



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION  
OF THE  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of Shanta Ellis,  
Secretarial Assistant 1, Non-  
Stenographic (PS4904P), Juvenile  
Justice Commission

Examination Appeal

CSC Docket Nos. 2018-950

ISSUED: APRIL 9, 2018 (SLK)

Shanta Ellis appeals the determination of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) that she did not meet the experience requirements for the promotional examination for Secretarial Assistant 1, Non-Stenographic (PS4904P), Juvenile Justice Commission.

The examination at issue was announced with specific requirements that had to be met as of the May 22, 2017 closing date. The relevant requirements are five years of experience in secretarial and administrative clerical work. A total of five employees applied for the subject examination which resulted in a list of four eligibles with an expiration date of September 13, 2020. Certification PS171545 was issued on September 18, 2017 and one eligible was appointed.

On her application, the appellant indicated that she was a Secretarial Assistant 3, Non-Stenographic (Secretarial Assistant 3) from August 2014 to the May 22, 2017 closing date.<sup>1</sup> She did not indicate any other experience. Agency Services credited that appellant with two years and 10 months of experience based on her service as a Secretarial Assistant 3, but determined that she lacked two years and two months of applicable experience.

<sup>1</sup> Ms. Ellis's application indicated that she started as a Secretarial Assistant in August 2013, but personnel records indicate that she started working in this title in August 2014. Personnel records also indicate that the appellant was a Senior Clerk Typist from March 2006 to August 2014 and a Clerk Typist from October 2005 to March 2006.

On appeal, the appellant states that she has more than 15 years of experience performing the required duties. She indicates that she began State service as a Clerk Typist in October 2005 and then became a Senior Clerk Typist in March 2006. The appellant presents that she was promoted to Secretarial Assistant 3 in August 2013. She asserts that she often serves as the backup to the Administrative Assistant 1 in the Office of the Executive Director. The appellant highlights that the job specification for Secretarial Assistant 3 requires three years of experience in secretarial and administrative clerical work and the subject title requires five years of this same experience. She states that although her work as the backup for the Administrative Assistant 1 is “out-of-title” work, she asserts that this experience adds to her demonstrated capabilities. The appellant argues that her three years of experience that were required for her to be promoted to her current title plus her four years of experience in her current title means that she has at least seven years of the required experience. She also states that she served an additional seven years as a secretary for the appointing authority. The appellant attaches letters from Dawn Richardson, Administrative Assistant 1 and from Kevin Brown, Executive Director, which confirm that the appellant has been the primary Administrative Assistant 1 backup for Mr. Brown since August 2013. Mr. Brown further indicates that the appellant has been performing the required duties for approximately 16 years and that she performs at the highest level.

### CONCLUSION

*N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.6(a) provides that applicants shall meet all requirements specified in the promotional announcement by the closing date. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-6.3(b) provides that the appellant has the burden of proof in examination appeals.

A review of the record indicates that Agency Services correctly determined that the appellant is not eligible for the subject examination. Initially, the Civil Service Commission notes that the appellant only included her Secretarial Assistant 3 experience on her application and none of her other State service. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.1(f) provides that an application may only be amended prior to the announced closing date. That is, any documentation indicating work in any setting that was not previously listed on an application or resume cannot be considered after the closing date. *See In the Matter of Joann Burch, et al.* (MSB, decided August 21, 2003) and *In the Matter of Rolanda Alphonso, et al.* (MSB, decided January 26, 2005). Consequently, the appellant’s experience while serving as a Senior Clerk Typist and as a Clerk Typist cannot be considered. In this regard, the importance of following instructions and submitting a properly completed application that includes all of the necessary information cannot be overstated, since a complete application provides the only reliable barometer by which Agency Services can make the initial determination whether to admit or reject an applicant. Agency Services has no other tool to rely on in order to make this important initial assessment in an expeditious, fair and efficient manner. Moreover, the instructions

for completing the application state, “Carefully review your application to ensure that it is complete and accurate before submitting,” and “You must complete your application in detail. Your score may be based on a comparison of your background with the job requirements. Failure to complete your application properly may cause you to be declared ineligible or may lower your score if your application is your test paper.” Further, the application states, “Employment Record: You may be declared ineligible or may lower your score if your application is your test paper.” Further, the application states, “Employment Record: You may be declared ineligible or you may not receive proper credit for scoring purposes if you do not properly complete your application. If you held different positions with the same employer, list each position separately. Make sure you give full dates of employment (month/year), indicate whether the job was full or part time, and the number of hours worked per week. If you are currently employed in this position, enter the current month and year in the Employed To section. Since your application may be your only test paper, be sure it is complete and accurate. Failure to complete your application properly may cause you to be declared ineligible, lower your score, or possibly cause you to fail.” The Online Application System User Guide asks candidates to review the application to make sure the information is complete and accurate. It also states that, by clicking “yes” to make a payment and submit the application, the candidate is told that he or she is certifying that the application is complete and accurate. *See In the Matter of Michael Gelesky* (CSC, decided July 26, 2017). Additionally, as the list is complete, there is not good cause to relax this requirement.

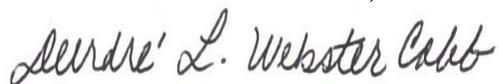
Therefore, there is no basis to disturb the decision of Agency Services. Accordingly, the appellant has not met her burden of proof in this matter.

### ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that the 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 ON  
THE 4<sup>th</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2018



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