

**APPLICATION FOR  
CITY OF CHAMPAIGN TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR**

(Note: Information provided by the applicant on this form may be disclosed pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, subject to applicable exemptions.)

**Name:** Rita Conerly

**Home Address:** 1612 Glen Burnie Dr., Champaign, IL 61821

**Home Telephone:** 7(1)(b) - Personal Telephone Number      **Business Telephone:**

**Cell Phone:** 7(1)(b) - Personal Telephone Number

**Email Address:** 7(1)(b) - Personal Email Address

**How long have you lived in the City of Champaign Township?** 42 years

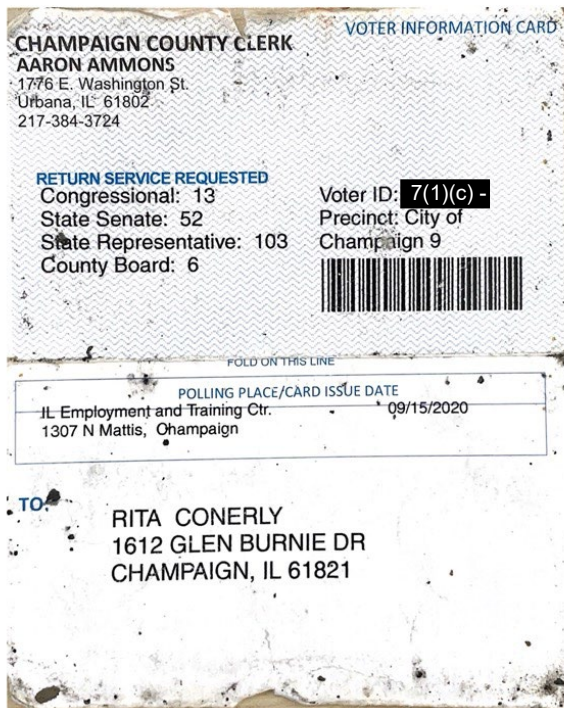
Please list addresses at which you have established residency within the City of Champaign Township during the past three (3) years and the dates of residency at that address:

<u>Address</u> (Most recent first)	<u>Dates</u>
1. 1612 Glen Burnie Dr	2014 - current
2. [REDACTED]	
3. [REDACTED]	

**Present Occupation**

Account Specialist, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Center for Advanced Study

**Voter Registration**



**Education and Tra**

Please list the formal education or training you have received. Be sure to include all training which is related in some way to preparation for serving as Township Supervisor.

<u>Dates of Study</u>	<u>Name, Type of School or Instructor</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Degree/Certificate</u>
2023	Eastern Illinois University	BA Interdisciplinary Studies	current
2019	University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	Humanities	credits
2004	Danville Area Community College	General	credits

### **Experience**

Beginning with your most recent employment, volunteer work, or life experience, please state your previous experience. Be sure to include all experiences which are related to preparation for serving as Township Supervisor.

#### **1. University of Illinois Urbana – Champaign / Account Specialist:**

In my role, I play a crucial part in maintaining the Center, ensuring that it operates smoothly and efficiently. This involves diligently checking and managing emails, voicemails, and postal mail, distributing information as needed to relevant parties. One of my key responsibilities is meticulously maintaining financial records for various accounts, demonstrating my commitment to organizational accuracy.

Confidentiality is paramount, and I take pride in responsibly managing faculty, staff, and student files while also handling reimbursements for faculty, staff, visitors, and foreign national guests. Beyond administrative duties, I am involved in the practical aspects of staff events and luncheons held in the center's reception area, taking care of both the set-up and clean-up processes to create a conducive and welcoming environment.

Effective communication is a cornerstone of my role, and I ensure clear and prompt interaction with various individuals through email and telephone correspondence. This multifaceted approach to my responsibilities reflects my dedication to the smooth functioning of the Center and the satisfaction of its faculty, staff, and guests.

**Position:** Account Specialist

**Dates of Employment/Experiences:** From: March 2015 To: Current

#### **2. University of Illinois Urbana – Champaign Extra Help / Office Support**

Vital role in the successful operation of the office by undertaking various responsibilities. This included reviewing and managing confidential documents to generate reports and organize essential data. Answering phones and greeting visitors were integral aspects of my daily tasks, contributing to a welcoming and efficient office environment.

To stay informed and connected, I took the initiative to create and attend required meetings, ensuring active participation and collaboration within the team. Handling confidential student files was a responsibility I approached with diligence, prioritizing the confidentiality and accuracy of the information.

