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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

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

In the Matter of Linda Hill,  
Program Specialist 2 Social/Human  
Services (PS6738K), Ann Klein  
Forensic Hospital

**Examination Appeal**

CSC Docket No. 2014-2495

**ISSUED: MAR 10 2015 (RE)**

Linda Hill appeals the decision of the Division of Selection Services (DSS) which found that, per the substitution clause for education, she did not meet the experience requirements for the promotional examination for Program Specialist 2 Social/Human Services (PS6738K), Ann Klein Forensic Hospital.

The subject examination announcement was issued with a closing date of December 21, 2013. The examination was open to employees in the competitive division who had an aggregate of one year of continuous permanent service as of the closing date and who were serving in the title Program Specialist 1 Social/Human Services, OR in any competitive title and who met the announced requirements. These requirements included graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree, and two years of experience in planning, monitoring, coordinating, implementing, modifying and/or evaluating a social or human services program. The appellant was found to be below the minimum requirements in experience, per the substitution clause for education. No candidates were admitted to the examination and the examination was canceled on April 26, 2014.

The appellant indicated that she possessed 21 college credits, which prorates to nine months of experience. Per the substitution clause for education, the appellant was required to possess five years, three months of applicable experience. On her application and resume, the appellant listed experience in four positions, provisional Program Specialist 2 Social/Human Services, Technician, Management Information Systems, Principal Clerk Bookkeeper, and Nursing Services Clerk.

None of her experience was accepted, and she was found to be lacking five years, three months of experience, per the substitution clause for education.

On appeal, the appellant argues that she has accrued applicable experience in her position as a Technician, Management Information Systems. Specifically, she states that she worked in quality improvement, where she evaluated and modified services as needed, compiled and retrieved statistical data, and performed other relevant duties. She resubmits a copy of her resume with her appeal.

*N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.6(a)* provides that applicants shall meet all requirements specified in the promotional examination announcement by the closing date.

### CONCLUSION

The appellant was denied admittance to the subject examination since she lacked five years, three months of experience per the substitution clause for education. A review of appellant's application reveals that this determination is correct. At the outset, it is noted that titles are categorized as professional, para-professional or non-professional. *N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.5(a)1* states that professional titles require at least a Bachelor's or higher level degree, with or without a clause to substitute experience. Thus, since the Program Specialist 2 Social/Human Services title requires completion of a Bachelor's degree with a substitution clause, which permits additional experience in lieu of the college credits, as well as relevant experience, it is considered a professional title.

The appellant's prior-held State title which she claims provided applicable experience does not require a Bachelor's degree and therefore is not a professional title. *N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.5(a)3* states that non-professional titles require less than 60 general college credits or less than 12 specific college credits, while *N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.5(a)2* states that para-professional titles require at least 60 general college credits or 12 or more specific college credits (but less than a full degree). As such, the title Technician, Management Information Systems is considered to be a para-professional title since 60 college credits are required.

When a promotion is between the above noted categories, *N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.5(c)2* permits the examination to be open to applicants who are permanent in an approved bridge title(s) and/or applicants who meet the complete open competitive requirements. A bridge title is one that is recognized by the Civil Service Commission as related to a higher category title in terms of work performed and knowledge, skills, and abilities required. It is noted that "bridge titles" were established in order to allow individuals with experience in a given job category (e.g., clerical or paraprofessional) the opportunity to compete in promotional examinations involving a higher level job category (e.g., paraprofessional or professional). Advancement in some cases was otherwise not possible because the

experience acquired in the lower category titles would not technically satisfy the requirements for eligibility in the higher category title. There is no bridge title for Program Specialist 2 Social/Human Services. In addition, the experience requirements for a professional level title assume professional level experience. For example, for the current title, the work involving the planning, monitoring, coordinating, implementing, modifying and/or evaluating a social or human services program must be professional level work. This cannot be accrued in a para-professional title. The appellant's experience as a Technician, Management Information Systems is not applicable for this reason, as well as the fact that the duties of the position do not match the experience requirement. As a Technician, Management Information Systems, the appellant was responsible for databases and data processing systems, not social or human services programs. The appellant's experience as a Principal Clerk Bookkeeper, and Nursing Services Clerk is clerical in nature and is clearly inapplicable. Per the substitution clause for education, the appellant lacks five years, three months of applicable experience as of the December 2013 closing date.

The job specification for Program Specialist 2 Social/Human Services indicates that incumbents in these titles are responsible for taking the lead over a professional and/or technical staff engaged in program activities; and performing professional, administrative and analytical work to promote the planning, operation, implementation, monitoring and/or evaluation of human and social services programs. The appellant indicated that in her provisional position in the subject title she supervises two support staff and no professional staff. As such, she is not performing the first part of the definition of the subject title. In addition, the duties that she lists involve databases and data processing systems. She prepares data for reports, correspondence, charts, tables, and other documents; inputs data and makes database corrections; distributes and interprets results of reports; troubleshoots application errors; and provides technical assistance on program queries regarding reporting of case information. Based on this description, the appellant is not performing applicable duties for this title. Her description of duties does not support that the position is properly classified.

If the appointing authority wants the appellant to remain in her current position, the appellant should provide a duties questionnaire to the Division of the Agency Services (DAS) detailing the duties of the position, along with a completed examination application within 30 days of the issuance of this decision, so that an appropriate provisional title can be assigned and a pre-qualification determination can be made. Should the appellant be found not eligible for the new provisional appointment, she should be returned to her regular prior-held title at that time. Otherwise, since the appellant has accrued at least one year in her provisional position, but does not meet the minimum qualifications for the title of Program Specialist 2 Social/Human Services, contrary to *N.J.A.C. 4A:4-1.5(a)2*, she should be returned to her regular prior-held title immediately upon receipt of this decision.

The subject examination announcement for the appellant's provisional position was canceled. In the future, if DAS determines that the position is that of Program Specialist 2 Social/Human Services, a new examination can be announced.

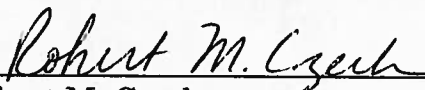
The appellant was denied admittance to the subject examination since she lacked the minimum requirements in experience per the substitution clause for education. An independent review of all material presented indicates that the decision of DSS that the appellant did not meet the announced requirements for eligibility by the closing date is amply supported by the record. The appellant provides no basis to disturb this decision. Thus, the appellant has failed to support her burden of proof in this matter.

### ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied. Further, the position should undergo a classification review to determine whether the position is properly classified.

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 4<sup>th</sup> DAY OF MARCH, 2015

  
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