



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

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

In the Matter of Shakira Peterson,
Quality Assurance Specialist, Health
Services (S0141W), Statewide

CSC Docket No. 2019-1327

Examination Appeal

ISSUED: February 11, 2019 (RE)

Shakira Peterson appeals the determination of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) which found that she did not meet the experience requirements for the open-competitive examination for Quality Assurance Specialist Health Services (S0141W), Statewide.

The subject examination announcement was issued with a closing date of July 16, 2018 and was open to residents of New Jersey and the United States who possessed a current license in New Jersey as a Registered Professional Nurse, and had four years experience as a registered nurse, one year of which shall have included the monitoring and/or evaluation of clinical or human services records and programs in a mental health, geriatric, health care setting or human service agency. It was noted that graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree, and three years of specialized experience in the field of quality assurance in a mental health, geriatric, health care setting, or human services agency which includes monitoring and/or evaluation of clinical or human services records and programs, which may include allegations of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or incidents of client abuse or safety and well-being, could be substituted for the above license and experience requirements. The appellant was found to be below the minimum requirements in experience. It is noted that 311 candidates were admitted to the examination, which has not yet been held.

The appellant did not indicate on her application that she possessed the required license as a Registered Professional Nurse. She indicated that she possessed a Bachelor's degree, and as such, she was required to have three years of

specialized experience per the substitution clause. She indicated on her application that she was a Case Manager (HPC) and a Program Coordinator for the New Jersey Institute of Disabilities. Official records indicate that the appellant was a Habilitation Plan Coordinator. None of her experience was accepted, and she was found to be lacking three years of specialized experience in the field of quality assurance which included monitoring and/or evaluation of clinical or human services records and programs, which may include allegations of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or incidents of client abuse or safety and well-being.

On appeal, the appellant maintains that she possesses the required experience in her position a Habilitation Plan Coordinator as she maintains 65 clients on her caseload. Each month, she visits the clients' residence, completes a report, and collects, reviews and analyzes each individual service plan to ensure that the plan meets their needs and preferences, and identifies risks. She reviews monthly reports regarding goals and progress, and recommends modifications to meet objectives; reviews files for medical and behavioral needs changes; reviews Unusual Incident reports and indicates if follow up is needed and provides related comments or writes up an incident report for issues of abuse or neglect; reviews individual financial records for proper deposit, withdrawal and balance; reviews fire drill logs for compliance with policy; reviews individual medical appointments and physician reports to ensure compliance with orders and medication intake; and reviews day program or employment records for issues or concerns to be addressed. She states that she records discrepancies and corrective actions to be taken, uploads data, notifies her supervisor and the team of her findings, follows up on the status of tasks, provides assistance, and makes recommendations. She indicates that she monitor's agency services for compliance with guidelines, identifies problems and recommends changes.

CONCLUSION

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.

Quality assurance involves performing program and/or facility evaluations of all aspects of clinical care and administrative services provided by any departmental unit or facility, and may assess and evaluate reports or incidents of client safety and neglect. Such responsibilities include, but are not limited to: collecting, reviewing, and analyzing data to contribute to better utilization of resources in such areas as risk management, program evaluation, infection control, utilization review, and staff development; identifying and analyzing factors that contribute to inappropriate utilization of services, situations, or processes, and which promote or reduce optimum patient care; assessing, reviewing and evaluating reports or allegations of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or incidents which may impact a client's safety and well-being; and reviewing clinical and social service records,

individual habilitation plans, treatment team functioning, and facility programs/services for compliance with policies, procedures, and standards for optimal clinical care. Additionally, quality assurance work involves participating as a team member of the quality assurance team in the analysis and evaluation of a variety of documents to identify problems and recommending appropriate changes in the areas of: (a) clinical necessity for admission/discharge; (b) necessity for extended stay; (c) clinical necessity for professional care/services rendered; (d) quality of care/services rendered; (e) timeliness of care/services rendered; and (f) incident review. In order for experience to be acceptable, 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 appellant was deemed to be ineligible for the subject examination since she lacked three years of specialized experience. A review of her application indicates that this determination is correct.

A Habilitation Plan Coordinator is responsible for, or assists in, the development and implementation of Individual Habilitation Plans for a designated number of individuals. The appellant is not working out-of-title in her Habilitation Plan Coordinator position, and again, this does not have quality assurance as the primary focus. The development and implementation of Individual Habilitation Plans is the focus of responsibility of a Habilitation Plan Coordinator, and if some quality assurance was performed, it was restricted to the individuals being treated and ancillary to the primary focus of developing and implementing Individual Habilitation Plans for individuals. A Habilitation Plan Coordinator is not responsible for the monitoring and/or evaluation of clinical or human services programs, and experience in this title is considered to be patient monitoring, and is not qualifying experience. The appellant's remaining position involved direct care and is inapplicable. Thus, the appellant does not meet the announced requirements for the examination.

The appellant was denied admittance to the subject examination since she lacked the minimum requirements in experience. An independent review of all material presented indicates that the decision of Agency Services, that the appellant did not meet the announced requirements for eligibility by the closing date, is amply supported by the record. The appellant provides no basis to disturb this decision. Thus, the appellant has failed to support her 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 6th DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2019



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