Additionally, I took on the role of supervising student workers, demonstrating my ability to lead and manage a team effectively. Through these diverse tasks, I consistently contributed to the smooth functioning and productivity of the office. Position: Certified Patient Navigator

**Position:** Varied Office Support Positions in various departments (i.e. Math, OMSA, UB, SOM)

**Dates of Employment/Experiences:** From: December 2010 To: March 2015

### **3. Aramark Food Service / Office Manager**

I actively participated in the hiring process by reviewing applications and providing support with various aspects such as I-9 verification, background checks, and fingerprinting. Managing payroll, accounts payable/accounts receivable, and the general ledger were integral components of my responsibilities, demonstrating my proficiency in financial operations.

Effectively overseeing a team of 40+ employees showcased my leadership capabilities. I meticulously compared daily, weekly, and monthly statements to ensure accuracy for state and federal reports, contributing to the organization's compliance and transparency. Handling daily deposits, including cash counting, and reconciling financial records were tasks I executed with precision.

Utilizing Excel, I created and maintained spreadsheets to streamline data management processes. Additionally, I generated memos as needed for the Food Service Director, enhancing communication within the team. To stay updated, I actively attended training sessions and quickly adapted to a newly implemented system. Meeting deadlines, I successfully completed month-to-month proposals, highlighting my ability to manage tasks efficiently and contribute to the overall success of the team.

**Position:** Office Manager

**Dates of Employment/Experiences:** From: April 2009 To: December 2010

### **Boards and Commissions**

Please list any boards, commissions or task forces on which you currently serve by appointment of the Mayor or City Council of the City of Champaign.

None

### **Public Office**

Please list any public offices currently held by appointment or election of the governing body of a unit of local government, school district, State constitutional officer or Illinois General Assembly.

<u>Office</u>	<u>Appointed by/Elected</u>	<u>Term</u>
NONE		

**Community Involvement**

Please list volunteer organizations that you are involved with locally:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Champaign Unit #4 Schools.	CU One-to-One Mentor and DAC Committee	2021-current
G.I.R.L.S.	Parent Board/Lead on Committees	2019 - current
DREAAM	Parent Board – IMAGINE	2020 - current
RPC – Headstart (IHSA)	Family Committee, Policy Council, Parent Ambassador, IHSA Board Rep	2015 - 2023
HitNHomeboy	Community Organization/Advocacy	2019 – current
African American Heritage Trail	Community Organization	2021 - current

**Honors, Awards, Recognition**

Please list any honors, awards or recognition which you have received:

<u>Honor, Award, Recognition</u>	<u>Received From</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Leota Brown Memorial Scholarship	IHSA	2015
Outstanding Performance Award	TRiO / OMSA	2013

**Potential Conflict of Interest**

Can you think of any relationship or other reason which might possibly constitute a conflict of interest if you are selected to serve as Township Supervisor? (This question is not meant to disqualify you; it is only intended to provide information.)

No

Have you been convicted of any infamous crime, bribery, perjury, or other felony? If so, please list the offense, date and court of conviction. 60 ILCS 1/55-6.

No

**Personal Statement**

**Please write a brief statement concerning why you are interested in serving Township Supervisor.**

As a lifelong, native of Champaign, not only have I been faced with, but overcome many adverse, traumatic experiences throughout my life. Through my own experiences of being a vulnerable citizen, I have first handedly used the systems in our city to help me navigate my way to self-sufficiency. I am deeply committed to the well-being and prosperity of our most indigent populations; I have been, can relate to, and understand the township's clients because I have sat in similar positions of susceptibility. Having witnessed the positive impacts effective leadership can have, I am eager to contribute my experiences, skills, and dedication to the role of Township Supervisor. I believe in fostering collaboration, transparency, and innovation to meet the needs of our residents. Many of the facets of my life have prepared me for this role. Foundationally, my personal examples are what have driven me to realize that I have both the experience and knowledge to work with the citizens the township serves. My goals and passion will enable me to help clients and to empower those in need to gain a self-expression similar to what I now have; strength and resilience.

This position should be for the people to help the people and reflective of the people that receives its services.

