

B-62



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION  
OF THE  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of Joan Campbell-  
Douglas and Monetta Smith,  
Administrative Secretary (M0233S),  
Paterson

Examination Appeals

CSC Docket Nos. 2015-453 and 2015-  
436

ISSUED: **OCT 27 2014** (SLK)

Joan Campbell-Douglas and Monetta Smith appeal the determinations of the Division of Selection Services (Selection Services) which found that they were below the minimum requirements for experience for the open-competitive examination for Administrative Secretary (M0233S), Paterson. These appeals have been consolidated due to common issues presented.

By way of background, since 2008, this agency has announced three competitive examinations for the subject title in Paterson. The open competitive examination for Administrative Secretary (M0375K) was announced with a closing date of June 19, 2008 and resulted in a list of one eligible with an expiration date of September 10, 2011. The sole eligible was appointed from that list. Thereafter, the promotional examination for Administrative Secretary (PM0277M) was announced with a closing date of April 21, 2010 and resulted in a list of one eligible with an expiration date of June 30, 2013. The sole eligible from that list was also permanently appointed. The subject open competitive examination for Administrative Secretary (M0233S) was announced with specific requirements that had to be met as of the closing date of May 7, 2014 (see attached). A total of 44 individuals applied for the subject examination which resulted in a list of one eligible with an expiration date of August 6, 2017. Certification OL141052, which has a disposition due date of November 11, 2014, was issued containing the name of the one eligible and has not yet been disposed. It is noted that the last eligible list for Administrative Secretary in Paterson prior to 2008 was promulgated in 1996. In summary, this agency, since 2008, has announced two open competitive

examinations and one promotional examination for the subject title for Paterson and each announcement has resulted in an incomplete list.

Ms. Campbell-Douglas indicated on her application that she was an Administrative Secretary from March 1999 to the May 7, 2014 closing date and that she possessed an Associate's degree. Personnel records indicate that she was a Clerk Stenographer 1 from March 1999 to the May 7, 2014 closing date. Selection Services did not credit her for any experience as it determined that she did not have any experience as a secretary to an executive or administrative official. It further commented that based on personnel records, she was a Clerk Stenographer 1 who reported to an Assistant Municipal Clerk.<sup>1</sup>

Ms. Smith indicated on her application that she was serving provisionally in the title under test from March 2013 to the May 7, 2014 closing date and a Medical Assistant/Administrative Secretary for Preventative and Diagnostic Medical Center from February 2000 to March 2014. Selection Services credited her with one year and two months of experience based on her provisional experience in the subject title, but determined that her other experience was not applicable as she did not have experience as a secretary to an executive or administrative official.

On appeal, Ms. Campbell-Douglas states she has an unblemished record of employment with the appointing authority for over 15 years. She indicates that she has worked as an Administrative Secretary for the past ten years in both the Municipal Clerk and Municipal Council offices, as well as the offices of Council Presidents and Chairpersons of various Municipal Committees. Specifically, she represents that she provides full-time support to both full and part-time members of the governing body, that she provides administrative support for the Municipal Clerk as part of the day-to-day operations and that she collects and reconciles data in order to make administrative decisions on behalf of the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Municipal Council Members, and Municipal Clerk. She also maintains that she supervises, trains, and reviews assignments for all Municipal Council Secretaries.

Ms. Smith highlights that she has been provisionally serving in the subject title since March 2013 and that previously she had been a medical assistant and later became the administrative secretary/office manager for a multi-physician group from February 2000 to March 2013. The appellant provides a resume further detailing her duties as an Administrative Secretary for Preventative and Diagnostic Medical Center.

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<sup>1</sup> Personnel records indicate that the appellant's supervisor as listed on her application, Jane Williams-Warren, is on a leave of absence from her permanent title of Assistant Municipal Clerk and is currently serving in an unclassified appointment as a Municipal Clerk.

## CONCLUSION

*N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.3(b)2 requires applicants to possess all the requirements specified in an announcement for an open competitive examination by the closing date. Further, *N.J.A.C.* 4A:1-1.2(c) states that the Civil Service Commission (Commission) may relax a rule for good cause in order to effectuate the purposes of Title 11A, New Jersey Statutes.

