

Ms. Atkins listed two positions on her application, Human Services Specialist 2 and 1. Also, she provided a resume with five additional positions: Adjunct Professor (Spring 2013, no specific dates given, no hours given); Intensive Case Manager, SAIF Program and Intensive Case Manager, Participation Rate Initiative (no hours given, duties combined); Substitute Teacher (no hours given); and Manager/Owner of Information Technology 2000 School (no hours given). As none of this experience was found to be acceptable, she was found to be lacking three years of applicable experience. On appeal, Ms. Atkins states that her experience as an Intensive Case Manager with Catholic Charities in East Orange, New Jersey from May 2008 to May 2009, is applicable, and she provides additional duties of that position. She also argues that she performs investigations as part of her Human Services Specialist 2 duties. She states that it is her responsibility to interview and check data systems for clients to determine truthfulness and accuracy, as well as eligibility. She argues that once the investigation and data collection have been verified, a completed report regarding eligibility for public assistance, medical benefits, cash assistance and food stamps is produced.

Ms. Jones listed four positions on her application and resume: Probation Officer with the New Jersey Judiciary, Support Counselor with Bethel Ridge (part-time, 15 hours per week), Community Outreach Counselor with Project Live (overlaps with Support Counselor, no hours given), and Instructional Teacher's Aide (no dates and hours given). Her 2 years, 10 months of experience as a Probation Officer was accepted, and she was found to be lacking two months of qualifying experience. On appeal, Ms. Jones argues that she *currently* has more than three years of experience in Investigations.

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. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.1(f) provides that an applicant may amend a previously submitted application prior to the closing date.

CONCLUSION

At the outset, it is noted that qualifying experience has the announced experience as the primary focus. In the eligibility screening process for open competitive examinations, reliance on the job specifications to determine the primary focus of duties for incumbents of a particular title or title series provides a standardized basis on which DAS can compare what an applicant indicates on his or her application to what incumbents in a particular title series generally perform. See *In the Matter of William Moore* (MSB, decided May 10, 2006). A Human Services Specialist does the field and office work involved in the collection, recording, analysis, and evaluation of data, to include the employability, the medical status and the physical or mental health of applicants/clients, for the purpose of determining applicants'/clients' eligibility for program services, analyzes

information on forms, applications and other financial assistance documents for completeness and accuracy; negotiates with absent parents to arrange a voluntary consent support agreement; conducts initial assessment of applicants' employability and makes appropriate referrals; and provides information to families and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency through employment opportunities and/or child support services. The appellant's description of job duties in her Human Services Specialist titles is similar, and the appellant was not working out-of-title. While she used the word "investigating" in her description of duties, she was not actually performing investigations. Investigations include collecting evidence, and preparing investigative reports related to criminal, civil, or regulatory matters involving fraud, misrepresentation, or other acts of criminal or civil misconduct. The Human Services Specialist determines eligibility for services or program assistance. Thus, experience as a Human Services Specialist 1 and 2 is inapplicable as the announced experience was not the primary focus of the position.

Ms. Atkins listed experience as an Intensive Case Manager, SAIF Program and Intensive Case Manager, Participation Rate Initiative. First, the appellant did not indicate whether these positions were part-time or full-time. Next, even if they were full-time, she did not have three years in those titles. Lastly, she described these positions as managing caseloads, processing client cases by researching the clients' finances and assets, and interviewing them. The focus of these positions was to process cases to benefit the clients, and was not related to matters involving fraud, misrepresentation, or other acts of criminal or civil misconduct. The appellant stated that she conducted "investigations" to collect data and to complete reports, but this was to determine client eligibility to receive public assistance. As such, this was not investigations into criminal, civil or regulatory matters. This experience, and the experience in her remaining positions, is not qualifying experience. Mrs. Atkins lacks three years of required experience.

Ms. Jones received credit for her experience as a Probation Officer to the June 26, 2015 closing date. Her experience as a Support Counselor, Community Outreach Counselor, and as an Instructional Teacher's Aide is clearly inapplicable. This examination is extremely competitive, with 186 admitted applicants, all of whom met the eligibility requirements as of the closing date. There is no basis to accept the appellant's experience past the closing date merely to admit her to the examination. Ms. Jones lacks two months of applicable experience.

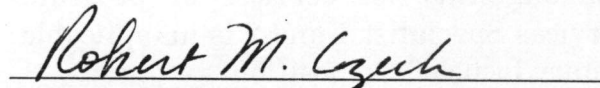
The appellants were denied admittance to the subject examination since they lacked the minimum requirements in experience. An independent review of all material presented indicates that the decisions of DAS, that the appellants did not meet the announced requirements for eligibility by the closing date, are amply supported by the record. The appellants provide no basis to disturb these decisions. Thus, the appellants have failed to support their burden of proof in these matters.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that these appeals 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 16th DAY OF DECEMBER, 2015


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