



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

In the Matter of Karen Brockington,
Clerk 3 (PC2184E), Mercer County
Sheriff

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

CSC Docket No. 2026-1851

Administrative Appeal

ISSUED: August 12, 2026 (HS)

Karen Brockington requests relief regarding her personnel record and related remedies.

As background, the examination for Clerk 3 (PC2184E), Mercer County Sheriff was announced with a closing date of February 21, 2023 and was open to employees in the competitive division serving in the Clerk 2 or Clerk 2 Bilingual in Spanish and English title who had an aggregate of one year of continuous permanent service as of the closing date in one of those titles. It was also open to employees in the competitive division who had an aggregate of one year of continuous permanent service as of the closing date in any competitive title and met the open competitive requirements. The resulting eligible list of nine non-veterans, including the appellant ranked fourth, promulgated on July 6, 2023 and expired on July 5, 2026. The appellant was certified from the list on three occasions where she was not appointed and retained on the list:

- July 10, 2023 certification (PL231296): The appointing authority appointed the eligible ranked first. The certification disposition was recorded September 29, 2023.
- October 28, 2024 certification (PL241743): The appointing authority appointed the eligible ranked third and an eligible who also held the rank of four. The certification disposition was recorded December 9, 2024.

- May 27, 2025 certification (PL250966): The appointing authority appointed another eligible who also held the rank of four. The certification disposition was recorded July 21, 2025.

Subsequently, a certification was issued on March 13, 2026 (PL260379). In disposing of the certification, the appointing authority, in pertinent part, permanently appointed the appellant, effective March 20, 2026.

The County and Municipal Personnel System (CAMPS) reflects that the appellant served in the Civil Service title Keyboarding Clerk 2 from December 31, 2007 until March 20, 2026, when she received a permanent appointment from the Clerk 3 list (PC2184E).

In her appeal to the Civil Service Commission (Commission), filed February 10, 2026, the appellant contends that she was improperly bypassed on the PC2184E list. She writes:

There was a list in 2018 that I was #1 on then a new list [*i.e.*, PC2184E] was created in 2023 where I became #4 and 3 people who were 7, 8 and 9 became 1, 2, 3. I appealed and was told because of seniority and because my position was listed as a [Keyboarding Clerk 2] and not [Clerk 2] I scored less pushing me to #4.¹

The appellant claims that the appointing authority changed her title in 2022 to manipulate the eligible list as evidenced by screenshots from Mercer County's POSS personnel system, which she submits. She also insists that her Clerk 3 appointment does not remedy the earlier promotional decisions of their impact on her promotional opportunities, compensation, seniority, and retirement benefits.

The appellant also insists this appeal should be deemed timely because “[a]t no time prior to February 2026 was [she] notified that [her] personnel title had been changed.” Rather, she “discovered the title change only after independently reviewing Mercer County's POSS personnel system in February 2026.” Concerning

¹ Specifically, the appellant had filed an appeal concerning her final average on the PC2184E examination and rank on the resulting eligible list (CSC Docket No. 2024-104). When this agency responded to said appeal closing the matter on August 16, 2023, it advised the appellant, among other things:

Regarding your seniority score, you received a score of 70.000 since you were not in either the Clerk 2 or Clerk 2 Bilingual in Spanish and English titles. Since the first three ranked eligibles were in one of those titles, they properly received additional seniority credit above the base 70.000. Accordingly, final averages and ranks are confirmed correct upon review. The prior Clerk 3 examination is not relevant to the scoring of the subject examination since scoring is determined on the basis of each discrete announcement.

the scoring of her PC2184E examination, the appellant asserts that because she had no knowledge that her title had been changed, she reasonably believed the issue involved the examination scoring process. She then filed an appeal challenging the scoring (*i.e.*, CSC Docket No. 2024-104), and this agency “addressed only that issue.” The appellant requests that the instant appeal be considered timely and that the merits be considered as she insists that the appointing authority changed her title in 2022 to manipulate the PC2184E list.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:2-1.1(b) provides, in pertinent part, that an appeal must be filed within 20 days after either the appellant has notice or should reasonably have known of the decision, situation, or action being appealed.

The appellant has the burden of proof in this matter. *See N.J.A.C.* 4A:2-1.4(c).

Upon review, the Commission finds that this appeal was not timely filed. The appellant contends that the appointing authority manipulated her title in 2022 and improperly failed to appoint her from certifications PL231296, PL241743, and PL250966. The dispositions for these certifications were recorded September 29, 2023, December 9, 2024, and July 21, 2025, respectively. However, the instant appeal was not filed until February 10, 2026. The purpose of time limitations is not to eliminate or curtail the rights of an appellant but to establish a threshold of finality. In the instant case, the delay in filing the instant appeal unreasonably exceeds that threshold of finality. Thus, it is clear that the appellant’s appeal is untimely.

Nor is there any basis in this particular case to extend or to relax the time for an appeal. *See N.J.A.C.* 4A:1-1.2(c) (the Commission has the discretionary authority to relax rules for good cause). In this regard, it is appropriate to consider whether the delay in asserting her right to appeal was reasonable and excusable. *Appeal of Syby*, 66 *N.J. Super.* 460, 464 (App. Div. 1961) (construing “good cause” in appellate court rules governing the time for appeal); *Atlantic City v. Civil Service Com’n*, 3 *N.J. Super.* 57, 60 (App. Div. 1949) (describing the circumstances under which delay in asserting rights may be excusable). Among the factors to be considered are the length of delay and the reasons for the delay. *Lavin v. Hackensack Bd. of Educ.*, 90 *N.J.* 145 (1982). *See e.g., Matter of Allen*, 262 *N.J. Super.* 438 (App. Div. 1993) (allowing relaxation of the Commission’s appeal rules where police officer repeatedly, but unsuccessfully, sought clarification of his employment status). In this case, the appellant has not presented any reason that would excuse the delay in filing her appeal. The appellant’s reliance on her viewing Mercer County’s POSS personnel system in February 2026 is not persuasive. In this regard, while the appellant’s prior appeal indeed addressed the scoring of her PC2184E examination, the appellant’s official Civil Service title as reflected in CAMPS was an important element of the scoring as only those in the Clerk 2 or Clerk 2 Bilingual in Spanish and English titles

received additional seniority credit above the base 70.000. On August 16, 2023, the appellant was specifically advised that she received a score of 70.000 since she was not in either the Clerk 2 or Clerk 2 Bilingual in Spanish and English titles. As such, any appeal concerning the accuracy of her personnel record could have been filed promptly after the scoring appeal was addressed. However, another two and a half years passed before the filing of this appeal. As such, the appeal has not been timely filed. Similarly, no substantial excuse has been proffered to address any delay in the appeal as it relates to the dispositions of certifications PL231296, PL241743, and PL250966.

Nevertheless, for informational purposes only, the Commission offers the following comments. The appellant argues that screenshots from Mercer County's POSS personnel system are evidence that the appointing authority changed her title in order to manipulate the PC2184E list. However, that is not the case as the appellant has not presented any evidence of a manipulation of CAMPS, which is the system this agency relied on to determine her seniority score on PC2184E. Additionally, the appellant has not provided any substantive evidence that she was improperly not appointed on certifications PL231296, PL241743, and PL250966. In this regard, on these certifications, the appointing authority only appointed eligibles ranked higher or equally with the appellant.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this request be dismissed.

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 12TH DAY OF AUGUST, 2026



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