



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

In the Matter of Forensic Scientist 1,
Department of Law and Public
Safety, Division of State Police

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

CSC Docket No. 2025-606

Request for Title Reallocation

ISSUED: September 25, 2024 (SLK)

The Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) recommends the reallocation of the Forensic Scientist 1 (FS1) State government title to the noncompetitive division of the career service.

In this matter, Agency Services presents that the Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of State Police (NJSP) indicates that the Office of Forensic Sciences has historically had difficulty hiring FS1s for its accredited laboratories under the ANSI National Accreditation Board, specifically its DNA Laboratory. The NJSP provides that due to the extremely technical nature of these positions, current testing does not consider the specialized experience and educational qualifications mandated by the FBI's Quality Assurance Standards.

In this regard, per the FBI's Quality Assurance Standards issued in 2020, scientists who work in a DNA Laboratory must have had specific coursework in biochemistry, genetics, molecular biology, and statistics. The NJSP is finding that most applicants that score high on the Civil Service examination for Forensic Scientist 1 lack the specific DNA coursework required in a DNA Laboratory where it has the greatest need. Additionally, it presents that it is facing a critical staffing shortage while it is also experiencing an increase in cases. Specifically, in 2023, the DNA Laboratory received 2,400 cases, which was a 24 percent increase from the 1,939 cases it received in 2022. Further, the NJSP provides that as of May 1, 2024, the unit received 1,588 cases and is on track to handle 3,800 cases in 2024. The NJSP asserts

that constantly evolving legislative mandates and Attorney General Directives, changes in the field of forensic science, and the critical work performed in the DNA Laboratory make it especially important that FS1s are qualified to fill these roles.

Agency Services indicates that the affected negotiation representatives were notified concerning the subject request and offered support for it. Additionally, it provides that any existing eligibility list for FS1 and any current announcements for which the examination had not been administered will be cancelled upon the successful completion of the reallocation process. Agency Services presents that appointment types for existing employees in the FS1 title as of the effective date will be handled in accordance with *N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-1.2(f) as follows:

- Permanent employees in the FS1 title as of the effective date shall have their appointment types changed to RAN and shall retain their permanent status in the noncompetitive division.
- Probationary employees in the FS1 title as of the effective date shall continue serving their working test periods and, upon successful completion, attain permanent status in the noncompetitive division.
- Provisional employees who remain in the FS1 title as of the effective date shall receive regular appointments and begin serving their working test periods on the effective date.

Agency Services notes that FS1 (01592) is a common title, and it is recommending that this title be reallocated to the noncompetitive division of the career service only for State government. If approved, it indicates that a new title code will be assigned to FS1 for State government, and the existing 01592 title code will only be used in local government:

Titles to be reallocated:

From:

FS1

Common - 01592 Competitive

To:

FS1

Local - 01592 Competitive

State – TBD Noncompetitive

Agency Services request that the effective date of this action be the beginning of the first pay period that follows the Civil Service Commission's (Commission) approval.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:3-1.2(a) provides that the Commission shall allocate and reallocate career service titles between the competitive and noncompetitive divisions.

N.J.A.C. 4A:3-1.2(c) provides that a job title may be placed in the noncompetitive division on an ongoing or interim basis when it is determined by the Commission that it is appropriate to make permanent appointments to the title and one or more of the following criteria are met.

1. Competitive testing is not practicable due to the nature of the knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with the job;
2. Certification procedures based on ranked eligible lists have not or are likely have not or likely to meet the needs of appointing authorities due to such factors as salary, geographic location, recruitment problems, and working conditions; or
3. There is a need for immediate appointments arising from a new legislation program or major agency reorganization.

N.J.A.C. 4A:3-1.2(e) provides, in pertinent part, that prior to any reallocation from the competitive to noncompetitive division, whether on an ongoing or interim basis, an administrative review shall be conducted and notice of the proposed reallocation shall be sent to affected appointing authorities and negotiations representatives. The notice shall designate the period of time, which in no event shall be less than 20 days, during which written comment may be submitted, and may provide for a public hearing.

In the instant matter, the NJSP seeks to reallocate the FS1 (01592 – State government) title to the noncompetitive division of the career service on a permanent basis.

Based on the above circumstances, ample reason exists for the reallocation of the FS1 State government title to the noncompetitive division of the career service. Specifically, the NJSP's Office of Forensic Sciences has had difficulty hiring FS1s for its increasing caseload in its DNA Laboratory and current testing does not consider the specialized experience and educational qualifications mandated by the FBI's Quality Assurance Standards. Therefore, competitive testing is impracticable for this title.

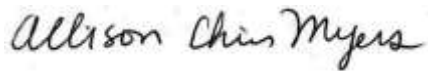
It is noted that the reallocation of the FS1 title to the noncompetitive division is limited to State government and a new FS1 title code will be determined for State government. The FS1 title code for local government shall remain as 01592 in the competitive division.

ORDER

It is ordered that the Forensic Scientist 1 State government title be permanently reallocated to the noncompetitive division and a new title code be assigned. It is further ordered that such action is effective October 5, 2024.

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 25TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2024



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