



CITY OF ITHACA

108 East Green Street Ithaca, New York 14850-5690

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES / CIVIL SERVICE

Telephone: 607 / 274-6539 Fax: 607 / 274-6574 E-mail: hrdept@cityofithaca.org

PUBLIC INFORMATION SPECIALIST OPEN-COMPETITIVE EXAM NO. 66-335

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED UNTIL:

August 30, 2018

EXAMINATION WILL BE HELD:

October 13, 2018

ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATIONS: Applications must be received by the City of Ithaca Human Resources Department no later than 4:30 PM EST on the last filing date indicated above. Postmarks are not accepted. All applications must be original applications, either hard copy or electronically submitted through our online application program. We do not accept faxed applications, e-mailed applications or photocopies of applications.

APPLICATION MATERIALS REQUIRED: An original City of Ithaca application and copy of high school and college transcripts.

VACANCIES: Currently, there is one (1) vacancy in the City of Ithaca Public Information and Technology Department. The eligible list established as a result of this examination may be used to fill this vacancy and any future vacancies that may occur during the life of the eligible list.

RESIDENCY: Candidates must be legal residents of Tompkins County at least one month prior to the date of the examination. Preference in certification may be given to candidates who are residents of the municipality in which appointment is to be made, provided that the candidate is a resident of such municipality at the time of examination and remains a resident of such municipality continuously thereafter, up to and including the dates of certification and appointment.

SALARY: \$50,002

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: The work involves responsibility for preparing, producing and disseminating information about the City of Ithaca's activities, services, programs, legislation and news to the media and the public. The Public Information Specialist manages and disseminates news and information through a variety of media, including media releases, community newsletters, the City website, social media accounts, the City digital television channel and the City mass notification system. The Public Information Specialist also assists with the daily activities of the City Clerk's office as needed, including serving as the first point of contact with the City, issuing a variety of licenses and permits, and taking and transcribing minutes of official meetings. The work is performed under the general supervision of the City Clerk, in accordance with established laws, practices and procedures. Supervision may be exercised over the work of student interns, part-time temporary staff or volunteers. Does related work as required.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- A. Graduation from a NYS registered or regionally accredited college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in Journalism, Communications, Creative Writing, English, Media Arts, Public Relations or a closely related field with similar course curriculum; or
- B. Graduation from a NYS registered or regionally accredited college with an Associate's Degree in Journalism, Communications, Creative Writing, English, Media Arts, Public Relations or a closely related field and two (2) years of full-time paid experience, or its part-time or volunteer equivalent, in public information, journalism, public relations, advertising or community relations, in a capacity which included writing as a primary job duty; or
- C. Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma and four (4) years of full-time paid experience, or its part-time or volunteer equivalent, in public information, journalism, public relations, advertising or community relations, in a capacity which included writing as a primary job duty; or
- D. An equivalent combination of training and experience as defined by the limits of (A), (B) and (C) above.

If you expect to complete the educational requirement within six (6) months of the date of examination, you can be admitted to this examination. If successful on the examination, you will not be certified for appointment until you have submitted proof of completion of the requirements to the Civil Service Commission. Proof must be submitted within eight months of the date of examination. Failure to do so will result in removal of your name from the eligible list.

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.

SCOPE OF THE EXAMINATION:

The written examination will cover knowledges, skills and/or abilities in such areas as:

1. Educating and interacting with the public

These questions test for the ability to communicate with others in a manner consistent with good public relations practices. Questions will cover such concepts as interviewing or gathering information from others; participating in meetings or work groups; and presenting information to citizens, community organizations, staff and the media.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

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 online at: <https://www.cs.ny.gov/testing/testguides.cfm>.

NOTE: Most Civil Service examinations do not require the use of a quiet, hand-held calculator or slide rule; however, candidates have the option of bringing a battery-operated or solar-powered calculator to the test room unless specifically notified that their use is prohibited. Devices with typewriter keyboards, spell checkers, Personal Digital Assistants, Address Books, Language Translators, Dictionaries, or any similar devices are prohibited. **USE OF CALCULATORS IS ALLOWED FOR THIS EXAM.**

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION - CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES - MILITARY MEMBERS:

_____ Applicants whose religious beliefs or military service prevent their taking examinations on the scheduled date and candidates with disabilities who require special accommodations to take the test should indicate the need for special arrangements on their application. Candidates who are called to military service after filing an application should send requests for an alternate test date to the City of Ithaca Human Resources/Civil Service Department before the test date.

_____ Military Service Members: If you apply for an examination during the filing period but are on active military duty on the date the examination is scheduled, you may request a military makeup examination. Contact the City of Ithaca Human Resources/Civil Service Department

for more information. If you are on active duty or discharged after the filing period has begun, you may apply for the examination up to ten days before the test date.

SECTION 23.2 STATEMENT: This examination will be prepared and rated in accordance with Section 23(2) of the Civil Service Law. The provisions of New York State Civil Service Law, Rules and Regulations dealing with the preparation and rating of examinations will apply to this examination.

APPLICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED: at the City of Ithaca Human Resources/Civil Service Department - 108 East Green Street - Ithaca NY 14850. You may also apply online or download an application at www.cityofithaca.org.

TIME AND PLACE OF THE EXAMINATION: Approved candidates will be notified by mail regarding the time and place of the examination. If notice of approval or disapproval is not received three (3) days prior to the exam date, please call the City of Ithaca Human Resources/Civil Service Department at (607) 274-6539.

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.

VETERAN'S CREDIT: Veterans or disabled veterans who are eligible for additional credit must submit an application for veteran's credit with their application for examination or at any time between the dates of their application for examination and the date of the establishment of the resulting eligible list. Applications for veteran's credit are available from this office. Veteran's credits can only be added to a passing score on the examination.

Effective January 1, 1998, 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 examinations. 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 veteran's credits.

ADDITIONAL CREDIT FOR CHILDREN OF FIREFIGHTERS AND POLICE OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY: 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.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

1. Falsification of any part of the "Application for Employment" will result in disqualification.
2. 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.
3. Candidates who wish to take more than one examination must complete the "Application for Employment" for each examination. If you are cross-filing for another examination to be held on the same date, please indicate this on the application and specify the examination title and number, and the jurisdiction offering the other examination.
4. Appointments from an eligible list must be made from the top three candidates willing to accept appointment. The duration of an eligible list may be fixed for a minimum period of one (1) year and a maximum period of four (4) years.
5. It is the responsibility of the candidate to notify the City of Ithaca Human Resources/Civil Service Department of any change in address. No attempt will be made to locate candidates who have moved.

Issued by: City of Ithaca Civil Service Commission
July 26, 2018

THE CITY OF ITHACA
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER WITH A COMMITMENT TO WORKFORCE DIVERSIFICATION