

# 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**

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**TITLE:** Real Property Appraiser

**EXAM NO:** 67299

**SALARY:** \$26.80 on hire automatically increasing to \$29.10 after a nine-month training period.

**LOCATION:** Tompkins County Assessment Department

**TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT:** Full-time

**EXAM DATE:** 06/09/17

**ISSUE DATE:** 04/17/18

**THE FINAL DATE TO FILE APPLICATIONS:** 05/07/18

**DATE THAT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM POSTING:** 06/10/18

**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 RECOMMENDED FOR THIS EXAMINATION. YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO USE THE CALCULATOR APP ON YOUR CELL PHONE.**

### **LOCATION OF POSITIONS/VACANCIES:**

There are currently no vacancies in the title of Real Property Appraiser, however, the eligible list resulting from this examination may be used to fill any full-time, part-time and/or temporary vacancies that may occur during the life of the eligible list.

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

(a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered four-year college or university with a Bachelors Degree in engineering, architecture, economics, business administration or a related field **AND** one year of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience in estimating and appraising real property, buildings or building construction work, including the preparation of original written detailed reports; **OR**

(b) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered two-year college with an Associates Degree in engineering science, engineering technology, architecture, economics, business administration or a related field **AND** three years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience in estimating and appraising real property, buildings or

building construction work, including the preparation of original written detailed reports; **OR**

(c) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma **AND** five years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience in estimating and appraising real property, buildings or building construction work, including the preparation of original written detailed reports; **OR**

(d) Any equivalent combination of training and experience as described in (a), (b), or (c) above.

**Promotion:** The incumbent will promote to the Real Property Appraiser title without further competitive examination upon satisfactory completion of two years of permanent competitive class status as a Real Property Appraiser Trainee during which time the incumbent must satisfy all of the requirements set forth in the Office of Real Property Services rules and Regulations, Section 188-5. This promotion qualification does not apply to the Assistant Real Property Appraiser title.

### **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:**

The incumbent will be required to satisfy all of the requirements set forth in the ORPS Rules and Regulations section 188-5.

The incumbent must possess a valid New York State drivers license at the time of appointment and maintain such license throughout the life of employment **OR** otherwise demonstrate the ability to meet the transportation requirements of the job.

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

This is technical work involving responsibility for the appraisal of real property for taxation purposes. The Real Property Appraiser is responsible for discovering, inspecting, classifying and valuing all property classes. Work also involves the maintenance of property record cards and computer data files. The position involves a degree of physical effort and exposure to disagreeable conditions while performing field work. Work is performed under the general supervision of the Assistant Director of Assessment and is reviewed for conformance to departmental policies and standards. Supervision is exercised over the work of Assistant Real Property Appraisers. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

### **TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- Locates and identifies all taxable property within the jurisdiction(s);
- Inventories all taxable property including quantity, quality, and other important characteristics deemed necessary for valuation purposes;
- Determines the taxable status for each property;
- Determines the market value of each taxable property including residential, commercial and industrial classes;
- Calculates the assessed value of each taxable property, utilizing income and expense statements and applying capitalization techniques;
- Participates in the full preparation of the assessment rolls within the assigned jurisdiction(s);
- Notifies owners of the assessed values of their properties, and upon appeal of the assessed value, defends the value of the property and the methods used to establish value;
- Supervises and trains Assistant Real Property Appraisers in office and field work;
- Makes field inspections of land, buildings and improvements, and prepares sketches thereof;
- Enters all data collected on computer files;
- Obtains information regarding real property from owners, tenants, lessors, brokers, and publications;
- Reviews and analyzes data relevant to fair market value of each property;
- Reviews and analyzes reports of assessed valuations for state assistance and equalization surveys;
- Confers with taxpayers with regard to questionable assessments and follows through with making a final determination;
- Interfaces with the Tax Map Section on a daily basis concerning deed description, parcel size and location;
- Interfaces with the Data Management Section on a daily basis concerning data entry and maintenance for all changes to computerized assessment data files and State required reports and notices;
- Interfaces with the Administrative Section on a daily basis concerning real property tax administration, including various procedures, exemption administration, public relations, and updates on Real Property Tax Law;
- Interfaces with county and local municipal officials on various subjects including interpretations of regulations and requirements of zoning, code enforcement, and the health department;
- Interfaces with attorneys, real estate sales professionals and private appraisers on matters of real estate valuation;
- Reviews and analyzes fee appraisal reports for property tax purposes;
- Assists property owners in filing complaints regarding their assessments;
- Represents the County in grievance hearings with the County Board of Assessment Review, at Small Claims Hearings and Article 7 (Certiorari Proceedings) in the State Supreme Court;

- Reviews and discusses complaints of real property assessment with local and county boards of assessment review;
- Reviews and discusses complaints of real property assessments, deeds, fiduciary and other legal matters with attorneys and paralegals;
- Complies with State law reporting damage to domestic animals and reimbursement thereof.

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

- Thorough knowledge of the methods, principles, practices and techniques of real estate appraisal for assessment purposes;
- Thorough knowledge of building construction methods, materials, and costs for a wide variety of commercial, industrial and private buildings;
- Thorough knowledge of the laws, rules and regulations governing the valuation of real estate for tax assessment purposes;
- Thorough knowledge of deeds and other property records and their relation to the valuation process;
- Thorough knowledge of the economic tenets surrounding the valuation of commercial properties;
- Ability to conduct individual economic valuation research;
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relations with the public, elected officials and appointed Boards;
- Ability to interact with taxpayers in emotional and stressful situations;
- Ability to make and review arithmetic computations with accuracy and speed;
- Ability to prepare oral and written reports;
- Integrity, accuracy, and good judgment required.

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### **Subjects of examination:**

A written test designed to evaluate knowledge, skills and /or abilities in the following areas:

#### **1. Preparing written material**

These questions test for the ability to present information clearly and accurately, and to organize paragraphs logically and comprehensibly. For some questions, you will be given information in two or three sentences followed by four restatements of the information. You must then choose the best version. For other questions, you will be given paragraphs with their sentences out of order. You must then choose, from four suggestions, the best order for the sentences.

#### **2. Principles and techniques of real property appraisal**

These questions test for a knowledge of principles and practices used in the appraisal of agricultural, commercial, and residential real property including knowledge of the three approaches to value; sales comparison, income, and cost estimation. Special emphasis will be placed upon the ability to analyze market data and develop land schedules, market models, and income models for use in mass appraisal.

#### **3. Principles, practices and theory of real property assessment**

These questions test for a knowledge of the equalization rate process, the assessors' calendar, the content of the assessment roll, and the exemptions from real property taxes in New York State. These questions will also test for the ability to use public relations skills when confronted by individuals in your municipality.

#### **4. Supervision**

These questions test for knowledge of the principles and practices employed in planning, organizing, and controlling the activities of a work unit toward predetermined objectives. The concepts covered, usually in a situational question format, include such topics as assigning and reviewing work; evaluating performance; maintaining work standards; motivating and developing subordinates; implementing procedural change; increasing efficiency; and dealing with problems of absenteeism, morale, and discipline.

#### **5. Understanding and interpreting abstracts, deeds, and other documents related to real property**

These questions test for the ability to understand and apply information contained in documents related to real property and include examples, illustrations and applications of laws and procedures in relation to the reading and interpretation of title abstracts, deeds and other related documents.

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