

**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:** FORENSIC COUNSELOR

**EXAM NO:** 87278

**SALARY:** 2023 Hire Rate \$77,790.54 / Work Rate \$84,474.83

**LOCATION:** Tompkins County Sheriffs Office

**TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT:** Full Time, Part-Time, Temporary

**EXAM DATE:** 03/02/24

**ISSUE DATE:** 01/03/24

**THE FINAL DATE TO FILE APPLICATIONS:** 02/01/24

**DATE THAT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM POSTING:** 03/03/24

**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.**

**LOCATION OF POSITION:**

There is currently one vacancy in the title of Forensic Counselor located at Tompkins County Sheriff's Office. The eligible list resulting from this open competitive examination may be used to fill any full-time, part-time, or temporary vacancies that may occur during the life of the eligible list.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

Possession of a Masters Degree in Social Work, Forensic Psychology, Psychology, or Counseling from a regionally accredited or New York State registered graduate school at the time of application.

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:**

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

**DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:**

This is a professional counseling position involving responsibility for providing assessment, evaluation and crisis intervention services to individuals who are inmates of the Tompkins County Public Safety Building or who are participating in the Alternatives to Incarceration, Felony Treatment Court, or Family Treatment Court Programs. The clients may have psychiatric, drug abuse, parent/child interaction issues, or may be at risk of suicide. In the jail, the incumbent will consult with jail medical staff and converse with corrections staff in order to determine the psychiatric state of inmates for the purpose of formulating an effective treatment program. In the Alternatives to Incarceration and Treatment Court Programs, the incumbent may be involved in observing parent/child interactions and other types of assessment to determine the need for psychological counseling. This position is also responsible for providing comprehensive forensic psycho-social evaluations to the courts, parole board, Probation Department, Department of Social Services and other agencies as appropriate. The incumbent may perform specific evaluations and specialized group treatment in the Sexual Offender Aggression Retraining (SOAR) program. This class of positions differs from that of Psychiatric Social Worker in that the incumbent works with a specialized population. The work is performed in accordance with agency policies and procedures under the general supervision of a Clinic Supervisor in charge of the forensic program. Leeway is allowed for the exercise of independent judgment when carrying out the duties of the position. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

**TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- Performs preliminary assessments of clients requesting service per agency and state regulations by evaluating information provided on an Intake form and through interviews with the client and Sheriff's Department or Alternatives to Incarceration and Treatment Court Program Staff;
- Performs intake screening and diagnostic duties for new clients, referring clients to the psychiatrist for a medical examination if necessary;
- Provides individual or group psychotherapy to clients as indicated in a treatment plan and in consultation with a multidisciplinary Mental Health team, Sheriff's Department staff, Alternatives to Incarceration staff, Treatment Court Program staff and other agencies as appropriate;
- Provides crisis intervention services and coordinates the provision of other services as needed (e.g., drug/alcohol assessment and treatment), including discharge planning to facilitate transition to the next setting, whether that be a community plan or a higher level of care;
- Refers released clients to appropriate agencies (including the Mental Health Clinic) for ongoing services;
- Maintains all clinical records relevant to cases in accordance with clinic, state and Alternatives to Incarceration and Treatment Court Program policy;
- Coordinates services and treatment plans with other agency professionals for clients who are connected with, or have need of the services of, those other agencies;
- Arranges for Sheriff's Department, Alternatives to Incarceration or Treatment Court Program staff to transport clients requiring hospitalization or psychiatric evaluation;
- Participates in regularly scheduled group supervision and intake meetings, providing peer consultation to the other professionals involved;
- Participates in multidisciplinary teams involved with the screening of recently released forensic patients, the identification of troubled youths or other case management activities involving interagency coordination;
- Provides consultation to professionals, paraprofessionals, and volunteers, law enforcement officials and others;
- Performs court-ordered psycho-social evaluations;
- Maintains a variety of case management related records;
- May supervise MSW-level interns, bachelors-level professionals and/or volunteers;
- May act as an expert witness in legal matters as required.

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

- Thorough knowledge of current theories, principles and practices of psychotherapy;
- Good knowledge of forensic mental health principles and practices;
- Good knowledge of crisis intervention techniques;
- Good knowledge of local resources available to clients;
- Ability to classify the psychopathology manifested by clients in accordance with currently accepted classifications;
- Ability to provide effective face-to-face therapy;
- Ability to function as a member of a multi-disciplinary team;
- Ability to correctly appraise personal situations and make sound judgments concerning action required;

- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with professionals, para-professionals and volunteers from a variety of agencies;
- Ability to present ideas clearly and concisely both orally and in writing;
- Ability to prepare a wide variety of written records and reports;
- Ability to make decisions and take decisive crisis intervention action in a jail setting;
- Ability to understand and interpret the various federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations that pertain to forensic mental health programs.
- Empathy, good judgment, initiative and tact are required;
- Mental and physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

Created: 12/00

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## **COMPLETE SCOPE OF THE EXAMINATION AND EXPANDED SUBTEST DESCRIPTIONS:**

### **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.

### **Principles and practices of social casework**

These questions test for knowledge of the principles and practices used to provide casework services to individuals and/or families of all ages, backgrounds, and circumstances. Questions will test for application of this knowledge in various settings and will include such topics as assessment, monitoring and evaluating services, counseling, referrals, and advocacy.

### **Working with individuals to promote mental health**

These questions test for knowledge of characteristics, causes and treatment methods associated with working with individuals who may have mental, developmental, physical, social and substance abuse disorders and/or disabilities. Questions cover such topics as establishing, maintaining and terminating client relationships; recognizing, interpreting, and responding to individual and group behaviors, as well as crisis situations; and facilitating access to essential services such as financial, housing, medical, educational, legal, vocational, and recreational.

### **Interviewing**

These questions test for knowledge of the principles and practices employed in obtaining information from individuals through structured conversations. These questions require you to apply the principles, practices, and techniques of effective interviewing to hypothetical interviewing situations. Included are questions that present a problem arising from an interviewing situation, and you must choose the most appropriate course of action to take.

## **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.

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