**Supplemental Questions**

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**1. What do you see as the most pressing need in the City of Champaign Township? Why?**

As Township Supervisor, I'm committed to addressing our critical lack of affordable housing and homelessness. I'll collaborate with local stakeholders, advocate for inclusive policies, and explore innovative housing solutions. Prioritizing affordable housing initiatives will create a more resilient and thriving community. I'll also enhance outreach services to connect residents with resources. Importantly, I'll work towards a more diverse and inclusive community, ensuring our policies and services reflect and meet the varied needs of our residents. Together, we can build a stronger and compassionate township for all as everyone deserves a quality of life.

**2. Prior to learning about the Township Supervisor vacancy, have you ever been to a Town Board meeting or City Council meeting? If yes, what was the topic or topics you were interested in?**

Yes, I have attended Town Board and City Council meetings on multiple occasions before learning about the Township Supervisor vacancy. My interests spanned a diverse range of topics, reflecting my commitment to community engagement. I actively participated in discussions concerning the Garden Hills neighborhood and infrastructure, addressing concerns related to police injustices, advocating for solutions to food insecurity, exploring improvements to the election process, raising awareness about domestic violence issues, and supporting funding initiatives for various community organizations. My involvement demonstrates a broad and comprehensive understanding of the intricate issues that impact our community.

**3. What in your qualifications or background make you the right person for this appointment?**

My prior candidacy for the Township Supervisor position during the 2020 election season underscores my unwavering commitment to community service. While I didn't secure the position, I garnered significant support, earning 40% of the vote. This experience has afforded me valuable insights into the concerns and aspirations of our community members, signaling a solid base of trust and endorsement. My dedication to the township's well-being, coupled with the understanding gained from my campaign, positions me as a deeply invested candidate ready to contribute to growth and prosperity as Township Supervisor.

Furthermore, I have actively participated in community initiatives addressing social injustice and food insecurity, collaborating with organizations like HitNHomeboy, CCARC, and other nonprofits. Volunteering with community gardens, food pantries, and mentorship has equipped me with a diverse skill set, including leadership, personal management, employee and community relations, and compliance.

My adeptness at fostering collaboration, engaging diverse stakeholders, and implementing effective practices to address community needs is evident. With a commitment to transparency, accountability, and innovation, I am enthusiastic about leveraging my experience and dedication to serve as a proactive Township Supervisor, working tirelessly to enhance the quality of life for all residents.

#### **4. What are some of your long-range objectives for the City of Champaign Township?**

In my role as Township Supervisor for the City of Champaign, I am dedicated to a comprehensive vision aimed at fostering a thriving community. My long-range objectives prioritize eradicating homelessness through strategic partnerships with public housing and other organizations, implementing targeted assistance programs, and advocating for affordable housing initiatives to address the root causes of housing instability. Additionally, I am committed to advancing education and workforce development by collaborating with local schools, businesses, and vocational training programs to ensure residents are equipped with the skills necessary for a competitive job market. Health and wellness initiatives will be a cornerstone, promoting access to healthcare services, recreational facilities, and wellness programs to enhance the overall quality of life. Also, recognizing the importance of emergency preparedness, I aim to develop robust plans and partnerships to ensure the community's resilience in the face of unforeseen challenges. Through these objectives, my goal is to create a City of Champaign Township that is not only prosperous but also compassionate, inclusive, and well-prepared for the future.

#### **5. What do you see as successful qualities of a Township Supervisor?**

As a Township Supervisor, I believe this role requires a combination of key skills. Firstly, strong leadership is essential for guiding the township towards its goals and making informed decisions that positively impact the community. I understand the importance of effective communication skills in fostering positive relationships with residents, local officials, and other stakeholders. I prioritize transparency and openness in communication to build and maintain community trust and engagement.

Additionally, my organizational skills serve as a crucial role in managing the township's resources efficiently, overseeing budgets, and implementing policies effectively. I recognize the significance of being responsive to the needs of the community and am adept at problem-solving to address challenges effectively. My commitment lies in promoting the overall well-being and development of the township. I am dedicated to striking a balance between fiscal responsibility

and community development, ensuring that the township thrives under my leadership. I embrace a collaborative approach to leadership, valuing input from various stakeholders to make well-rounded decisions for the benefit of the community, especially our most indigent.

**6. What is the role of a Township Supervisor?**

The Township Supervisor in Champaign holds a pivotal role, prioritizing support for the community's most vulnerable. With a focus on general assistance and emergency rental aid, the Supervisor ensures timely and targeted help for those facing financial hardships or housing crises. By managing resources efficiently and fostering collaborations, the Township Supervisor works to address the immediate needs of indigent citizens, embodying a commitment to the well-being of the community.

