

# APPLICATION GUIDELINES

## **Purpose**

This guideline has been prepared to assist for employment with Tioga County. It is especially intended for the use of first-time applicants but could be useful for any application. It has been designed for applicants responding to examination announcements. It may also be helpful to applicants responding to vacancy notice postings issued by Tioga County.

## **Role of Civil Service**

The Tioga County Civil Department of Personnel and Civil Service review all applications submitted for both tested and non-tested positions. Each year there are approximately 20 different examination dates. Sometimes, depending on the popularity of an examination, such as entry level law enforcement (Police Officer and Deputy Sheriff) the number of applications received increases dramatically. Other times, an examination or vacancy notice may require additional supporting material be submitted in addition to the application (such as college transcripts). And, there is usually only about two or three weeks in which to review these applications. Submitting a well-prepared application speeds up the application review process and allows Civil Service staff to make all the arrangements that are necessary to test candidates.

## **Importance of the Application**

Whether your application is approved or not for a particular examination or for further consideration of a position vacancy depends on how well it is completed. In completing your application, think of it as an advertisement of yourself. It is important to think about your application in this way because it will be used to review your qualifications and training against the minimum qualifications for the examination or for a vacancy position that needs to be filled. Decisions will be based on the information you provide on your application. Remember this application represents you!

Few applicants make effective use of the application when documenting how they meet the minimum qualifications. Most applicants could substantially improve the way they describe themselves and their training and experience, their knowledge, skills, and abilities, and other assets as prospective employees.

## **Completing the Application: Dos and Don'ts**

Please review the following suggestions before you complete your next application. Taking the time to submit a complete and accurate application the first time will save you effort later.

1. If you are unable to complete an application online you may submit a hard copy of the application. Applications are available for download or from our office.
2. If the examination announcement requires a fee, you must either submit the fee in person or send via US postal mail. Both the fee and the application must be received by the Personnel & Civil Service Department by the announced deadline date.
3. Be sure to complete ALL items on the application. (Unanswered questions make it appear that you are avoiding the question, that you are unable to answer, or that you are careless.) Do whatever research is necessary to give exactly the information that is asked for.

4. Provide all the information asked about your education and training, especially that which relates to the examination or position for which you are applying. Include on-the-job, informal and self-acquired training, as well as training in formal courses or programs. Include, where relevant, all registrations, certification and licenses held (vehicle and professional) and whether they are temporary or permanent. If temporary, remember to record the term.
5. One of the most important sections on the application is the work experience section. Provide the most complete and specific descriptions of duties that you can in the space provided. If there is inadequate space, continue on a separate sheet of paper. Work extra hard in writing the descriptions of those jobs that were similar to the one for which you are applying.
6. The application asks for the month/day/year of employment and hours worked per week. In most cases, the month/year may be adequate. If there is any doubt whether you have enough time performing the job duties, record the month/day/and year. In addition, you must enter the actual or average number of hours worked per week for each position held.
7. Be truthful on your application. Deliberately misleading or outright falsehoods are likely to be discovered, and could lead to your disqualification for testing or an appointment.
8. Don't substitute a resume for any part of your application. A resume is not formatted to address the specific questions on the application form; for example: salary, supervisor's name or hours per week worked. A resume does not expedite application review. However, you may attach your resume to the completed application.
9. Indicate volunteer jobs, organizational participation and other outside activities that relate, even indirectly, to the job for which you are applying. This type of experience may be important to the interviewer.
10. Remember to provide a phone number where you can be reached and or a reliable email address.
11. Avoid errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.
12. Submit your application with any required fee on or before the announced deadline date.
13. You may wish to keep a copy of the application you submitted. This copy can be a model for future submissions. If you're going to be interviewed for a job, review your application before the interview to refresh your memory. You will probably be discussing the things you reported on the application form.
14. When you apply for another examination, repeat the process described above. Review all the applications you have previously prepared to see what you said before. This will save you time.

## **Summary**

The principal tool used in the screening, evaluation and selection of applicants is the application. You may disadvantage yourself because of the haste and carelessness with which you complete the application. Remember, your application says a lot about you!

## **Commonly Held Misconceptions**

### **A disqualification letter for a civil service examination is the end of the line!**

When you get a letter from the Personnel & Civil Service Department saying it appears that you do not meet the minimum qualifications for the examination.

This means that you may not have provided enough information on the application to determine that you meet the qualifications. Read the disqualification letter closely because you will be given an opportunity to appeal this decision by providing the missing or unclear information. Be mindful of amount of time

you have to submit your information. By sending a letter or email with this additional information, the department will then be able to take a second look at your application and determine if you qualify.

**Deadlines don't matter, exceptions can always be made!**

This is not true! When you apply to take an examination or a vacancy notice, take note of the deadline date for filing. An application must be received in the Personnel & Civil Service Department on or before the announced deadline date for apply by.

**I don't need to be specific when completing an application; I'll just attach my resume!**

You must be specific on ALL parts of your application. A resume is not a substitute for this. Vagueness and ambiguity WILL NOT result in your favor and you may be disqualified.