



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

In the Matter of Forester Trainee

CSC Docket No. 2024-1043

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

Reallocation to Noncompetitive
Division

ISSUED: December 6, 2023 (SLK)

The Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) requests the reactivation of the Forester Trainee title in the non-competitive division of the career service in accordance with *N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-1.2.

By way of background, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requested the reactivation of the Forester Trainee (02650, P95) title. The DEP stated that it has an urgent need to reestablish a trainee level title within the Forester title series. It indicated that positions in this class will receive on-the-job training and assist in implementing forestry programs on State, municipal, and private lands. The DEP explained that it has been having difficulty filling positions within the Forester title series. To address this issue, the reactivation of the trainee title will allow incumbents to gain experience in this area. The DEP provided that appointees who successfully complete the 12-month training period will be eligible for advancement to the Forester (02652, P19) title in accordance with Civil Service procedures. Further, the DEP requested that the trainee level be reassigned to the non-competitive division of the career service pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-1.2(c).

Agency Services indicates that it would be appropriate to assign this title to the non-competitive division of the career service as competitive testing is not practicable due to the knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with the job. It presents that the title has no experience requirements; hence, there is no skill set to be tested. Additionally, Agency Services advises that it has provided notice and the

opportunity to review the proposal to all collective negotiations units and all articulated issues have been reviewed and resolved. Finally, Agency Services requests that the changes specified become effective beginning on the first pay period following Commission approval of these actions.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:3-3.3(a) provides that the Chairperson or designee shall implement and administer the classification plans. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-3.7(a) provides that trainee, apprentice, recruit, and intern titles may be established in State and local services to provide for entry level employment. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-1.2(a) states that the Commission shall allocate and reallocate career service titles between the competitive and non-competitive divisions. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-1.2(c) states that a job title may be placed in the non-competitive division on an ongoing or interim basis when it is determined that competitive testing is not practicable due to the nature of the knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with the job.

Based on the foregoing, ample reasons exist to reactivate the title of Forester Trainee and to reallocate this title to the non-competitive division of the career service. In this regard, the Forester Trainee has no experience requirements as the skills required to perform the job are gained through on-the-job training. Given the lack of an experience requirement, competitive testing is not practicable since the knowledge, skills and abilities associated with this title are evaluated during the mandatory training period. In this regard, appointees would be required to complete both a 12-month training period as well as the required four-month working test period prior to attaining permanent status.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this request be granted, and the title of Forester Trainee be reactivated and allocated to the non-competitive division of the career service. This action shall be effective the beginning of the first pay period following the issue date 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 6TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2023

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Chairperson
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