

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY

## FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

**Examination Appeals** 

In the Matter of Crystal Martin and Brietta Morton, Quality Assurance Specialist, Health Services (PS0917K), Department of Human Services

CSC Docket Nos. 2017-979 2017-914

ISSUED: JAN 2 3 2017 (RE)

Crystal Martin and Brietta Morton appeal the decisions of the Division of Agency Services that they did not meet the experience requirements for the promotional examination for Quality Assurance Specialist, Health Services (PS0917K), Department of Human Services. These appeals have been consolidated due to common issues presented by the appellants.

The subject promotional examination announcement was issued with a closing date of April 21, 2016 and was open to employees in the competitive division who had an aggregate of one year of continuous permanent service as of the closing date in the title Charge Nurse OR 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 who possessed the required license and experience. Applicants were required to be licensed in New Jersey as Registered Professional Nurses. The required experience included four years as a registered nurse, one year of which is specialized experience including the monitoring and/or evaluation of clinical or human services records and programs in a mental health, geriatric, health care setting or human services agency. It was noted that graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree, and three years of specialized experience in the field of quality assurance in a mental health, geriatric, health care setting, or human services agency which includes monitoring and/or evaluation of clinical or human services records and programs, which may include allegations of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or incidents of client abuse or safety and well-being, could be substituted for the above license and experience requirements. The appellants were found to be ineligible based on a lack of experience. It is noted

that neither appellant met the licensing requirement and, while possessing Bachelor's degrees, failed to meet the three year experience requirement. Twenty-two candidates appear on the eligible list, which was certified once, and twenty one appointments were made.

Ms. Martin possesses a Bachelor's degree and an applicable Master's degree, and therefore needed to possess two years of applicable experience. She indicated on her application that she was a provisional Quality Assurance Specialist, Health Services. She also listed experience as a Investigator (Family Service Specialist), Special Response Unit Worker, another position as Family Service Specialist, and Housing Support Specialist with Catholic Charities. She was credited with eleven months of experience in her provisional position. She was found to be lacking one year, one month of specialized experience in the field of quality assurance which includes monitoring and/or evaluation of clinical or human services records and programs. It is noted that official records indicate a different employment history than that presented by the appellant. These records indicate that Ms. Martin was a Family Service Specialist 2 and Family Service Specialist Trainee. No indication is given that she was in an Investigator title, and there is no State title of Special Response Unit Worker.

On appeal, Ms. Martin argues that she should be eligible as she has held a provisional appointment in the title for a year, and believe that her experience as a Family Service Specialist is applicable. She submits a copy of her application and transcripts. She compares the examples of work from the job specifications for the subject title and Family Service Specialist, and states that the actual job duties are similar and overlap.

Ms. Morton possesses a Bachelor's degree and therefore needed to possess three years of applicable experience. She indicated on her application that she was a provisional Quality Assurance Specialist, Health Services, a Child Care Quality Assurance Inspector 1, a Family Service Specialist 2, and a Health Educator with Paterson Community Health Center. She was credited with two years of applicable experience in the first two positions, and was found to be lacking one year of additional experience in the field of quality assurance which included monitoring and/or evaluation of clinical or human services records and programs.

On appeal, Ms. Morton states that she should be eligible as she has held a provisional appointment in the title for over a year, and believes that experience as a Family Service Specialist 2 and Child Care Quality Assurance Inspector 1 is applicable. As noted above, Ms. Morton received credit for her experience as a Childcare Quality Assurance Inspector 1.

## **CONCLUSION**

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.

Quality assurance involves performing program and/or facility evaluations of all aspects of clinical care and administrative services provided by any departmental unit or facility, and may assess and evaluate reports or incidents of client safety and neglect. Such responsibilities include, but are not limited to: collecting, reviewing, and analyzing data to contribute to better utilization of resources in such areas as risk management, program evaluation, infection control, utilization review, and staff development; identifying and analyzing factors that contribute to inappropriate utilization of services, situations, or processes, and which promote or reduce optimum patient care; assessing, reviewing and evaluating reports or allegations of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or incidents which may impact a client's safety and well-being; and reviewing clinical and social service records, individual habilitation plans, treatment team functioning, programs/services for compliance with policies, procedures, and standards for optimal clinical care. Additionally, quality assurance work involves participating as a team member of the quality assurance team in the analysis and evaluation of a variety of documents to identify problems and recommending appropriate changes in the areas of: (a) clinical necessity for admission/discharge; (b) necessity for extended stay; (c) clinical necessity for professional care/services rendered; (d) quality of care/services rendered; (e) timeliness of care/services rendered; and (f) incident review.

In order for experience to be acceptable, it must mirror the experience required in the examination announcement. In addition, 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). Regarding Family Services Specialist 2 experience, incumbents in this title perform field and office work related to screening allegations of child abuse and/or neglect; initiating or conducting various types of investigations including child welfare assessments or abuse and/or neglect referrals in problematic high risk family situations, in-home supervision, residential placement, assessment, recruitment, and placement in resource family/foster homes, adoption related work and placement supervision: managing various aspects of court involved cases; referring families for services; facilitating Family Team Meetings; collecting, recording and analyzing significant facts, drawing conclusions, and determining appropriate action. While the Family Services Specialist 2 works with individuals and families to assess and evaluate reports or incidents of safety and neglect, the Quality Assurance Specialist, Health Services does so in a larger context, performing evaluations of all aspects of clinical care and administrative services of programs or facilities. The work performed by the Family Services Specialist 2 is not equivalent and experience in this title is not

acceptable. The appellants' remaining experience in the private sector is also not applicable.

An independent review of all material presented indicates that the decisions of the Division of Agency Services that the appellants did not meet the announced requirements for eligibility by the closing date are amply supported by the record. The appellants provide no basis to disturb these decisions. Thus, the appellants have failed to support their burden of proof in these matters.

## **ORDER**

Therefore, it is ordered that these appeals 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 ON THE 18th DAY OF JANUARY, 2017

Robert M. Czech

Chairperson

Civil Service Commission

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and

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