

COLUMBIA COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
401 STATE ST., HUDSON, NEW YORK 12534
Phone: 518-828-6622
www.columbiacountyny.com

Please Post Conspicuously



Issue Date: 1/10/24
County #3529

Columbia County Civil Service Commission announces
an open competitive (*open to the public*) examination for:

Social Services Investigator
#86010

Administration of an exam does not imply a vacancy exists

Date of Examination: April 13, 2024

Last Filing Date: March 6, 2024

Filing Fee: Fee for this examination is \$15.00
PERSONAL CHECKS ARE NO LONGER ACCEPTED
(See reverse side for instructions)

Residency: Candidates must be a resident of Columbia, Dutchess, Ulster, Greene, Albany or Rensselaer County for four (4) months prior to the date of the exam.

****Preference in appointment may be given to residents of each civil division (Civil Service Law 23.4)**

Location: To be announced.

Vacancy: The eligible list from this examination will be used to fill vacancies as they occur in the **Columbia County Department of Social Services.**

Salary: \$ 49,620.00

Duties: This position involves research and field investigation of individuals and vendors in cases where there is allegation or suspicion of improper amounts of payments, failure to make supports payments, and attempted or actual welfare fraud. Incumbents are responsible for gathering evidence and documentation, including individual statements, to develop legally acceptable cases. The work includes attempts to persuade defaulters to make payment and negotiate or renegotiate agreements according to changing personnel and financial situations. The work is performed under general directions with broad discretion permitted in carrying out the details of the work. Does related work as required. Typical Work Activities (Illustrative only): Investigates complaints charging recipient or vendor in welfare cases; Studies public assistance laws and rules and obtains information to determine type of fraud involved and discusses the possibility of placing criminal charges with the county prosecutor. Interviews clients, their relatives and others and initiates proper procedures to obtain support or gather information concerning violation of social service laws; Makes field visits to question recipients, neighbors, acquaintances, employers, and others to secure information for the possible prosecution of fraud cases; Secures evidence and affidavits required by the district attorney for indictment and prosecution of fraud, support and desertion cases; Prepares reports for each case describing all steps taken, visits made, witnesses questioned and facts established for submission to appropriate authorities; Attempts to locate missing respondents; Answers correspondence and inquiries concerning all support or fraud matters from other government agencies, beneficiaries and respondents; Assists the social services attorney in preparing cases for court hearings and attends court hearings when necessary. Prepares and testifies to agency records in those cases that result in a fair hearing before an Administrative Law Judge. Handles overpayments and required activity i.e. small claims, filing of judgments etc. Does security inspections as required and maintains rapport with landlords in solving housing problems as they arise. Full Performance, Knowledge, Skills, Abilities & Personal Characteristics: Good knowledge of investigative techniques used in determining financial practices and status of vendors and individuals and in locating missing persons; good knowledge of office terminology and modern methods used in keeping and checking financial records and reports; working knowledge of Federal and State social services and related laws and regulations in regard to support, desertion and fraud; ability to be courteous yet firm with the public; ability to develop materials for legal actions according to prescribed regulations; ability to prepare written reports; ability to analyze facts and use them in making judgments in support, desertion and fraud cases; physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Applications may be obtained from Columbia County Civil Service, 401 State St., Hudson, NY 12534 Phone: 518 828-6622. Applications will be accepted for filing during **OFFICE HOURS ONLY** Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm or via United States Postal Service Mail...Applications postmarked on the last filing date will be accepted. **Applications received/postmarked after the last filing date will not be accepted, including those sent via Columbia County inter office mail. Faxed Applications will not be accepted.**

Note: Sabbath observers/disabled persons/military members: If special arrangements for testing are required, indicate this on your application form.

VETERANS CREDITS: Disabled and non-disabled veterans who establish their eligibility for additional credits and are successful in the exam are entitled to have 10 and 5 points respectively (5 and 2 ½ points of credits in the case of promotional examination), added to their earned scores provided they have not used such credits to obtain permanent appointment or promotion. You will be allowed the option of waiving these credits after the completion of the examination. Effective 1/1/98 the State Constitution was amended to permit a candidate currently in the armed forces to apply for and be conditionally granted veteran's credit in exams. Any candidate who applies for such credit must provide proof of military status to receive the conditional credit. No credit may be granted after the establishment of the list. It is the responsibility of the candidate to provide appropriate documentary proof indicating that the service was in time of war, as defined in Section 85 of Civil Service Law and that the candidate received an honorable discharge or was released under honorable conditions in order to be certified at a score including veterans' credit.

"In conformance with section 85-a of the Civil Service Law, children of firefighters and police officers killed in the line of duty 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 a firefighter or police officer killed in the line of duty 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."

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS: Candidates must be a resident of Columbia County at the time of exam and for four months prior to the date of the examination, unless otherwise stated on the front of the announcement. Preference in appointment may be given to Columbia County residents or residents of each civil division. (CS Law Section 23.4) when opened to contiguous counties. It is the responsibility of the candidate to file a Change of Address Notification Form (available @ Civil Service or @ www.columbiacountyny.com and all supporting documentation as necessary. Information provided will be reviewed at a monthly commission meeting. Date of address change on Eligible list will be effective the date of the commission meeting after information has been reviewed. No attempt will be made to locate candidates who have moved.

RATING & REVIEW: Unless the announcement states otherwise, this written examination is being prepared and will be rated by NYS Civil Service in accordance with Section 23-2 of the Civil Service Law. The provisions of the NYS Civil Service Rules and Regulations dealing with preparation and the rating of exams will apply to this written examination.

TRANSCRIPTS: Whenever college transcripts or diplomas are required, they should be submitted with the application for the examination.