**7. Give us an example of a time you solved a difficult problem or issue.**

As an advocate for children and families, I encountered a challenging issue within our local school system that required resolution. Several concerns had arisen regarding certain policies and practices that I believed were not in the best interest of the students. As a parent of seven Unit #4 students, I felt compelled to address these issues. I took the initiative to speak out against these concerns, engaging both the school administration and fellow community members in constructive conversations. By raising awareness and fostering dialogue, I was able to catalyze meaningful discussions among various stakeholders. This proactive approach resulted in collaborative efforts to address the identified problems and work towards solutions that better served the interests of the students and families within our community. This experience highlights my ability to navigate complex issues, initiate positive change, and foster open communication for the benefit of the community.

**8. How would you support the Strides shelter? What are your ideas for long term funding and hiring and retention of employees for the shelter?**

To enhance support for Strides homeless shelter, I propose a multifaceted strategy. First and foremost, diversifying funding sources is pivotal for long-term sustainability. This involves establishing partnerships with local businesses, engaging community organizations, pursuing grant opportunities, and organizing fundraising initiatives. By creating a robust financial foundation, Strides can ensure the stability necessary for its operations and growth.

To address the hiring and retention of employees, a two-pronged approach is essential. Offering competitive salaries, comprehensive benefits, and professional development opportunities will attract skilled professionals and bolster staff retention. Simultaneously, fostering a positive work environment through team-building activities and recognition programs will contribute to a motivated and satisfied workforce, resulting in improved services for shelter residents.

In expanding temporary housing options, collaboration with local landlords and property owners is key. Negotiating affordable rent agreements and garnering community support for additional spaces can significantly increase the shelter's capacity. Simultaneously, integrating case management services into the shelter's offerings is crucial for transforming temporary accommodations into transitional options. This approach will empower residents to set and achieve personal goals, facilitating a smoother transition towards self-sufficiency.

Creating employment opportunities from within for shelter clients involves the implementation of vocational training programs and partnerships with local businesses. Identifying and nurturing the skills and talents of shelter residents can pave the way for meaningful employment, contributing to their sense of independence and stability.

In conclusion, this comprehensive strategy aims to strengthen Strides' financial standing, cultivate a positive work environment, expand temporary housing options, and empower clients through case management and employment opportunities. By adopting these measures, Strides can evolve into a holistic support system, effectively breaking the cycle of homelessness and promoting a self-sufficient community.



**References**

\* Current City of Champaign Town Board/City Council Members should not be included below.

Name: Dr. Evelyn Burnett Underwood

Occupation: Assoc. Minister / Retired

Address:

7(1)(b) - Home Address

Home Phone:

7(1)(b) - Personal Telephone Number

Name: Dr. Deloris P Henry

Occupation: Retired

Address:

7(1)(b) - Home Address

Home Phone:

7(1)(b) - Personal Telephone Number

Name: Justin Hendrix

Occupation: Teacher / UIUC Student

Address:

7(1)(b) - Home Address

Home Phone:

7(1)(b) - Personal

**Submitted by:**

Rita Co  
Printed

Signature

7(1)(b) - Signature

1/8/2024  
Date



# Public Records Exemptions

The following information explains the factual basis for the redactions applied to the responsive records provided to you, pursuant to the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/7 *et al.*

Reason	Description	Pages
7(1)(c) - Invasion of Personal Privacy	7(1)(c) Personal information contained within public records, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, unless the disclosure is consented to in writing by the individual subjects of the information. "Unwarranted invasion of personal privacy" means the disclosure of information that is highly personal or objectionable to a reasonable person and in which the subject's right to privacy outweighs any legitimate public interest in obtaining the information. The disclosure of information that bears on the public duties of public employees and officials shall not be considered an invasion of personal privacy	1
7(1)(b) - Personal Telephone Number	7(1)(b) Private information, unless disclosure is required by another provision of this Act, a State or federal law or a court order	1, 9
7(1)(b) - Personal Email Address	7(1)(b) Private information, unless disclosure is required by another provision of this Act, a State or federal law or a court order	1
7(1)(b) - Home Address	7(1)(b) Private information, unless disclosure is required by another provision of this Act, a State or federal law or a court order	1, 9
7(1)(b) - Signature	7(1)(b) Private information, unless disclosure is required by another provision of this Act, a State or federal law or a court order	9