



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION  
OF THE  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of Keith Donath,  
Supervising Program Development  
Specialist, Community Service  
(M0488C), Jersey City

Examination Appeal

CSC Docket No. 2022-2079

ISSUED: May 2, 2022 (RE)

Keith Donath appeals the decision of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) which found that he did not meet the experience requirements for the open competitive examination for Supervising Program Development Specialist, Community Service (M0488C), Jersey City.

The subject examination had a closing date of October 21, 2021 and was open to residents of Jersey City who met the announced requirements. These requirements included graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor’s degree, and four years of experience in the development of programs designed to solve socio-economic needs of residents of the State and/or local communities which shall have included responsibility for research, negotiation, and/or writing of proposals for community service programs. Applicants who did not possess the required education could substitute experience on a year for year basis. Possession of a Master’s degree from an accredited college or university with concentration in the field of human or social services could be substituted for one year of experience. The appellant was found to be ineligible based on a lack of experience. The list was certified with one admitted candidate, but no appointments have yet been made.

On his application and resume, the appellant indicated that he possessed a Bachelor’s degree, which satisfies the educational requirement, and he listed four positions on his application: Director of Enrichment from August 2019 to October 2021; Aide to the Mayor from July 2019 to August 2019; “Seasonal” (part-time, 20 hours per week) from January 2017 to July 2018 with Jersey City; and Program

Director with YMCA of Greater New York from September 2013 to July 2015. Official records indicate that the appellant was a provisional Supervising Program Development Specialist, Community Service from March 2020 to the October 21, 2021 closing date, and a Youth Opportunity Coordinator from August 2019 to March 2020. The appellant was credited with two years, three months in the first position, and eleven months of prorated experience in the third position. He was found to be lacking ten months of applicable experience.

On appeal, the appellant states that he exceeds the experience requirement and provides a longer list of duties than those originally submitted.

## 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.

The appellant was correctly deemed to be ineligible for the subject examination. At the outset, it is noted that the appellant did not properly complete his application. The online application process is automated and provides instructions to candidates on how to properly complete their applications. Eligibility for a given examination is determined based on the information provided on the application. The announcement states, "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." The Online Application System User Guide repeats, "Failure to complete your application properly may cause you to be declared ineligible or may lower your score if your application is your test paper." The guide asks candidates to carefully review the application to ensure that it is complete and accurate before submitting, and states, if supplemental documents are required, they should be uploaded with the application or submitted within five business days of submitting the online application. To proceed to the payment section, candidates must certify that their application is complete and accurate.

A review of the application reveals that the appellant combined his Supervising Program Development Specialist, Community Service and Youth Opportunity Coordinator positions together under a new title, Director of Enrichment. While the experience was accepted for both, the appellant is cautioned to properly complete any future applications, using correct titles and separating his positions with the same employer.

As to the second position on the application, Aide to the Mayor from July 2019 to August 2019, the appellant listed his duties as: "Assist with planning, coordinating and monitoring special programs/projects as assigned to support City initiatives. • Maintain daily contact with the Mayor, City Council, and Chief of

Staff to communicate progress on various programs & projects. • Compose correspondence dealing with challenges and subject matter that require considerable sensitivity, discretion, judgment, and negotiation in replying to inquiries, and/or presenting or requesting information; • Develop and maintain a broad understanding of the varied functions and operations of the City and how it relates to overall programs and policies. • Establish and maintained highly effective working relationships with committee members, department directors, residents, co-workers, representatives of civic and community groups, and public and others encountered in the course of work.” This description included no indication that the appellant was developing programs to solve the socio-economic needs of residents. Indeed, he was in this position for only two months. In his appeal, the appellant groomed his duties to include programs for socio-economic needs of residents. Nonetheless, the duties did not include program development.

As to the third position, it appears that Agency Services incorrectly provided credit. This position was entitled “Seasonal,” and the duties were: “Jersey City Youth Counsel (JCYC) • Assist in supervising the Jersey City Youth Counsel participants in an out-of-school-time (OST) program environment focused in the practice of restorative justice. • Assist in recruitment and review application process of youth counsel participants. • Support youth court members during trainings and hearings. • Assist in planning and implementation of related community service learning projects. • Assist with administrative responsibilities including participant paperwork, client intake, and client follow up as directed. Jersey City Summer Internship Program/ Summer Works (JCSI) & Saturday Jump Start (SJS) • Support and assist the planning and implementation of youth development enrichment sessions, focused on professional, and soft skills development in high school age youth. • Support in outreach and recruitment of youth at local schools and community based organizations.” This is not program development and does not include responsibility for research, negotiation, and/or writing of proposals for community service programs. Again, the appellant is directed to properly title each position on his application, as “Seasonal” is not a job title.

The appellant indicated that he was a “Seasonal” (part-time, 20 hours per week) from January 2017 to July 2018 with Jersey City. On a prior application, the appellant indicated he was a Supervisor Jersey City Summer Works with the Jersey City's Mayors Office part-time, 25 hours per week) from June 2017 to August 2017, and that examination had a closing date of September 2017. There are some discrepancies here. One, “seasonal” usually means for a season, such as summer. Next, the appellant indicated he commenced employment in June 2017, not January 2017, which is in the winter. It is illogical that the appellant was working in a program called Jersey City Summer Works in the winter, spring and fall. He also indicated an end to that employment in August 2017. Also, the hours worked per week were different. No evaluation can be done after September 2017; however, the

appellant must properly complete his employment history. Start and stop dates, titles, and hours worked per week do not change, and the appellant's applications should remain consistent.

The appellant's fourth position, Program Director at a YMCA, involved operating a program, not developing one. The focus of this position was staffing. It is also inapplicable. In sum, the appellant met the educational requirement of possession of a Bachelor's degree, but lacks one year, nine months of applicable experience.

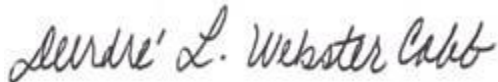
An independent review of all material presented indicates that the decision of Agency Services that the appellant did not meet the announced requirements for eligibility by the closing date is amply supported by the record. The appellant provides no basis to disturb this decision. Thus, the appellant has failed to support his 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 27<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRIL 2022




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