EXAM NOTICES: The Commission does not acknowledge receipt of the application, but all applicants will be notified of the disposition of their application. Approved candidates will be notified at least four days in advance of the place, date and hour of the examination. Every candidate should bring his/her Social Security Number to the exam. Do not interpret a notice to appear for the exam to mean that you have been found to meet fully the announced requirements. Applicants are admitted to the exam on the basis of statements made in the application. These statements may not be reviewed and/or verified until after the exam has been held. At that time those candidates not meeting the requirements will be disqualified. Candidates who are disqualified after taking the exam will not receive a score. If you have not received a notice to appear for the written test three days before the date of the test, you should call 828-6622.

CALCULATORS: Unless otherwise notified, candidates are permitted to use quiet, hand-held, solar or battery powered calculators. Devices with typewriter keyboards, Spell Checkers, Personal digital assistants, address books, language translators, dictionaries, cell phone calculators or any similar devices are prohibited.

ELIGIBLE LIST: The lists established as a result of examinations will remain in existence for a minimum of one (1) year maximum of (4) four years. When an Eligible List has been in existence for less than one year and a new list for the same position or group of positions is established, the names of the persons remaining on the old list shall have preference in certification over the new list until such old list is one year old. Changing conditions may make it advisable to certify to future vacancies at higher or lower salaries than announced.

FILING FEES: A filing fee, as indicated on the front, will be required at time of application. Please write the examination no. and your social security no. on your money order, certified or bank check. Please be advised that NO REFUNDS will be made, therefore, you are urged to compare your qualifications carefully with the requirements for admission and file only for those exams for which you are qualified. **MAKE MONEY ORDERS/BANK OR CERTIFIED CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Columbia Co. Treasurer & mail to Civil Service with your application. Cash is accepted (exact change is preferred).** **PERSONAL CHECKS WILL NO LONGER BE ACCEPTED.** Credit Cards are accepted, when paying in person, with a 2.35% charge plus an additional dollar..

APPLICATION WAIVER FEE: A waiver of application fee will be allowed if you are unemployed and primarily responsible for the support of a household. In addition, a waiver of application fee will be allowed if you are determined eligible for Medicaid, or receiving Supplemental Security Income payments, or Public Assistance (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/Family Assistance or Safety Net Assistance) or are certified Job Training Partnership Act/Workforce Investment Act eligible through a State or local social service agency. **All claims for application fee waiver are subject to verification. If you can verify eligibility for application fee waiver, complete a "Request for Application Fee Waiver and Certification" form and submit it with your application by the close of business on the Application Deadline as listed on the Examination Announcement. Copies of the Application Fee Waiver and Certification forms are available at the Civil Service Office, 401 State St., Hudson, NY 12534 (518) 828-6622 or on our web site at www.columbiacounty.ny.com.**

MULTIPLE EXAMINATIONS SCHEDULED FOR THE SAME DAY: If you have applied to take a written test announced by either one or several local jurisdictions (county, town, city) scheduled to be held on the same test date as this written test, you must notify each of the local jurisdictions no later than two weeks before the test date, so they can make arrangements for taking all tests at one test site. All examinations for positions in State government will be held at a State examination center. If you need an alternate test date, see Alternate Test Date Policy @ www.columbiacounty.ny or call this office at (518) 828-6622 prior to the examination.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: A candidate must meet the qualifications on or before the last filing date.

NOTE: Your degree must have been awarded by a college or university accredited by a regional, national, or specialized agency recognized as an accrediting agency by the U.S. Department of Education/U.S. Secretary of Education. If your degree was awarded by an educational institution outside the United States and its territories, you must provide independent verification of equivalency. A list of acceptable companies who provide this service can be found on the Internet at <http://www.cs.ny.gov/jobseeker/degrees.cfm>. You must pay the required evaluation fee.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT FOR APPOINTMENT IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS & QUESTAR III: 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 Questar III as involving direct contact with students, a clearance for employment from the State Education Department is required.

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. Candidate may be responsible for fees associated with such an investigation. **Failure to meet the standards for the background investigation may result in disqualification.**

NOTE: Evaluation of foreign post secondary education is required. Please ask for a listing of private/not-for-profit agencies who evaluate foreign credentials. You must obtain an independent evaluation of your education to verify the equivalency of same to the minimum qualifications. This must be presented with your application at time of filing.

Minimum Qualifications: (ON OR BEFORE LAST FILING DATE):

Graduation from high school and either

1. Two years of investigative experience of which one year must have been in-field investigation; **OR**
2. Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered two year college. **OR**
3. An equivalent combination of the above experience and training.

NOTE: Study in a regionally accredited college or university or one registered by New York State may be substituted for the experience on a year for year basis.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: Possession of a valid NYS driver's license is required at the time of appointment and throughout time of employment.

Series Name: Investigators

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

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.

Understanding and Interpreting Written Material

These questions test for the ability to understand and interpret written material. You will be presented with brief reading passages and will be asked questions about the passages. You should base your answers to the questions **only** on what is presented in the passages and **not** on what you may happen to know about the topic.

Evaluating Information and Evidence

These questions test the candidates' abilities to evaluate and draw conclusions from information and evidence. Each question consists of a set of facts and a conclusion based on the facts. The candidate must decide if a conclusion is warranted by the facts.

A Guide for the Written Test for **Investigators** is available at the New York State website:

<https://www.cs.ny.gov/testing/testguides.cfm>. Candidates not having access to a computer or the internet may request copy of the test guide from the municipal civil service office conducting this examination using the contact information found elsewhere on this announcement.

Use of calculators is ALLOWED

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