



**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

In the Matter of Betzaida Plaza,  
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor  
2 (PS0652N), Department of Labor  
and Workforce Development

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

CSC Docket No. 2024-1537

Examination Appeal

**ISSUED: April 30, 2025 (SLK)**

Betzaida Plaza appeals her score on the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor 2 (VRC2) (PS0652N), Department of Labor and Workforce Development promotional examination.

By way of background, there were 37 candidates who applied and 27 were admitted to the test, including the appellant who is provisionally serving in the subject title. The appellant was determined ineligible for the subject examination as her test score was 51, which was below the minimum cutoff for the test, 53. A total of 20 applicants were determined eligible for the subject examination. Certification PS241153 was issued containing the name of the 20 eligibles, and all 20 were appointed. The list expires on January 24, 2027.

On appeal, the appellant questions the answer for question 64. The appellant highlights pages in the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) Case Services Policy Manual, the DVRS Best Practice Manual, and RSA-911 Manual to support her position that her answer choice is correct. Additionally, the appellant contends that the questions, in general, were not reflective of the work of a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) and she highlights the job specifications for VRC titles to support her argument. Further, she asserts that certain parts of the test were extremely time consuming. Moreover, the appellant claims that the answer to question 13 was not available. Also, the appellant indicates that she does not believe

that the questions that were related to spelling and grammar were relevant as she notes that there are tools to assist with these duties, and she states that VRCs do not do a lot of writing beyond case notes. Further, she believes that the questions were worded in a manner to “trick” or “manipulate” the examinee instead of testing the knowledge that VRCs must possess. Additionally, the appellant asserts that candidates were not given sufficient direction or time to prepare for the test. Moreover, the appellant submits other documents, such as her resume, college transcripts, her notification that she passed the test for being bilingual in Spanish and English, performance evaluations, and emails recognizing her performance as a VCR1 to support her appeal. The appellant requests that two points be added to her score.

## CONCLUSION

*N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-6.3(b) provides that the appellant has the burden of proof in examination appeals.

*N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-6.4(a)1, provides that within five days after review, in the case of candidates who have reviewed the keyed test booklet, or five business days from the date the multiple choice examination has been held, in the case of all other candidates, candidates may file an appeal in writing against the keyed response for a given item, or with respect to the job-relatedness or appropriateness of test content. The appeal shall specify the question(s) being challenged.

In response, this agency’s Division of Test Development, Analytics and Administration (TDAA) has thoroughly reviewed the specific test items and the materials that the appellant has submitted in support of her appeal. Referring to question 64, TDAA indicates that documentation demonstrates that the keyed answer is correct, and the appellant’s selection is incorrect.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, regarding the other specific test items the appellant identified, these questions related to tasks as identified in the VRC2 job specification, and the test population in the subject test did as expected or better on these items.

Concerning the appellant’s appeal of the job-relatedness or appropriateness of test content in general, TDAA performed a job analysis to identify certain tasks that were directly from the VRC2 job specification. Further, from these tasks, it identified the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to perform these tasks and then a series of multiple-choice questions were developed to test those KSAs. Specifically, on the subject test, eight specific tasks and corresponding KSAs were identified from the VRC2 job specification. Thereafter, TDAA developed 10 questions for each of these eight identified areas. For example, although the appellant does not believe that spelling and grammar are relevant to the subject title, a review of the VRC2 job specification indicates that preparing correspondence is a VRC2 duty. Accordingly,

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<sup>1</sup> To protect the integrity of the test for future examinations, the details will not be addressed.

it was appropriate for the subject test to contain spelling and grammar questions. Further, it is noted that the education requirement for a VRC2 is a specialized Master's degree. Therefore, incumbents in the VRC2 title are expected to have knowledge of the fundamentals of standard English and usage and grammar.<sup>2</sup>

Referring to the appellant's statements that she does not believe that the test was reflective of the work of a VRC, the VRC title is not used exclusively by the appellant's unit scope in the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Instead, the VRC titles are also used by other State agencies. Therefore, the test was appropriately written to test general KSAs that are applicable to all VRCs regardless of the State agency and not written to test any specific position.

Regarding the appellant's comments about parts of the test that were extremely time consuming; the questions were believed to be worded in a manner to trick or manipulate the examinee instead of testing the knowledge that incumbents in the position must possess; and candidates were not given sufficient direction or time to prepare for the test, as 20 of the 26 candidates who sat for the subject test (77%) passed, the appellant's arguments are clearly unpersuasive. Finally, the appellant's resume, college transcript, her VRC1 performance evaluation and other documentation concerning the appellant's background do not alone signify that she can successfully perform the duties of a VRC2, as passage of a written examination was also required to demonstrate this proficiency. In this regard, a review of the job specifications indicates that VRC2s may act as lead workers, handle complex caseloads, and makes recommendations regarding agency policies and procedures which are higher level duties that VRC1s are not expected to perform. Therefore, it was appropriate in this matter that candidates demonstrate that they possess the necessary KSAs through competitive testing.

### **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.

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<sup>2</sup> The job specification for VRC2 also indicates that a specialized Bachelor's degree and certain professional experience can substitute for the Master's degree requirement. However, this does not lower the proficiency requirements in English that a VRC2 must possess.

DECISION RENDERED BY THE  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION ON  
THE 30<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2025

*Allison Chris Myers*

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