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STATE OF NEW JERSEY

In the Matter of Rhonda McDonald, Personnel Assistant (M0117S), Irvington

CSC Docket No. 2015-170

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

Examination Appeal

ISSUED: **DEC** 7 5 2014

(RE)

Rhonda McDonald appeals the determination of the Division of Selection Services which found that she did not meet the experience requirements for the open competitive examination for Personnel Assistant (M0117S), Irvington.

The subject examination announcement was issued with a closing date of February 18, 2014, and was open to residents of Irvington Township who met the announced requirements. These requirements included graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree, and one year of technical experience in personnel work in a government department, institution, or agency, or other establishment. Applicants who did not possess the required education could substitute additional experience as indicated on a year for year basis with 30 semester hour credits being equal to one year of experience. A Master's degree in Personnel Administration, Applied Psychology, or other related field from an accredited college and university could be substituted for the one year of experience. The appellant was found to be below the minimum requirements in experience. Two candidates appear on the eligible list, which has been certified once, but no appointments have yet been made.

Ms. McDonald indicated that she possessed a Master's degree in Public Administration. On her application and resume, she listed an internship and positions as a Realtor and Data Processing Technician. She was found to be lacking one year of applicable experience. On appeal, Ms. McDonald argues that her Master's degree in Public Administration is an acceptable substitute for the experience requirement. Specifically, she asserts that Public Administration is a

related field to Personnel Administration and Applied Psychology. She states that while in the Master's program at Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey, School of Public Affairs and Public Administration in Newark, New Jersey, she learned that Public Administration and Human Resource Management are closely related fields.

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.

CONCLUSION

The appellant was correctly initially deemed to be ineligible for the subject examination since she lacked one year of required experience. Applicable experience has the announced experience requirement as the primary focus. The appellant's experience as a Realtor and as a Data Processing Technician was clearly inapplicable. As to the substitution clause, an acceptable degree is one related to Personnel Administration or Applied Psychology. A Master's degree in Public Administration may be related, depending on the focus of the degree and the specific courses the student completed. The appellant's Master's degree in Public Administration was not initially considered acceptable as a substitute for the experience requirement. However, given that the current eligible list is incomplete and a review of her Master's degree reveals at least some applicable coursework, the Commission accepts her Master's degree in this particular circumstance, and finds that it is appropriate to add the appellant's name to the subject list for current appointment consideration. In addition, a similarly situated candidate, Ronald Brown, should also be added.

It is noted that this remedy is limited to the particular circumstances of this matter and does not set a precedent in any other matter.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be granted and the appellant's and Ronald Brown's applications be processed for current employment opportunities.

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 3rd DAY OF DECEMBER, 2014

Robert M. Czech Chairperson

Civil Service Commission

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