TOMPKINS COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

Inclusion Through Diversity





OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Tompkins County Personnel Office
125 E. Court Street
Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 274-5526

Tompkins County is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply

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TITLE: Administrative Assistant - Level 3

EXAM NO: 21700

SALARY: $17.91 per hour - Hire Rate for County Departments

EXAM DATE: 05/12/14

ISSUE DATE: 11/18/13

THE FINAL DATE TO FILE APPLICATIONS: 04/30/14

DATE THAT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM POSTING: 05/12/14

RESIDENCY: Candidates must have been legal residents of Tompkins County or one of the six contiguous counties for at least one month immediately preceding the date of application and maintain residency throughout the life of the eligible list. The eligible list will be established in accordance with the final earned numerical ratings of passing candidates regardless of residence. A municipality or district may exercise its right under section 23-4-a. of Civil Service Law to request a certification of eligible candidates who have been residents of that municipality or district for at least one month prior to appointment. After the names of residents have been exhausted, Tompkins County must then certify the names of non-residents on the list.

Exam Number: 21700

THE USE OF A QUIET HAND HELD CALCULATOR IS RECOMMENDED FOR THIS EXAM.

LOCATION OF POSITIONS/VACANCIES:

The eligible list resulting from this continuous recruitment examination may be used to fill any full-time and part-time vacancies (and may be used to fill temporary vacancies) in the title of Administrative Assistant – Level 3 in any of the various County departments, TC-3, the Tompkins County Public Library, and the Towns, Villages, School Districts, and Special Districts within Tompkins County's jurisdiction during the candidates' life on the eligible list.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

a. Possession of an Associates degree from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college; **AND** two years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) office clerical experience*; **OR**

b. Two years of permanent competitive class status as an Administrative Assistant – Level 2; OR

c. Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma **AND** four years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) office clerical experience*; **OR**

d. Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that specified in (a), (b), or (c) above.

*NOTE: Bank Teller and other types of cashiering jobs are not considered to be "office clerical".

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: If required to operate a motor vehicle in the course of his/her duties, it is the responsibility of the appointing authority to ensure possession of a valid New York State drivers license at the time of appointment. The incumbent would need to maintain such license for the duration of employment.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This work involves the independent performance of a broad range of complex clerical operations which require an understanding of specific laws, organizational rules, policies or procedures. Specific duties will vary with the needs of the appointing authority. The routine operation of an alphanumeric keyboard and other office technology is required in this role. Ability to accurately manipulate specific software is valued over speed when performing the keyboarding function. An Administrative Assistant – Level 3 is responsible for relieving the head of a department or major division of administrative details such as calendar management, meeting scheduling and conference arrangements as well as relieving the official of contacts which should properly be made with subordinate staff. The psychological demands of this job are moderate with unpredictable fluctuations in work volume, frequent interruptions, shifting work priority, rush orders and conflicting priorities. At a Level 3, the employee should possess moderate interpersonal skills in order to explain information or inform others about agency regulations, policies and/or programs. Internal contacts may be across sections or divisions within the organization and may require routine administrative or highly structured work interactions. External contacts will typically be with the general public and involve the exchange of information in structured situations. The incumbent works under the direct supervision of a senior staff member but enjoys some moderate level of autonomy when carrying out the day-to-day activities of the office. Although guidelines and policies are available, many cases require the independent interpretation and application of guidelines or policies to specific situations. Only unusual or very complex matters are referred to the supervisor. The employee may be defined as a lead worker of a group, or be assigned to supervise specific personnel with a unit or section. The incumbent will perform any and all administrative duties that may be assigned.

This examination is being prepared and rated in accordance with Section 23(2) of the Civil Service Law. The provisions of the New York State Civil Service Law, Rules, and Regulations dealing with the preparation and rating of examinations, as well as establishment and certification of eligible lists for positions in the classified service will apply to this examination.

COMPLETE SCOPE OF THE EXAMINATION AND EXPANDED SUBTEST DESCRIPTIONS:

SPELLING:

These questions test your ability to spell words that are used in written business communications.

GRAMMAR, USAGE, PUNCTUATION:

The grammar and usage questions test for the ability to apply the basic rules of grammar and usage. The punctuation questions test for a knowledge of the correct placement of punctuation marks in sentences.

KEYBOARDING PRACTICES:

These questions test for a knowledge of preferred practices in such area as letter format, capitalization, hyphenation, plurals, possessives, word division, word and figure style for numbers, and common proofreading marks. In addition, you will be given a passage to proofread and asked questions about how to correct the errors in the passage.

OFFICE RECORD KEEPING:

These questions evaluate your ability to perform common office record keeping tasks. The test consists of two or more "sets" of questions, each set concerning a different problem. Typical record keeping problems might involve the organization or collation of data from several sources; scheduling; maintaining a record system using running balances; or completion of a table summarizing data using totals, subtotals, averages and percents.

OFFICE PRACTICES:

These questions test for a knowledge of generally agreed-upon practices governing the handling of situations which stenographers, typists, and secretaries encounter in their work, as well as a knowledge of efficient and effective methods used to accomplish office tasks. The questions will cover such topics as planning work flow; setting priorities; dealing effectively with staff, visitors, and callers; filing and retrieving information; safeguarding confidentiality; using office equipment; and making procedural decisions and recommendations which contribute to a well-managed office.

THE ELIGIBLE LIST:

Candidates who are successful on the written examination will be on the Administrative Assistant – Level 3 eligible list. Candidate names are inter-filed on the continuous recruitment eligible list for one year. Eligible candidates will be ranked according to their written test score relative to the other candidates on the list first and (in the case of tie scores) by date of test and alphabetical order.

