

Mental Health Clinic from November 1999 to October 2002; Childcare Worker (no hours given, overlaps with fourth position) with Five Acres from April 1999 to December 2001; and Residence Counselor with Saint Mary's Crisis Residence from August 1988 to August 1998. None of this experience matched the announced experience requirement, and Ms. Cole was found to be lacking one year of applicable experience.

On appeal, Ms. Cole argues that her 10 years as a Senior Case Manager is applicable experience as the duties and responsibilities match closely with the examples of work from for the announced title. She states that she interviewed potential clients who applied to the residential program, reviewed their applications, explained the program's benefits, rules and regulations, and then made a decision as to their acceptance. She states that it was her responsibility to make sure the apartments were in OSHA compliance and would pass inspection, and she worked with different landlords and residents to accomplish this goal. She also assisted residents in applying for various community services, and supervised the residence counselors. She assisted clients in finding apartments and acclimating to new situations, which included referring them to various community programs and outreach follow-ups. As a Case Manager in a mental health clinic, she states that her duties included assisting clients in finding and maintaining affordable housing, helping clients explore vocational goals, and supporting them in managing symptoms of mental illness, as well as obtaining citizenship.

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.3(b)(2) provides that applicants shall meet all requirements specified in the open competitive examination announcement by the closing date.

CONCLUSION

A Field Representative, Housing (Housing Assistance Program) is responsible for the primary field activities necessary to establish and maintain housing assistance payments to program participants including tenant counseling, dwelling unit inspections, lease and contract negotiations, and liaison activities with community service agencies. As such, applicable experience includes field duties as well as client intake review. Qualifying experience has the announced experience as the primary focus, and the amount of time, and the importance of the duty, determines if it is the primary focus. An experience requirement that lists a number of duties which define the primary experience requires that the applicants demonstrate that they primarily performed all those duties for the required length of time. In this case, there are two requirements, field duties and client intake review duties, and performance of only one of these is not indicative of comprehensive experience.

In that light, a review of Ms. Cole's experience as a Senior Case Manager reveals that she described her duties as, "I worked as a senior case manager in a

residence for adults diagnosed with a chronic mental illness for ten years. My job responsibilities included interviewing potential clients for placement. The program was comprised of apartments in three locations in Passaic County and three different levels of supervision. Prospective residents were required to display the ability to take care of themselves and their apartment. I worked with the residents and landlords to ensure the apartments were up to code and passed yearly inspections. I supported clients in developing treatment goals, made referrals and acted as a liaison to community resources. The residents were required to follow rules and regulations that were my responsibility to monitor and enforce." On her resume, the appellant described her duties for this position as supporting residents in exploring vocational interests and becoming gainfully employed, supervising four professional staff members, and assisting residents in managing their psychiatric symptoms.

While serving as a Senior Case Manager, Ms. Cole made determinations of eligibility, but that was not the primary focus of the position, and the responsibilities did not include lease and contract negotiations. On her resume, Ms. Cole provided a more general description which indicates that the focus of the position was to provide support to mental health clients in various ways. On appeal, the appellant provides more information regarding these duties, but does not indicate determinations of facility eligibility. The focus of her program was narrowly described and the housing was limited to three locations. In addition, field duties and client intake review relating to a housing assistance program was not the primary focus. Rather, comprehensive management of the clients' cases was the primary responsibility. Her remaining positions, including that of Case Manager, are not related to a housing assistance program or other housing related program requiring determination of facility and participant eligibility, and are inapplicable. The appellant lacks one year of qualifying experience.

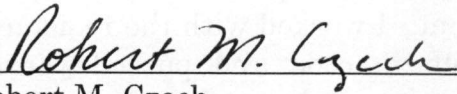
A thorough review of all material presented indicates that the decision of the DAS that the appellant did not meet the announced requirements for eligibility by the examination closing date is amply supported by the record and appellant provides no basis to disturb that decision. Thus, appellant has failed to support her 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
THE 16th DAY OF DECEMBER, 2015


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