

B-23



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of Yakema Coleman, *et al.*, Social Work Supervisor (PC0470S), Passaic County Board of Social Services

Examination Appeals

CSC Docket Nos. 2015-487, 2015-490, and 2015-495

ISSUED: NOV 12 2014 (SLK)

Yakema Coleman, Richard Grimes, and Lawana King-Obi appeal the determinations of the Division of Selection Services (Selection Services) that they did not meet the experience requirements for the promotional examination for Social Work Supervisor (PC0470S), Passaic County Board of Social Services. These appeals have been consolidated due to common issues presented.

The examination at issue was announced with specific requirements that had to be met as of the March 21, 2014 closing date (see attached). A total of 48 employees applied for the subject examination that resulted in a list of five eligibles with an expiration date of October 15, 2016. It is noted that the list has not yet been certified.

Ms. Coleman's application indicated that she was a Human Services Specialist 1 from May 1998 to the March 21, 2014 closing date and that she possessed a Bachelor's degree. Personnel records indicate that she was a Human Services Specialist 1 from October 2012 to the March 21, 2014 closing date and a Social Service Technician from May 1998 to October 2012. Selection Services credited Ms. Coleman with possession of a Bachelor's degree, but determined that none her experience was applicable. Consequently, it determined that she lacked three years of experience.

Mr. Grimes' application indicated that he was a Human Services Specialist 2 from November 1989 to the March 21, 2014 closing date and that he possessed a Bachelor's degree. Personnel records indicate that he was a Human Services

Specialist 2 from June 2001 to the March 21, 2014 closing date and an Income Maintenance Technician from March 1990 to June 2001. Selection Services credited Mr. Grimes with possession of a Bachelor's degree, but determined that none of his experience was applicable. Therefore, it determined that he lacked three years of experience.

Ms. King-Obi's application indicated that she was a Senior Training Technician from January 2003 to the March 21, 2014 closing date, a part-time Instructor for William Paterson University for September 2001 to May 2005, an Income Maintenance Worker from April 1992 to December 2002, an Income Maintenance Technician from July 1988 to April 1992, and an Instructor for Passaic County College from September 1985 to July 1989. Personnel records indicate that she was a Supervising Training Technician from January 2003 to the March 21, 2014 closing date, a Human Services Specialist 2 from June 2001 to January 2003, an Income Maintenance Worker from October 1990 to June 2001, and an Income Maintenance Technician from July 1988 to October 1990. Ms. King-Obi also possessed a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree in Communications/Media Studies. Selection Services credited Ms. King-Obi with possession of a Bachelor's degree, but determined that her Master's degree was not in a required field and that none of her experience was applicable. Therefore, it determined that she lacked three years of experience.

On appeal, Ms. Coleman states that she has served the appointing authority for the past 15 years as a Social Service Technician. She presents that she has social work experience which involves gathering social information, assessing and determining needs, and planning and carrying out treatment and effective service plans that are geared toward individual client needs. Ms. Coleman indicates that her title was changed to Human Services Specialist 1 within the past year, although she has been performing the same duties as she performed as a Social Service Technician. She provides that she possesses a Bachelor's degree in Metropolitan Studies and that her studies consisted of Social Work, Psychology and Sociology.

Mr. Grimes asserts that he has been performing the required duties as stated in the subject announcement for the past 25 years. He presents that as a Human Services Specialist 2 for the past 15 years, he has performed the required duties plus many other duties which are far greater than the requirements. Mr. Grimes requests that it be explained in detail as to how he does not meet the subject examination requirements.

Ms. King-Obi represents that she is using her education to substitute for her minimal experience as a Social Worker. She indicates that she started serving the appointing authority in 1988 as an Income Maintenance Technician, was promoted to Income Maintenance Worker in 1990 and then her title was changed to Human Services Specialist 2, and then was promoted to Senior Training Technician in 2003.

Ms. King-Obi also notes that she worked provisionally in the Social Service department. She further highlights that she has obtained a Master's degree in Sociology and Communications.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.6(a) provides that applicants shall meet all requirements specified in the promotional announcement by the closing date. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-6.3(b) provides that the appellant has the burden of proof in examination appeals.

In the instant matter, the appellants are not eligible for the subject examination. With respect to Ms. Coleman, on appeal she simply restates the subject examination requirements and asserts that she performs the required duties without providing any specificity. Simply quoting the duties contained in the job specification on an application or appeal is not a sufficient basis on which to determine if a candidate's *specific* duties would meet the requirements for an examination. Candidates must demonstrate that the duties they perform qualify them for admission to the examination. See *In the Matter of Maxsine Allen and Vivian Stevenson* (MSB, decided March 10, 2004). Further, in reviewing her application, she does not provide with specificity how she carries out treatment and/or service plans geared to individual client needs and therefore she has not met her burden of proof.

In reference to Mr. Grimes, his application does not indicate that he plans and carries out treatment plans and/or service plans geared to individual clients. Further, his appeal simply states that he performs the required duties without providing any specificity and therefore he has not met his burden of proof. In response to Mr. Grimes' request for a detailed explanation as to how he does not qualify for the subject examination, it noted that the onus is not on Selection Services or the Civil Service Commission (Commission) to flesh out the scope of Mr. Grimes' prior experience. See *In In the Matter of William A. Bailey, Assistant Supervisor, Sewers/Assistant Supervisor, Water*, Docket No. A-5283-02T2 (App. Div. December 30, 2004).