Initially, Selection Services correctly determined that the appellants did not meet the requirements for the subject examination. However, in accordance with *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.1(g), the Civil Service Commission (Commission) can accept clarifying information in eligibility appeals. For example, information submitted on appeal pertaining to duties performed in a given position that expands or enlarges on information previously submitted is considered clarifying. In reference to Ms. Campbell-Douglas, as a Clerk Stenographer 1, she clarified in her appeal submissions that she has provided for over 10 years administrative secretarial support for the Municipal Clerk as well as the Municipal Council Members and Chairpersons of Municipal Committees. *N.J.S.A.* 40:69A-43(3-13)(a) provides that the offices of the municipal clerk shall be subject to general administrative procedures and subject to the same requirements generally required of departments. *N.J.S.A.* 40A:9-133 *et seq.* specifies the various duties as an administrative official required to be performed by a Municipal Clerk. As such, the Municipal Clerk is considered an administrative official. Therefore, the Commission is satisfied that the appellant's experience as the secretary for an administrative official, the Municipal Clerk, for over ten years satisfies the required experience and she should be admitted to the subject examination.

With respect to Ms. Smith, she clarified her experience as an Administrative Secretary with Preventative and Diagnostic Medical Center for over thirteen years. As noted earlier, the subject announcement is the third announcement since 2008 that resulted in an incomplete list. Additionally, the appellant was credited for her experience while serving in a provisional capacity in the title under test. Therefore, although Ms. Smith's experience does not precisely mirror the requirements contained in the announcement, the Commission is satisfied that the totality of her varied levels of experience as far back as February 2000 as well as her provisional experience in the subject title warrants her admission to the subject examination. Additionally, Ms. Smith continues to serve provisionally in the title under test and the eligible list is incomplete. Therefore, under these circumstances, good cause exists to relax the provisions of *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.6(a) and accept the totality of Ms. Smith's experience, including her provisional experience after the closing date, and admit her to the subject examination.

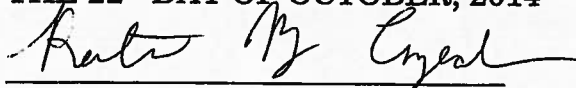
Accordingly, admitting the appellants to the subject examination will provide the appointing authority with an eligible list of three names.

**ORDER**

Therefore, it is ordered that these appeals be granted and Joan Campbell-Douglas' and Monetta Smith's applications be processed for prospective 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 22<sup>nd</sup> DAY OF OCTOBER, 2014**



**Robert M. Czech  
Chairperson  
Civil Service Commission**

**Inquiries  
and  
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**Henry Maurer  
Director  
Division of Appeals  
and Regulatory Affairs  
Civil Service Commission  
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P.O. Box 312  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0312**

**Attachment**

**c: Joan Campbell-Douglas  
Monetta Smith  
Nellie Pou  
Dan Hill  
Joseph Gambino**



## Job Announcements

Symbol: M0233S Title: **ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY**

Issue Date: 04/16/2014

Closing Date: 05/07/2014

Jurisdiction: PATERSON

Salary: \$40,000.00 - \$55,000.00 Per Year

Num. of Positions: 1

Workweek: 35 Hours per week

Application Fee: \$25.00

### OPEN TO RESIDENTS OF:

Paterson City

### REQUIREMENTS:

**EXPERIENCE:** Five (5) years of experience in the capacity of a secretary to an executive or administrative official in a public or private organization.

**NOTE:** Successful completion of a two (2) year program in secretarial science at an accredited college or university may be substituted for two (2) years of the above experience. If you are substituting education for some of the required experience, please upload a copy of your transcript with your application. Failure to do so will result in ineligibility.

**NOTE:** Foreign transcripts must be evaluated by a recognized evaluation service. Please upload a copy of your evaluation with your application. Failure to do so will result in ineligibility.

**LICENSE:** Appointees will be required to possess a driver's license valid in New Jersey only if the operation of a vehicle, rather than employee mobility, is necessary to perform essential duties of the position.

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

1. NJAC 4A:4-2.3(b) states that all requirements must be met as of the closing date.
2. Online applications must be completed and submitted by the closing date listed above.
3. **You must complete your application in detail.** Your score may be based on a comparison of your background with the job requirements. **Failure to complete your application properly may lower your score or cause you to fail.**
4. If an employment list results from this announcement, it may be certified to fill full-time and part-time positions.
5. If the announcement is open to residents of more than one jurisdiction, the eligible list will be ranked according to that residency sequence. Please click here for additional information.
6. Effective September 1, 2011, the New Jersey First residency law was enacted. Please click here for additional information.
7. In accordance with Public Law 2010 c. 26, Veterans pay a reduced application fee of \$15.00 if they have previously established Veteran's Preference with the DMAVA (as defined by NJSA 11A:5-1 et seq) or their claim is approved by DMAVA at least 8 days prior to the issuance of the eligibility list. Please note this reduced fee does not apply to Public Safety titles.

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