2021 and as a Nursing Assistant at Holly Manor from June 2007 to September 2018.

Upon review of her application and resume, Agency Services credited the appellant with three years and six months experience for her 114 credits, the maximum provided for incomplete degrees. However, Agency Services did not credit her with any additional applicable experience for any of her listed positions.

On appeal to the Civil Service Commission (Commission), the appellant maintains that she has spent four years working for Essex County Division of Family Assistance and Benefits. She states that three and a half years of her service has been as a Keyboarding Clerk 1, and that she has been serving as a customer service representative for almost a year. She also submits a copy of her college diploma, which shows a completion date of April 2025 for her Bachelor's degree. Additionally, she indicates that her responsibilities in this new role includes evaluating cases and ascertaining from which departments the clients require assistance, keeping client files up to date, and determining eligibility for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, Work First New Jersey, and Emergency Assistance.<sup>1</sup>

## 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.

In this matter, Agency Services correctly found that the appellant did not meet the announced requirements as of the examination closing date. With regard to the appellant's education, as the appellant had not completed her Bachelor's degree prior to the February 21, 2025 closing date, she was credited with three years and six months of experience for her incomplete Bachelor's degree, the maximum allowed for incomplete degrees.

The appellant argues that her experience as a Residential Counselor and Keyboarding Clerk 1 should be credited. However, Agency Services correctly found that none of her listed experience had, as its primary focus, professional experience in gathering social and other information from clients, determining their needs, and planning and carrying out a prescribed treatment plan or service and referral

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<sup>1</sup> Agency records indicate that the appellant was provisionally appointed, pending open competitive examination procedures, to the title of Client Services Representative, effective February 24, 2025.

program designed to meet needs of individual clients, or in examining, adjusting, determining, reconsidering, or authorizing eligibility or entitlement for cash awards or benefits in a public or private agency such as a welfare board or agency, Social Security Administration, Veterans Administration, a social service agency, or similar agency or organization, or in coordinating a public welfare program or in the review, analysis, evaluation, revision, and implementation of such programs.. In this regard, although the appellant maintains she performed relevant duties as a Keyboarding Clerk 1, the duties she described were largely clerical and customer service oriented. 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). Furthermore, her provisional appointment as a Client Services Representative occurred after the closing date of the instant examination announcement, so her experience in that role could not be credited to her for this matter. Likewise, her receipt of a Bachelor's degree after the closing date cannot be credited. 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 she 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 18<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MARCH, 2026



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