With regard to Ms. King-Obi, her application indicated that her Bachelor's degree was in Sociology and her Master's degree was in Communications/Media Studies. Consequently, Selection Services correctly determined that her Master's degree was not in a required field. Furthermore, even if she were to receive credit for her Master's degree, she would still lack two years of the required experience as she has not indicated in her application or appeal that she planned and carried out treatment plans and/or service plans geared to individual client needs.

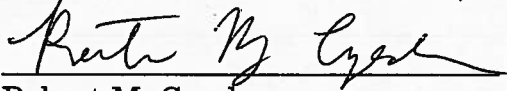
Accordingly, the appellants have failed to meet their burdens of proof and Selection Services properly determined that the appellants lacked the applicable experience as of the closing date and are not eligible for the subject examination.

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 6th DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2014



Robert M. Czech
Chairperson
Civil Service Commission

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and
Correspondence

Henry Maurer
Director
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Attachment

c: Yakema Coleman
Richard Grimes
Lawana King-Obi
Dan Hill
Joseph Gambino

NEW JERSEY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES
PROMOTIONAL ANNOUNCEMENT



[Click Here to File Online](#)
\$25.00 PROCESSING FEE REQUIRED
Make Check/Money Order Payable to NJCSC

SYMBOL: **PC0470S**

TITLE: **SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISOR**

ISSUE DATE: **March 01, 2014**

TITLE CODE: **03733 / CIRRR9**

JURISDICTION: **PASSAIC COUNTY**

DEPARTMENT: **BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICE**

WEIGHT CODE: *

SALARY: **\$74,506.00 - \$119,221.00**

CLOSING DATE: **March 21, 2014**

JURISDICTION CODE: **N16000300**

RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO:

**ONLY ON LINE APPLICATIONS
WILL BE ACCEPTED
FOR THIS ANNOUNCEMENT**

Open to employees in the competitive division who have an aggregate of one year of continuous permanent service as of the closing date and are currently serving in the following title(s):

**Social Worker 03734
Social Worker Bilingual Spanish and English 03735**

Or to employees in the competitive division who have an aggregate of one year of continuous permanent service as of the closing date in any competitive title and meet the requirements listed below:

Education: Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree supplemented by a Master's degree in Social Work, Psychology, Sociology, Guidance and Counseling or other field related to social work or social services. You must indicate either possession of a degree or total number of college credits completed to date on your application. (Foreign degrees/transcripts must be evaluated by a recognized evaluation service.) Failure to do so will result in rejection from the examination process.

Note: Applicants who do not meet the Bachelor's degree may substitute additional experience as indicated below on a year-for-year basis with thirty (30) semester hour credits being equal to one (1) year of experience.

Note: Applicants who do not possess the required Master's degree may substitute one (1) additional year of experience.

Experience: Two (2) years of social work experience involving gathering social information from clients, determining their needs, and planning and carrying out treatment plans and/or service plans geared to individual client needs.

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 the essential duties of the position. The responsibility for ensuring that employees possess the required motor vehicle license, commensurate with the class and type of vehicles they operate, rests with the Appointing Authority.

Note: This announcement may be tested via the Supervisory Test Battery, a computer-administered exam. For information regarding the Supervisory Test Battery, please refer to our website <http://www.state.nj.us/csc/seekers/about/steps/step7.html>.

NOTE: As of December 1, 2013, applications must be completed and submitted by 4:00 pm on the closing date.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

1. NJAC 4A:4-2.6 states that all requirements listed must be met as of the closing date, including assignment to jurisdiction/department, and satisfying the permanent status requirement.
2. **YOU MUST COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION IN DETAIL.** Your score may be based on a comparison of your credentials with the job requirements. Failure to complete your application properly may lower your score or cause you to fail.
3. This examination is open to full-time and part-time permanent employees. If an employment list results from this announcement, it may be certified to fill both full-time and part-time positions. If 35- and 40-hour positions are used within the department, the resulting list may be used to fill either work week position.
4. NJAC 4A:4-1.5 states that any employee who is serving on a provisional basis and who fails to file for and take an examination which has been announced for his/her title **SHALL BE SEPARATED FROM THE PROVISIONAL TITLE.**
5. In accordance with Public Law 2010 c.26, **Veterans pay a reduced application fee of \$15.00** if they have previously established Veterans Preference with the DMAVA (as defined by N.J.S.A. 11A:5-1 et seq.), or your claim is approved by DMAVA at least 8 days prior to the issuance of this eligibility list. **PLEASE NOTE THIS REDUCED FEE DOES NOT APPLY TO PUBLIC SAFETY TITLES.** (i.e. Police, Fire, Corrections and Sheriff).
6. **SAVE ON POSTAGE! GO PAPERLESS! RECEIVE IMMEDIATE CONFIRMATION THAT YOUR APPLICATION HAS BEEN RECEIVED!** You can now file an application for this examination on-line. Visit the Civil Service Commission website at <http://info.csc.state.nj.us/epoa>. Select the promotional announcement and click on the link, "Click Here to file Online" at the top of the announcement. **You can now complete and submit your application and payment on-line to the Civil Service Commission and you will receive an immediate receipt confirmation!**