



*Please Post Conspicuously*  
**Administration of an exam does not imply that a vacancy exists**

Issue Date: 11/15/11  
County #2744

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

Secretary 1 #68799 (*written exam*)

**Date of Examination:** February 4, 2012

**Last Filing Date:** January 5, 2012

**Filing Fee:** Fee for this examination is \$15.00  
(*PERSONAL CHECKS ARE NO LONGER ACCEPTED*)

**Place of Examination:** To be announced

**Residency Requirement:** **For positions with Columbia County Government, City of Hudson, Towns or Villages** Candidates must be a resident of Columbia County for 4 months prior to the date of the exam.

**For positions with Columbia Greene Community College** candidates must be a resident of Columbia or Greene County for 4 months prior to the date of the exam.

**For positions with Questar III**, candidates must be a resident of Albany, Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Rensselaer or Ulster County for 4 months prior to the date of the examination.

**For positions with School Districts** candidates must be a resident of Columbia County or the school district for 4 months prior to the date of the exam.

**Preference in appointment may be given to residents of each civil division per Civil Service Law section 23.4.**

**Vacancy:** The eligible list established from this examination will be used to fill vacancies **as they occur** in all divisions under the Columbia County Civil Service Commission's jurisdiction. **There currently are no vacancies.**

**Salary:** \$32,596.00 - \$37,495.00 (depending on location of vacancy)  
**\*Columbia County Salary subject to wage increase in 2012 per CPI with a minimum increase of 2.50% and a maximum increase of 2.75%**

**Duties of the position:** Work involves assisting in the administration of an office to increase the effectiveness of the staff and carrying out the day-to-day activities required to accomplish the work. The work is performed in accordance with general instructions and objectives. The incumbent works under general supervision with leeway for independent judgment, receiving detailed instructions only where policies have not been determined. Candidate may assist in the organization and coordination of the administrative duties of an office; Handle incoming correspondence and types routine replies; Handle telephone calls and visitors responding to questions; Order supplies and materials for the office; Maintain confidential files and general office files; Schedule use of departmental facilities; Type correspondence, memos, and other materials using typewriter, word processor or personal computer; supervise a small clerical staff; assist in coordinating and arranging meetings or travel arrangements; Candidate must have the following Full Performance Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Personal Characteristics: Thorough knowledge of agency policies, procedures and functions; good knowledge of: office terminology and vocabulary; office practices, procedures and principles of office management; ability to: establish effective working relationships with a variety of people at all levels of the department; analyze and summarize information; supervise the work of others; use modern office equipment including all types of alphanumeric keyboards; type at a rate of 35 words per minute; handle confidential matters with good judgment;

**Minimum qualifications:**

- A. Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma **and** four (4) years of clerical experience involving typing, two (2) years of which shall have been in an **administrative or supervisory** capacity; **OR**
- B. An associate degree in secretarial science or related field **and** two years of clerical experience which shall have been in an **administrative or supervisory** capacity; **OR**
- C. An equivalent combination of training and experience as defined by the limits of A or B above.

NOTE: College level training in fields other than secretarial may be substituted for one year only of the required experience.

**Series Name:** *Senior Clerical/Special Operations*

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

**1. Grammar/Usage/Punctuation--Level 2:**

The grammar and usage questions test for the ability to apply the basic rules of grammar, usage, and sentence structure. The punctuation questions test for a knowledge of the correct placement of punctuation marks in sentences. You will be presented with sets of four sentences from each of which you must choose the sentence that contains a grammatical, usage, or punctuation error.

**2. Keyboarding Practices--Level 2:**

These questions test your knowledge of preferred practices in such areas as letter format, capitalization, hyphenation, plurals, possessives, word division, word and figure style for numbers, and common proofreading marks. In addition, you will be given a passage to proofread and asked questions about how to correct the errors in the passage.

**3. Office record keeping:**

These questions test your ability to perform common office record keeping tasks. The test consists of two or more "sets" of questions, each set concerning a different problem. Typical record keeping problems might involve the organization or collation of data from several sources; scheduling; maintaining a record system using running balances; or completion of a table summarizing data using totals, subtotals, averages and percents.

**4. Office Practices--Level 2:**

These questions test for a knowledge of generally agreed-upon practices governing the handling of situations which secretaries encounter in their work, as well as a knowledge of efficient and effective methods used to accomplish office tasks. The questions will cover such topics as planning work flow; setting priorities; dealing effectively with staff, visitors, and callers; filing and retrieving information; safeguarding confidentiality; using office equipment; and making procedural decisions and recommendations which contribute to a well-managed office.

**5. Spelling--Level 2:**

These questions test for the ability to spell words that are used in written business communications.

**QUALIFYING PERFORMANCE TEST: TYPING AT 35 WORDS PER MINUTE.** Candidates who receive a passing score on the written test must also pass the performance test in typing. You must pass both the written test and the performance test to be considered for appointment. Since the performance test is qualifying (pass/fail), if you pass the performance test your final score for the exam will be the grade that you achieved on the written test. Candidates may be invited to the performance test in the order of the scores they achieve on the written test. The County of Columbia reserves the right to give the performance test to as many candidates as are needed to fill available vacancies. The typing performance test is usually within several weeks of receipt of the written grades. All candidates who pass the written test will be notified of time and place of the performance test.

The performance test is a test of keying and accuracy. It utilizes a standard keyboard and is given on computers. The computer program requires no prior knowledge of software. The test is five minutes long and is preceded by a three minute practice session. The test passage is displayed on a pc monitor. Candidates enter (key or type) as much of the passage as they can during the time available. In order to pass the test, candidates must enter the test at a rate of at least 35 wpm. For example, if a candidate enters the test at the rate of 35 wpm, the maximum allowable number of errors is 7. A word is defined as five characters. The rating formula divides the total number of characters entered by five to determine the number of words entered. Candidates who do not qualify on the performance test may request a retest of the performance test in typing. A one-time retest will be available. A retest will be given on the same day as the original performance test.

**Typing Performance Waiver Policy:** If you have passed a qualifying typing performance test administered by Columbia County Civil Service, NYS Dept. of Civil Service or the NYS Unified Court System within 4 years of this exam, you may request a waiver for the performance portion of this exam. This request must be submitted in writing at the time you apply to take the examination. Verifiable proof must be submitted at that time. The qualifying typing test must have been administered at the rate of 35 wpm.

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)

# COLUMBIA COUNTY – AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

## Use of calculators is **ALLOWED**

### 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 mail...Applications postmarked on the last filing date will be accepted. **Applications received/postmarked after the last filing date 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](http://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 then announced.

**FILING FEES:** A filing fee as indicated on the front will be required with your 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 would be preferred). PERSONAL CHECKS WILL NO LONGER BE ACCEPTED.**

**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](http://www.columbiacounty.ny.com).**

**MULTIPLE EXAMS:** If you have applied for any other Civil Service exams (for this date) for employment with NYS or any other local government jurisdiction, you must make arrangements to take all the examinations at one test site no later than two weeks before the test date. If you need an alternate test date, see Alternate Test Date Policy @ [www.columbiacounty.ny](http://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.

**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 NYS 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. **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.