TESTING FORMAT:

This decentralized examination may be given in a written form or it may be administered on a personal computer (PC). The preferred method is computerized testing on a PC in our testing facility. The Personnel Office will select the testing format and candidates will be notified by letter or e-mail no later than 7-10 days before the examination. Examinations will be administered on weekdays; other testing days may be arranged as necessary. Tompkins County reserves the right to terminate this continuous recruitment program and re-establish the periodic announced date type of examination

FURTHER INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

Falsification of any part of the "Application for Employment" will result in disqualification.

Accepted candidates will be notified when and where to appear for the examination. If you do not receive your notice to appear at least three days before the date of the written examination, call Tompkins County Personnel at 274-5526. If an application is disapproved, due notice will be sent. This department does not make formal acknowledgment of the receipt of an application or take responsibility for non-delivery or postal delay.

Applicants must answer every question on the application form and make sure that the application is complete in all respects. Incomplete applications will be disapproved.

ACTIVE MILITARY PERSONNEL, VETERANS OR DISABLED VETERANS desiring to claim additional credit will request the Veterans Credits application form, at any time between the date of application for examination(s) and the date of the establishment of the resulting eligible list. You must meet the requirements set by NYS for these credits and they may be used only once. **YOU MAY NOT CLAIM ADDITIONAL CREDITS AFTER THE ELIGIBLE LIST HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. IT IS THE CANDIDATE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REQUEST THE VETERANS CREDIT APPLICATION FORMS AND TO SUBMIT THESE FORMS AND ANY SUPPORTING PAPERWORK BEFORE THE ELIGIBLE LIST IS ESTABLISHED.**

Tompkins County's written examinations are prepared and rated by the New York State Department of Civil Service in accordance with Section 23-2 of Civil Service Law. The provisions of the New York State Civil Service Rules and Regulations, which deal with the rating and review of the examinations apply.

The duration of the eligible lists may be fixed for a minimum of one and a maximum of four years and may be extended beyond four years if there has been a restriction against the filling of vacancies in that title.
The candidates must complete a separate "Application for Employment" for each open-competitive and/or promotional examination that the candidate is eligible to take.

All experience required meeting the acceptable training and experience is full-time experience. (Part-time experience will be credited on a prorated basis).

Appointment from an eligible list must be made from the top three candidates willing to accept the appointment.

Tompkins County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. As part of its efforts to provide employment opportunities to the physically handicapped, Tompkins County Civil Service has adopted a rule permitting the employment of qualified physically handicapped persons without competitive examination (pursuant to Section 55 of Civil Service Law). If you meet the minimum qualifications for this position and wish to know more about this rule, please contact the Tompkins County Personnel Office.

Unless otherwise notified, candidates are permitted to use quiet, hand-held, and solar or battery powered calculators. Devices with Typewriter Keyboards, Spell Checkers, Personal Digital Assistants, Address Books, Language Translators, Dictionaries or any similar devices are prohibited. You may not bring books or other reference materials.

CROSS-FILING - APPLYING FOR CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS IN MULTIPLE JURISDICTIONS WHEN EXAMINATIONS ARE SCHEDULED ON THE SAME DATE: When applying for examinations across multiple jurisdictions - all of which are scheduled on the same day - you must submit a Tompkins County Cross-Filing Form. This form must be submitted no later than 4:30 PM on the final filing date of the examination. On this form, list each examination that you are taking and then tell us where you would like to sit. The purpose is to ensure that all of the test materials for the various examinations that you are taking will be available in one location. If you do not provide the cross-filing form to us by the final filing date, we cannot ensure that we can accommodate your desire to cross-file. If any of the examinations are State level examinations, you must sit at the State test center. You will still need to complete the Tompkins County cross-filing form. If sitting at the State site, the State will notify you of when and where to report for your examination(s) and you should bring all admittance letters to the State site. If you are not taking a State examination, bring all admittance letters to your chosen testing site. If you have any question please call Tompkins County Personnel Department (607) 274-5526. The Cross File form is located at http://www.tompkins-co.org/personnel/CivilSrvForms/index.html

FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION AND HANDICAPPED PERSONS: If special arrangements for testing are required, please indicate this on your application.

ALL CANDIDATES FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR POSITIONS IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND BOCES GOVERNED BY TOMPKINS COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE MAY HAVE THE FOLLOWING SPECIAL REQUIREMENT. PER CHAPTER 180 OF THE LAWS OF 2000, AND BY REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, TO BE EMPLOYED IN A POSITION DESIGNATED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR BOCES AS INVOLVING DIRECT CONTACT WITH STUDENTS, A CLEARANCE FOR EMPLOYMENT FROM THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IS REQUIRED.

In conformance with Section 85-a of the Civil Service Law, children of firefighters and police officers killed in the line of duties shall be entitled to receive an additional ten points in a competitive examination for original appointment in the same municipality in which his or her parent has served. If you are qualified to participate in this examination and are a child of firefighter or police officer killed in the line of duties in this municipality, please inform this office of this matter when you submit your application for examination. A candidate claiming such credit has a minimum of two months from the application deadline to provide the necessary documentation to verify additional credit eligibility. However, no credit may be added after the eligible list has been established.â–

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION: Applicants may be required to undergo a State and national criminal history background investigation, which will include a fingerprint check, to determine suitability for appointment. Failure to meet the standards for the background investigation may result in disqualification.

TOMPKINS COUNTY PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT, 125 EAST COURT STREET, ITHACA, NY 14850