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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

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

In the Matter of Irene Gonzalez and  
Gina O'Melia, Investigator, County  
Welfare Agency (C0264S), Hudson  
County

Examination Appeal

CSC Docket Nos. 2015-303  
2015-285

**ISSUED: OCT 23 2014**

(RE)

Irene Gonzalez and Gina O'Melia appeal the determinations of the Division of Selection Services which found that they did not meet the experience requirements for the open competitive examination for Investigator, County Welfare Agency (C0264S), Hudson County. These appeals have been consolidated due to common issues.

The subject examination announcement was issued with a closing date of May 14, 2014. It was open to residents of Hudson County who met the announced requirements. These requirements included possession of 60 semester hour credits from an accredited college or university, and two years of work experience that involved either 1) investigations in connection with the prosecution or defense of civil or criminal cases; or 2) investigations concerning compliance with or violations of statutory laws, rules, and regulations; or 3) criminal investigations requiring the use of a variety of investigatory methods and techniques; or 4) securing and verifying information and making determinations or recommendations pertaining to such matters as the eligibility or qualifications of applicants for loans, insurance, credit, employment, entitlement to cash awards or financial benefits, and the adjustment in settlement of insurance claims; or 5) other types of investigations which involved the collection of facts, and obtaining information by observing conditions, examining records, interviewing individuals; and preparing investigative reports of findings. Both appellants met the educational requirement, and were found to be below the minimum requirements in experience. Thirty-seven candidates have been admitted to the examination, which has not yet been held.

On her application and resume, Ms. Gonzalez listed an internship and six positions: Customer Service Specialist and Receptionist with Westgate Financial Corporation, Dental/Medical Office Assistant, Traffic Coordinator with Macy's Federated Department Stores, and two positions as a Volunteer Assistant Teacher. None of this experience was acceptable, and the appellant was found to be lacking two years of applicable experience. On appeal, Ms. Gonzalez argues that she meets the minimum qualifications, and she asks that her resume be re-evaluated, wherein she highlights duties of her Internship, Customer Service Specialist, Receptionist, and Dental/Medical Office Assistant positions. She provides various letters of reference.

On her application and resume, Ms. O'Melia listed experience as a Human Services Specialist 1, Adjunct Professor, Keyboarding Clerk 1, Tutor, Assistant Caretaker for children with special needs, and Freelance Assistant Stage Manager. Ms. O'Melia's three months of experience as a Human Services Specialist 1 was accepted, and she was found to be lacking one year, nine months of applicable experience. On appeal, Ms. O'Melia contends that her experience as a Keyboarding Clerk 1 was applicable as she acted as a certified passport agent by interviewing heads of households of recent U.S. citizens to see if they were in compliance with immigration statutory code so that their children were eligible to receive citizenship, then by reviewing the authenticity of documents. She also states that she was given Fraud training by the National Passport Center, and she completed a large number of fraud alerts on suspicious clients.

*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

A review of the appellant's application reveals that they do not meet the announced requirements. Applicants must demonstrate on their applications that the duties they perform provide them with the experience required for eligibility. *See In the Matter of Charles Klingberg* (MSB, decided August 28, 2001). Moreover, 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).

As to Ms. Gonzalez's experience, experience as an Intern, gained during the period of time that she had been attending college, cannot be considered. Any internship performed as part of a college curriculum is considered education or training, and not work experience. *See In the Matter of Luisa Mena* (MSB, decided February 14, 2001). As such, her internship cannot be considered toward the experience requirement. None of her other positions had the announced experience requirement as the primary focus. As a Customer Service Specialist, the appellant

indicated that she provided general administrative support, forwarded small business credit histories to banks, investigated reasons why applicants were denied loans and determined if they qualified to reapply, and advised prospective customers about loan application procedures. While the appellant determined why loans were denied and if applicants qualified to reapply, this was not the primary focus of the position, and does not rise the level and scope of the announced experience requirement. As a Dental/Medical Office Assistant, the appellant scheduled appointments, processed insurance documents, advocated for a client in disputes or underpayment, collected payments and assisted the doctor with instruments. This experience is unrelated to the announced experience requirement. Ms. Gonzalez's positions as a Receptionist, Traffic Coordinator with Macy's Federated Department Stores, and Volunteer Assistant Teacher are clearly inapplicable. She lacks the required two years of experience.

Ms. O'Melia's positions as an Adjunct Professor, Tutor, Assistant Caretaker for children with special needs, and Freelance Assistant Stage Manager, are clearly not acceptable. Regarding her Keyboarding Clerk 1 experience, the appellant indicated that her duties included reviewing documents and interviewing customers during the passport acceptance process; preparing documents and an observational check-list in cases of possible fraud; processing passport applications; performing research and genealogy searches; training staff and overseeing the office in the absence of the supervisor; and, as needed, assisting the Elections Division by making copies, preparing documents for web sites, processing absentee applications, sending out ballots, reading the cartridge on election nights, preparing official paperwork for certification of election, and organizing electronic ballot documents. The primary focus of this position was to prepare passports, which included reviewing documents and interviewing individuals. She engaged customers and processed passport applications and naturalization information requests, and produced copies of records. While investigations may have been performed during this process, or for the individuals who may have been committing fraud, this is not the primary focus of the position. For example, duties which would be applicable would have the full-time responsibility of performing investigations related to fraud referred by others performing the passport process. This aspect was only a part of the appellant's duties, and her other duties were clerical in nature. In addition, the appellant did not provide a percentage of time that she spent performing investigations of fraud as opposed to the other duties that she was required to perform, which would provide a solid basis for the conclusion that investigations were the primary focus. In sum, a holistic view of her duties does not indicate that the primary focus of this position matched the announced experience requirements. Ms. O'Melia lacks one year, nine months of qualifying experience.

An independent review of all material presented indicates that the decisions of the Division of Selection Services, that the appellants did not meet the announced

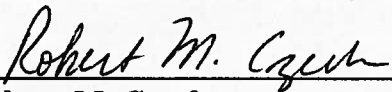
requirements for eligibility by the closing date, are amply supported by the record. The appellants provide no basis to disturb these decisions. Thus, the appellants have failed to support their burden of proof in these matters.

**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  
THE 22<sup>nd</sup> DAY OF OCTOBER, 2014**



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