

# TOMPKINS COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

Inclusion Through Diversity



## OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Tompkins County Department of Human Resources 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**

---

**TITLE:** Personnel Assistant Trainee

**EXAM NO:** 62752

**SALARY:** \$18.93/hour - 2017 Hire Rate

**EXAM DATE:** 10/28/17

**ISSUE DATE:** 09/13/17

**THE FINAL DATE TO FILE APPLICATIONS:** 09/28/17

**DATE THAT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM POSTING:** 10/29/17

**RESIDENCY:** : Candidates must have been legal residents of Tompkins County or one of the six adjoining counties (Cayuga, Chemung, Cortland, Schuyler, Seneca, Tioga) for at least one month immediately preceding the date of application and maintain residency. For Examinations: The eligible list resulting from the examination 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.

**THE USE OF A QUIET HAND-HELD CALCULATOR IS ALLOWED FOR THIS EXAMINATION.**

**LOCATION OF POSITION:**

There is currently one vacancy in the title of Personnel Assistant Trainee located in the Tompkins County Department of Human Resources. The eligible list resulting from this examination may be used to fill any full-time, part-time or temporary vacancies that may occur during the lift of the eligible list.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

- (a) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school general equivalency diploma **AND** one year of clerical experience in a human resources office; **OR**
- (b) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school general equivalency diploma **AND** two years of office clerical experience; **OR**
- (c) Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that specified in (a) and (b) above.

**NOTE:** The incumbent will promote to the title of Personnel Assistant without further competitive examination after completing a minimum eight-week or a maximum fifty-two week (post permanent appointment) traineeship as determined by the Commissioner of Personnel.

## **DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:**

An incumbent in this class has responsibility for learning the day-to-day administrative functions of the Personnel Office. A Personnel Assistant Trainee often serves as a first contact for employees, municipal officials, department heads and the general public. The duties being learned may include but are not limited to, maintenance of various records and files, telephone contact, preparation of reports, payroll input/certification, roster record tracking, examination administration, etc. The incumbent acts in a supportive role to the Commissioner and, while not performing professional level work, the incumbent is required to perform duties requiring the application of laws, rules and policies within limited and clearly defined parameters. The work is performed under the direct supervision of the Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner of Personnel. Some latitude is allowed, within the guidelines of Federal, State, and local law, rules and regulations, for the exercise of independent judgment when carrying out the details of the work. Supervision of others is not generally a function of a Trainee. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

## **TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- Encourage diversity within the organization by promoting the inclusion of all qualified candidates (including underrepresented candidates) in the examination, interview and appointment process;
- Serves as a general source of civil service information for the various customers of the Personnel department;
- Learns the various routine aspects of New York State Civil Service Law, the Local Rules, policies and procedures;
- Enters raw data and information from source documents into a computer and manipulates a computer program to provide finished letters and reports;
- Assists in the maintenance of the Personnel Department's web site;
- Reads, understands, interprets and replies to various forms of written material;
- Prepares a variety of correspondence and reports concerning personnel transactions, policy and procedure;
- Performs routine maintenance of the County Personnel Department's Applicant Database;
- Performs routine maintenance of the Personnel Department's paper based filing systems;
- Reviews applications for recruitment purposes to determine eligibility for specific positions;
- Performs vacancy tracking, learns how to track provisional employees and learns how to order, schedule and administer civil service examinations;
- Learns how to draft and distribute examination announcements;
- Learns how to and may be called upon to perform civil service test administration;
- Learns how to establish, canvass, certify and track information on civil service eligible lists;
- Verifies information given by employees or job applicants;
- Performs office record keeping, accounts payable, supply and inventory control;
- Learns how to monitor and/or conduct an entire civil service examination series, which shall include, but not be limited to: choosing an examination location, acquiring and arranging tables, chairs and other equipment, obtaining, training and supervising examination monitors;
- Learns how to establish and maintain Civil Service eligible lists including computation of seniority credits, veterans credits, canvassing and preparing certifications;
- May be required to learn and perform payroll input and certification procedures and roster record and position control tracking for conformance with law, rules, regulations, contracts and policies;
- May be required to maintain employment histories and a variety of personnel files and records;
- May be required to perform community outreach and education;
- May assist with ensuring a viable pool of candidates from which to choose by performing internet, newspaper, trade publication, and other types of targeted recruitment, adjusting strategies to ensure that the county's recruitment needs and legal requirements are met;
- May learn how to coordinate and administer a staff development and training program, the duties of which encompass participant notification, trainer coordination, travel arrangements and record keeping.

## **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Working knowledge of office terminology, procedures and equipment;
- Working knowledge of methods and procedures used in records maintenance and the processing of personnel transactions;
- Working knowledge of the structure, functions and operation of municipal government;
- Working knowledge of Civil Service law and the Civil Service Rules for Tompkins County;
- Skill in the operation of an alphanumeric keyboard (speed is not a factor);
- Excellent customer service skills are required;

- Ability to communicate effectively with others, both orally and in writing;
- Ability to perform close, detail work;
- Ability to compose routine correspondence and memoranda;
- Clerical aptitude.
- Confidentiality, tact, accuracy and good judgment are all required personal traits;
- The employee's physical condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the position.

P101.doc

Originally created October 24, 2007.

**Complete Scope of the examination and Expanded subtest descriptions:**

1. Coding/decoding information

These questions test for the ability to follow a set of coding rules. Some questions will require you to code information by converting certain information into letters or numbers. Other questions will require you to decode information by determining if the information that has already been converted into letters or numbers is correct. Complete directions will be provided; no previous knowledge of or training in any coding system is required.

2. Name and number checking

These questions test for the ability to distinguish between sets of words, letters, and/or numbers that are almost exactly alike. Material is usually presented in two or three columns, and you will have to determine how the entry in the first column compares with the entry in the second column and possibly the third. You will be instructed to mark your answers according to a designated code provided in the directions.

3. Office record keeping

These questions test 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. **You should bring with you a hand-held battery-or solar-powered calculator for use on this test. You will not be permitted to use the calculator function of your cell phone.**

4. Understanding and interpreting written material

These questions test how well you comprehend written material. You will be provided with brief reading selections and will be asked questions about the selections. All the information required to answer the questions will be presented in the selections; you will not be required to have any special knowledge relating to the subject areas of the selections.

The New York State Department of Civil Service has not prepared a test guide for this examination. However, candidates may find information in the publication "How to take a written test" helpful in preparing for this test. This publication is available on line at: [www.cs.ny.gov/testing/localtestguides.cfm](http://www.cs.ny.gov/testing/localtestguides.cfm)

## 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 Department of Human Resources 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 Department of Human Resources 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 Department of Human Resources 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.

**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