

**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:** Communications Specialist

**EXAM NO:** 60277

**SALARY:** \$23.45/hr- Tompkins County 2023 Hire Rate

**EXAM DATE:** 11/04/23

**ISSUE DATE:** 09/06/23

**THE FINAL DATE TO FILE APPLICATIONS:** 09/21/23

**DATE THAT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM POSTING:** 11/05/23

**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 WILL BE ALLOWED FOR THIS EXAMINATION.**

**LOCATION OF POSITIONS/VACANCIES:**

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

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in communications, public relations, marketing, graphic design, , or a related field; **OR**
2. Graduation from an accredited college with an Associate's degree in communications, public relations, marketing, graphic design, or a related field **AND** two years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience in the field of communications, marketing and public relations, graphic design; or a related field; **OR**
3. Graduation from high school or possession of a general equivalency diploma **AND** four years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience in the field of communications, marketing, public relations, graphic design, or a related field; **OR**
4. Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that specified in (a), (b) and (c) above.

**Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.**

**DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:**

This position is responsible for providing outreach and educational support for the programs of the Tompkins County Office of Employment and Training / Tompkins Workforce New York (OET/ TWFNY). The incumbent will work under the direct supervision of the Director of OET and Workforce Development Coordinator. A moderate amount of autonomy and independent judgment is expected. Supervision of other staff is not a function of this position; however, this position may supervise youth workers or interns for the OET/TWFNY. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

**TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- Develops and implements strategies for increasing public knowledge of the Department's programs and resources;
- Designs materials and posts for both social media and print using online design programs and Adobe Creative Suite;
- Fields requests for promotional materials for events/program offerings;
- Provides outreach and education to job seeking customers of TWFNY and businesses. and the general public;
- Responsible for photographs and videos of staff, customers, and events for use in print and social media materials and website;
- Obtains and maintains appropriate publicity release forms;
- Assists in developing the communication plans for the Department;
- Assists in developing and writing press releases and articles, brochures, posters, ads, radio spots and other informational materials or literature to educate the community about TWFNY services and programs;
- Assists in the preparation of grant proposals, program budgets and contracts;
- Coordinates and participates in the set-up, preparation and promotion of all Department-sponsored events;
- Provides updated and accurate information on the OET/TWFNY website;
- Maintains the Department's website(s) and social media presence (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, etc);
- Conducts surveys with TWFNY clients and the public, as well as researches strategies for effectively communicating OET/TWFNY information;
- Schedules outreach events to engage and inform the public;
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

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

- High level of creativity, comfort and competence working independently
- Good knowledge of design materials and programs for both social media ad print mediums, including free online design programs such as Canva and newsletter templates, and Adobe Creative Suite software;
- Working knowledge of photography, videography and editing software and equipment, including but not limited to Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign, plus a DSLR camera;
- Working knowledge of Workforce Development programs;
- Ability to conduct internet research;
- Strong written, verbal and interpersonal communication skills;
- Ability to read and interpret written information;
- Ability to communicate and work effectively with the public and community groups, particularly youth, adults and individuals from marginalized populations, including but not limited to people with disabilities;
- Ability to manage multiple projects;
- Ability to understand and carry out complex oral and written instructions;
- Ability to make oral presentations;
- Ability to work under pressure;
- Remove and add to posting request
- Ability to contribute to building a positive team atmosphere;
- Demonstrated characteristics of tact, initiative, resourcefulness, creativity and integrity .

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

**Educating and interacting with the public**

These questions test for knowledge of techniques used to interact effectively with individuals and/or community groups, to educate or inform them about topics of concern, to publicize or clarify agency programs or policies, to negotiate conflicts or resolve complaints, and to represent one's agency or program in a manner in keeping with good public relations practices. Questions may also cover interacting with others in cooperative efforts of public outreach or service.

**Grammar, usage, punctuation, and editing**

These questions test for the ability to generate, prepare, and edit written documents. Some questions test for a knowledge of grammar, usage, punctuation, and sentence structure. Others test for the ability to edit sentences to produce correct, clear, concise copy.

**Preparing public information materials**

These questions test for the ability to prepare basic informational materials electronically and in print, for the public and the media, including such products as correspondence, brochures, and news releases. Questions may cover such topics as selecting content to effectively communicate with the intended audience, making decisions regarding page readability of text, and using graphics, photographs, headlines, or captions to enhance a message.

**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.

**Promoting and publicizing a program**

These questions test for knowledge of the principles and practices related to promoting and publicizing a program or service in order to attract customers, clients, or participants. Questions may cover such topics as researching and setting promotion objectives, appealing to various target audiences, and producing and distributing informational materials.

**Test guide:**

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 'General Guide to Written Tests' helpful in preparing for this test. This publication is available on line at: <https://www.cs.ny.gov/testing/testguides.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.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