

CSC
B-55



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of Karla Perla,
Personnel Assistant (PC0530S),
Atlantic County

Examination Appeal

CSC Docket No. 2015-982

ISSUED: **MAR 06 2015** (HS)

Karla Perla appeals the determination of the Division of Selection Services (Selection Services), which found that, per the substitution clause for education, she did not meet the experience requirement for the promotional examination for Personnel Assistant (PC0530S), Atlantic County.

The subject examination was announced with a closing date of April 21, 2014 and was open to applicants who possessed a Bachelor's degree and one year of technical experience in personnel work in a government department, institution, agency or other establishment. Applicants who did not possess the required education could substitute additional experience as indicated on a year-for-year basis with 30 semester hour credits being equal to one year of experience. A Master's degree in Personnel Administration, Applied Psychology or other related field from an accredited college or university could be substituted for the year of experience. The subject examination was cancelled due to a lack of qualified applicants.

Since the appellant did not indicate possession of a Bachelor's degree on her application, she was required to possess five years of the indicated experience per the substitution clause. On her application, the appellant indicated possession of 73 semester hour credits. She also listed her experience as a Personnel Assistant from September 2012 to the closing date, as an Office Services Manager from May 2003 to September 2012, as a Principal Word Processing Operator from May 2003 to August 2011 and as a Senior Word Processing Operator from November 1999 to

May 2003 all with Atlantic County;¹ and as a Marketing Operations Supervisor with the Tropicana Hotel and Casino from March 1991 to December 1996. The appellant indicated that as a Personnel Assistant, she assisted in performing the work involved in the analysis and evaluation of administrative procedures, practices and organizational structure in order to provide information and recommendations to management on ways to improve administrative functions and operational activities in the Department of Administrative Services, Health Benefits Office Audit Monthly Medical/Prescription, Vision and Dental Plans for over 2,000 employees; ensured that dental and vision plan providers have the same information as health benefits files; prepared a detailed cost share spreadsheet for several departments on a biweekly basis; inputted each employee's cost share amount into an Excel spreadsheet, summarized each department's totals and completed this work at the end of the quarter for each department's approval; assisted in the New Employee Orientation and ensured that all new hires are scheduled and receive the newest information regarding health benefits plans; and prepared regular and supplementary payrolls. Selection Services credited the appellant with the equivalent of two years and five months of experience based on her possession of 73 semester hour credits. However, none of her listed experience was found to be applicable since her positions did not have, as the primary focus, human resources or personnel experience. Therefore, Selection Services deemed her ineligible because, per the substitution clause for education, she did not meet the experience requirement set forth in the announcement since she lacked two years and seven months of experience.

On appeal, the appellant maintains that she should be awarded credit since her positions have required some personnel work. Specifically, as an Office Services Manager, she prepared payroll; as an Assistant Administrative Analyst, she analyzed department procedures and determined the possible need for revisions; and as Marketing Operations Supervisor, she resolved employee complaints. Moreover, the appellant contends that she also performed particular duties related to personnel work in her various positions. For example, as a Personnel Assistant and Assistant Administrative Analyst, the appellant audited health benefits program bills; sent notices of any changes to dental and vision programs to retirees; encumbered and processed monthly and quarterly bills; keyed payments into the retiree billing system; processed contractual payments, post-offer bills, Employee Assistance Program contracts and other contractual payments; printed edit reports and confirmed all payment processing before sending bills; coordinated the employee Bus Pass Program; assisted in handling open enrollment periods;

¹ Agency records indicate that the appellant served as a Clerk 1 from September 1, 1998 to October 31, 1999; as a Senior Word Processing Operator from November 1, 1999 to July 31, 2001; as a Principal Word Processing Operator from August 1, 2001 to May 26, 2003; as an Office Services Manager from May 27, 2003 to September 8, 2012; as an Assistant Administrative Analyst from September 9, 2012 to October 21, 2013; and as a Personnel Assistant from October 22, 2013 to the closing date. It is noted that the appellant received a provisional appointment to the subject title on October 22, 2013, and she continues to serve in that capacity.

scheduled quarterly meetings to facilitate employees' changes to their policies; and updated worksheets for Health Benefit Insurance Committee meetings. As an Office Services Manager, the appellant assumed complete responsibility for the entire day-to-day operations of the Word Processing Unit, including the general supervision of confidential documents, files and personnel records and prepared and submitted regular payroll and time adjustments. As a Marketing Operations Supervisor, the appellant was responsible for the managerial control, operational activities and supervision of 150 employees engaged in Promotion Booth, Bus Program and Room Reservations services and functions.

The job specification reveals that an individual in the title of Personnel Assistant does the work involved in interviewing applicants for employment, in making routine classification, statistical and other studies, and in assisting with the general personnel work program.

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. Applicable experience has as its primary focus the duties and responsibilities required for the title under test. *See In the Matter of James L. Walsh* (MSB, decided March 15, 1988).

Initially, it is noted that Selection Services correctly determined that the appellant was not eligible for the subject examination. The appellant was required to possess five years of applicable experience. However, a review of the appellant's application reveals that she did not possess the required experience. On appeal, the appellant asserts that her experience in the positions of Personnel Assistant, Assistant Administrative Analyst, Office Services Manager and Marketing Operations Supervisor is applicable and therefore, she possesses sufficient experience. However, 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). The amount of time, and the importance of the duty, determines if it is the primary focus. An experience requirement that lists a number of duties which define the primary experience, requires that the applicants demonstrate that they primarily performed all of those duties for the required length of time. Performance of only one or some of the duties listed is not indicative of comprehensive experience. *See In the Matter of Jeffrey Davis* (MSB, decided March 14, 2007). In the instant matter, the appellant contends that she performed *some* personnel work in each of the positions of Personnel Assistant, Assistant Administrative Analyst, Office Services Manager and Marketing Operations Supervisor. However, based on a review of the appellant's application along with the information supplied on appeal, none of the appellant's positions as described by her had technical personnel work

experience as the *primary focus*. Accordingly, the record reflects that the appellant did not meet the requirements for the title under test, and there is no basis to disturb the decision of Selection Services.

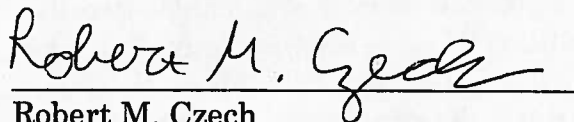
Finally, the appellant is presently serving in the title of Personnel Assistant. *N.J.S.A.* 11A:3-1 and *N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-3.1(a) provide that each position in the career and unclassified services shall be assigned to a job title. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-3.3(d) provides that positions in the career, unclassified and senior executive service shall be subject to job audit to ensure accurate classification and compliance with Titles 11A and 4A. Moreover, *N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-3.4 provides that no person shall be appointed or employed under a title not appropriate to the duties to be performed nor assigned to perform duties other than those properly pertaining to the assigned title which the employee holds. However, the appellant, based on the information she has provided on her application and on appeal, appears to be performing out-of-title work. Therefore, it is appropriate that this matter be referred to the Division of Agency Services for a classification review of the appellant's position.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied. It is further ordered that the Division of Agency Services complete its classification review of Karla Perla's position and issue its determination to Perla and Atlantic County within 60 days of the issuance of this decision.

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 4TH DAY OF MARCH, 2015



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