

CSC
B-43



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

In the Matter of Matthew K.
Karimattam, Accountant (PC2214R),
Bergen County

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

CSC Docket No. 2014-2926

Examination Appeal

ISSUED: **OCT 22 2014** (BS)

Matthew K. Karimattam appeals the determination of the Division of Selection Services which found that he did not meet the requirements for the promotional examination for Accountant (PC2214R), Bergen County.

The promotional examination at issue was announced with specific education and experience requirements which had to be met as of the announced closing date of December 21, 2013. Specifically, all applicants had to possess a Bachelor's degree including or supplemented by 21 semester hour credits in professional accounting subjects an accredited college or university. The examination announcement stipulated that applicants who have satisfactorily completed 21 semester hours credits in professional accounting courses at an accredited college or university could substitute accounting experience in work involving the installation, operation and keeping of large scale systems of accounts for the remainder of the above educational requirement on a year for year basis with 30 semester hour credits being equal to one year of experience. Additionally, possession of a valid certificate as a Registered Municipal Accountant or Certified Public Accountant issued by the New Jersey State Board of Certified Public Accountants or as a Certified Municipal Finance Officer issued by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services may be substituted for the above educational requirement. Records indicate that a promotional list promulgated on May 22, 2014 containing the name of one qualified applicant.

The appellant filed an application on which he indicated that he possessed a Bachelor of the Arts from the University of Bombay. However, according the

evaluation from World Education Services, the appellant's foreign credits are only the equivalent of three years of college-level study earned in the United States. Although the appellant possessed 27 credits in professional accounting subjects, he did not possess a completed Bachelor's degree in the United States. As a result, he could only be credited three years and six months for his education, the maximum allowable credit for incomplete degrees. The announcement specified that applicants who possessed the 21 accounting credits could substitute accounting experience as stipulated above in lieu of the remaining education. However, the appellant did not possess any experience in the required areas. Consequently, the Division of Selection Services found the appellant ineligible for the subject promotional examination.

On appeal, the appellant asserts that he satisfied the subject requirements. In this regard, the appellant argues that he possesses a total of 162 credits, which he asserts "is more than enough for a college degree." The appellant further argues that he possesses a foreign degree and that he had been found eligible for a previous examination for this title.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.6(a) provides that applicants shall meet all requirements specified in the examination announcement by the closing date. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-6.3(b) provides that, except for medical or psychological disqualification appeals, the appellant shall have the burden of proof.

As of the closing date, the appellant possessed a total of 162 college credits which included 27 credits in professional accounting subjects. However, although the appellant possessed a Bachelor's degree earned in India, according to the World Education Service evaluation, it was only the equivalent of three years of university study in the United States. Even though he possessed additional college credits earned in the United States, he did not possess a conferred Bachelor's degree or its equivalent earned in the United States. See *In the Matter of Maxine Bronson, et al., Social Worker (PC1087B), Camden County Board of Social Services* (Merit System Board, decided September 25, 2001). The maximum allowable credit for incomplete degrees is 105 credits, which prorates to three years and six months of experience. Although the examination announcement allows for the substitution of experience as stipulated in the announcement in lieu of the required education, the appellant did not possess any experience in the required areas. Accordingly, he was correctly deemed ineligible for the subject promotional examination.

With regard to his assertion that he was deemed eligible for a previous examination for this title, Civil Service Commission records indicate that the appellant was found eligible for the promotional examination for Accountant (PC1179G) which closed October 21, 2005 with the same requirements as the

subject promotional examination. The appellant was tested and ranked number 2 non-vet. The resulting promotional eligible list was good for three years and expired on October 25, 2009. Based on this same fact pattern, it appears that the appellant had been admitted to the previous examination in error since he lacked a conferred Bachelor's degree or any professional accounting experience to substitute in lieu of the degree. Since the previous list has expired, there is no need to correct the error at this time. However, neither can the appellant benefit from this previous error as errors cannot be perpetuated. *See Cipriano v. the Department of Civil Service* 151 N.J. Super. 86 (App. Div. 1977). The Commission notes that each examination is announced as a separate entity and an appellant's eligibility for one examination has no bearing on another.

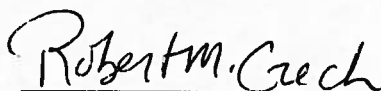
Accordingly, a thorough review of all material presented indicates that the determination of the Division of Selection Services, that the appellant did not meet the announced requirements for eligibility by the examination closing date, is amply supported by the record. Thus, the appellant has failed to support his burden of proof in this matter.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal 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 22ND DAY OF OCTOBER, 2014



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Attachment

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