



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

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	:	FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
In the Matter of Donnetta Shabazz,	:	OF THE
Supervisor of Billing and Collecting	:	CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
(PM3365C), Trenton	:	
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CSC Docket No. 2022-734	:	Examination Appeal
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ISSUED: FEBRUARY 7, 2022 (RE)

Donnetta Shabazz appeals the determination of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) which found that she did not meet the minimum educational and experience requirements for the promotional examination for Supervisor of Billing and Collecting (PM3365C), Trenton.

The subject examination announcement was issued with a closing date of June 21, 2021. The examination was 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 as Assistant Supervisor of Billing and Collecting, 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 who met the open-competitive requirements. Those requirements were five years of experience in clerical accounting and maintaining accounts of financial transactions, one (1) year of which shall have been in a supervisory capacity. As the appellant was the sole applicant, the examination was cancelled on September 23, 2021.

The appellant listed three positions on her application: provisional Supervisor of Billing and Collecting, Supervisor of Customer Service, and Senior Customer Service Representative. Agency records indicate that the appellant was an Assistant Supervisor of Customer Service for a portion of time, a year and a month, that she listed she was a Supervisor of Customer Service. She was also a Radio Dispatcher/Keyboarding Clerk 2 for the time she indicated that she was a Senior Customer Service Representative. She was credited with five months of applicable

general and supervisory experience in her provisional position, and was found to be lacking four years, seven months of general experience, and seven months of supervisory experience.

On appeal, the appellant provides detailed duties for the three positions listed on her application, and provides duties for additional positions not listed on her application. Agency records indicate that the appellant has been in the Department of Water and Sewer since October 2018, and was in the Department of Public Works from February 2004 to October 2018. In her appeal, the appellant explains that she was working out-of-title from October 2016 to January 2018 while in the title Dispatcher/Keyboarding Clerk 2 as a Senior Customer Service Representative.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.6(a)2 provides that an applicant shall meet all the requirements specified in the promotional examination announcement by the closing date. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.6(c) provides in pertinent part that applicants for promotional examinations with open competitive requirements may not use experience gained as a result of out of title work to satisfy the requirements for admittance to the examination or for credit in the examination process, unless good cause is shown for an exception. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.1(f) provides that an application may be amended prior to the announced closing date.

The appellant was denied admittance to the subject examination since she lacked the required amount of experience. Specifically, the appellant's position as Supervisor of Customer Service was found to be inapplicable as it was considered to be out-of-title work. The duties of her position as Senior Customer Service Representative were found to have some aspects of the required experience, but that was not the primary focus.

Generally, qualifying experience has the announced experience as the primary focus. The amount of time, and the importance of the duty, determines if it is the primary focus. The open competitive requirements for an examination must be evaluated in relation to both the level of the position and what actual experience would provide a logical nexus to the primary focus of the title. In this case, while Agency Services found that the appellant's duties as a Supervisor of Customer Service were out-of-title for the subject requirements, there is a nexus between those duties and the required experience. The job specification for Supervisor of Customer Service defines the title as:

Under direction, supervises and coordinates the activities of Customer Service Representatives engaged in receiving and handling customer complaints, requests and/or inquiries concerning the providing of public services, billings, service charges, the issuance of licenses, certificates

and permits and/or other matters of a similar nature; does related work as required.

Examples of work from the job specification include: supervises the preparation of all information and forms regarding the request and/or billings for special, final and private reading of water and electric meters; supervises the processing of all checks and money orders received as payment for water, electric and sewer billings by checking street addresses, account numbers and trial balances so the cashier may accept them; answers inquiries and gives information concerning water and electric meter readings, the manner of making computations for water and electric use and the water and electric distribution system; checks on new accounts to insure proper billings; supervises the establishment and maintenance of needed records and files; supervises the conducting of field inspections of water, sewer and/or electric lines and connections as the result of customer complaints in order to insure that property is being billed properly according to rate structure; supervises the inspection of property to determine proper rate structure category and gathers needed information for the customer account; sees that records are updated so that customer is billed properly; supervises the collection of payments for services, penalty and interest charges and makes partial payment arrangements as necessary; supervises the determination of charges for service requested, the collection of deposits, the preparation of change of address records and the issuance of discontinuance orders; may adjust complaints concerning billing or service rendered, referring complaints of service failures, energy diversion or meter tampering to designated departments for investigation; reviews meter books, microfilm, computer printouts and machine accounting records for errors causing high bills. The Assistant Supervisor of Customer Service performs similar duties in assisting the supervisor. Given the extensive involvement of billing and collections in these job specifications, and the appellant's description of duties for the period of time that she was in these titles, a sufficient nexus exists to accept this experience and credit her with three years, one month of experience in these titles, which includes supervisory experience.

As a Senior Customer Service Representative, the appellant indicated that she assisted daily with billing assignments, oversaw the processing of payments remitted by check or money order, and collected payments. On appeal the appellant explains that she was a Customer Service Representative for many years, and agency records confirm that she was in this title from February 2004 to February 2016 in the Department of Public Works, and from August 2003 to February 2004 in the Department of Finance. She states that her duties included processing the weekly cycle billing; processing payments; assisting customers with complaints about billing; rebilling accounts for correct usage; making and receiving calls regarding delinquent and collection accounts. Again, there is a sufficient nexus between the duties she performed in this position, and the required experience. The Civil Service Commission is satisfied that the totality of her experience warrants her admission to the subject examination. The examination was cancelled, and the appellant is still

serving as a provisional appointee. Based on the particular circumstances presented, good cause has been established to relax the provisions of *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.6(a)2 to accept the appellant's totality of experience and admit her to the examination.

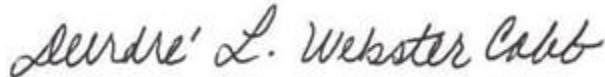
The remedy provided herein is limited to the facts of this case and may not be used as precedent in any other matter.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be granted, and the appellant's application be processed.

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 2ND DAY OF FEBRUARY 2022



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