

SECTION 2.0: APPLICATION AND SELECTION FOR EMPLOYMENT

A. RECRUITMENT

Effort will be made to aggressively recruit the best-qualified candidates to fill vacancies within the County.

All persons applying for employment with BCC departments must complete a County Employment Application Form prior to appointment. These forms are available in the Human Resources Department (HR), Room 707, County Administration Building and the County Web Site (www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov).

B. VACANCIES, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APPLICATION

1. To fill a vacancy, the department head shall submit a job posting request to Human Resources. All vacancies shall be posted for a minimum of ten working days and may be posted for a longer period at the discretion of the department head or HR Director. Unclassified positions, because they are exempt from Civil Service, do not require posting, but may be posted at the discretion of the appointing authority.
2. Human Resources shall be under no obligation to consider any application submitted after the close of the posting period.
3. Vacancies shall be filled, to the extent practicable, by qualified County employees.
4. County employees applying for other County positions shall be granted time off with pay, without reprisal, for job interviews or other selection-qualifying tests. The employee should notify the supervisor not less than two working days before the required time off.

C. EVALUATION OF APPLICANTS

1. Human Resources shall screen all applications to determine if the applicant meets the minimum qualifications for the classification of the posted position.
2. All applications meeting minimum qualifications shall be forwarded to the department head, or designee, for further evaluation and possible interview. The department head, or designee, shall then select the candidates for interviews.
3. Candidates shall be evaluated upon job-related criteria only, including the minimum qualifications of the job, and the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to successfully perform the essential functions, duties and

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tasks of the position. Other relevant criteria may include general background, education, coursework, task performance, training and experience through which the knowledge, skills and abilities were acquired or enhanced.

4. In lieu of civil service exams, structured interviews shall be used in assessing the final candidates for a position. Hiring departments may also use other job related written, oral, or physical tests, demonstrations of skill, or an evaluation of training and experiences to further assess a candidate's ability to discharge the particular duties of the position. Human Resources may be consulted for assistance in structuring interviews.

D. PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING OF EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

1. Human Resources, in cooperation with the department head, or designee, shall ensure that applicants and volunteers are properly screened prior to appointment. Screening shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Screening for minimum qualifications.
 - b. Reference checks and educational verification for those positions requiring a college degree.
 - c. Criminal background checks (Note: Some background checks require fingerprinting, such as the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) check or equivalent state police checks and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) check. The Sheriff's background check does not require fingerprinting.)
 - d. A State of Ohio BCI&I and an FBI background check for all employees who will have access to a work area which houses a Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS) computer terminal.
 - e. Declaration Regarding Material Assistance/Non-assistance to a Terrorist Organization
 - f. Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) record checks from his/her state of residence for positions which routinely require driving on County business as part of the job. An employee shall not operate a vehicle on County business without a valid driver license from his/her state of residence.
 - g. Pre-employment, post-offer drug testing for selected positions as permitted by law.

2. Applicants not meeting screening standards as determined by Human Resources in consultation with the department head, or designee, shall not be eligible for appointment. Past convictions will not automatically disqualify a candidate for possible employment with the County. Each situation will be considered on a case-by-case basis using the following criteria: 1) nature and gravity of offense(s); 2) time passed since conviction and/or completion of sentence; 3) nature of job held or sought.

In addition, any falsification of information on a County employment application, on an applicant's resume, or during an interview, including misrepresentation or omission of information called for, is basis for disqualification or dismissal.

3. After appointment, the County reserves the right at any time to conduct additional background checks, which may require fingerprinting. An updated background check consisting of an electronic criminal history check is required every five years for all employees that have access to a work area which houses a LEADS computer terminal.
4. Human Resources shall also ensure that volunteers are properly screened, which includes a Sheriff criminal background check and state(s) police check (which requires fingerprinting), prior to placement in any assignment in a County department. Upon assignment, Hamilton County reserves the right at any time to conduct additional background checks, which may require fingerprinting.

E. SELECTION

1. The department head, or designee, shall select the best-qualified applicant for the job, based solely upon merit and fitness.
2. No selection decision shall be unlawfully based upon race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, age or disabling condition.
3. The employment of persons under the age of eighteen will be subject to Ohio minor labor laws.
4. The re-employment of a retiree is subject to rules identified in Section 5.6 Paragraph P. and Section 6.0. Paragraph E.11.

F. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

The Human Resources Department shall establish, maintain and communicate standard operating procedures (SOPs) for effectively administering this policy in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and in cooperation with affected departments and agencies.

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This SOP implements Section 2.0 of the Policy Manual.

A. RECRUITMENT

1. The Human Resources Department (HR) will coordinate, develop, and conduct recruiting services for departments under the jurisdiction of the Board of County Commissioners and, upon request, may assist other County appointing authorities and agencies with recruiting services.
2. In order to select the most qualified candidate, HR must have a thorough understanding of the job to be filled. The position description will be reviewed in detail to determine the essential job functions and minimum qualifications of the available position.
3. Jobs will be posted for ten working days beginning on Wednesday mornings and ending on Tuesday afternoons. Outreach efforts will be used to target a wide spectrum of potential applicants. Sources may include: internal candidates, employee referrals, newspaper advertisements, web/internet sites, professional associations, social service agencies, state employment agencies, college placement offices, flyers, job fairs, etc.

B. VACANCIES, ANNOUNCEMENT AND APPLICATION

1. To have a position posted, departments should complete and forward a Job Posting Request Form to Human Resources by 4:00 p.m. on the Friday preceding the new posting period. Forms are available in HR in Room 707 of the County Administration Building or on the County Intranet.
2. All postings will be assigned a posting number and will be advertised for ten working days.. Advertisements will be posted by any means as deemed appropriate (i.e., website, bulletin boards, newspapers, publications, etc.).
3. All persons applying for posted positions must complete a County employment application form. Resumes may also be submitted. Application forms are available in HR and on the County Internet site (www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov).

C. EVALUATION OF APPLICANTS

1. Human Resources will send a list of all the applicants for each posted position to the department head, or designee, along with the employment applications and/or resumes, of those deemed to have met minimum qualifications.
2. The department head, or designee, will determine which applicants to interview based upon the number and quality of the applicants. Telephone interviews may be used to select final candidates for face-to-face interviews. The County Administrator is authorized to pay certain expenses, such as travel and lodging, which are deemed reasonably necessary for the recruiting and interviewing process.
3. The department head, or designee, will schedule and conduct all interviews, and request the assistance of HR, if needed. During the interview, the interviewer must secure from any final candidates a completed employment application form (if not already submitted) and a Declaration Regarding Material Assistance/Nonassistance to a Terrorist Organization (DMA form). All applicants must complete and sign the DMA form in the presence of the interviewer. The interviewer must witness the form by signing and dating below the applicant's signature
4. Structured interviews will be used which a) contain only job-related questions; b) address the essential functions of the job; and c) ask the same questions of all interviewees.
5. Final candidates for top management positions must be provided information regarding the County's ethics policy.
6. Once a candidate is selected, Human Resources will then perform the required Pre-Employment Screening.

D. PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING

Evidence that an applicant has a pattern of poor work habits and performance with previous employers, or has committed acts that demonstrate character traits that would be detrimental to successful performance of the employment sought, including but not limited to evidence that the applicant was dismissed for good cause from any branch of public service, or was convicted of or pleaded guilty to a job related felony or misdemeanor, shall be sufficient to exclude such applicant

from appointment. In addition, there are statutes in the Ohio Revised Code that prohibit individuals from being employed in certain lines of work upon certain felony convictions.

1. Reference Checks:
 - a. Human Resources will obtain references.
 - b. Previous employers will always be contacted for references.
 - c. Attempt will be made to obtain a minimum of two positive references for each job applicant. No applicant should be appointed without documenting at least one positive reference.

2. Verification of Education:

Human Resources will verify a candidate's educational credentials for all positions that require a college degree as a minimum qualification or for any position that allows for equivalencies (such as job experience in lieu of degree) when the candidate is using a degree, rather than experience, to meet the minimum qualifications.

3. Criminal Background Checks:

- a. Once a contingent offer of employment has been made, HR will obtain a local criminal background check by the Sheriff's Office, a state background check for each state the candidate has lived in over the past seven years, and any additional jurisdictions as deemed necessary by the Human Resources Director, on all prospective employees and volunteers. All employees who will have access to a work area which houses a Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS) computer terminal will receive a State of Ohio BCI&I background check. In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to complete the records check *after* employment begins.
- b. For certain types of positions, additional records checks may be warranted and will be performed by HR if deemed necessary by the department head, in consultation with the Human Resources Director. Positions that may require additional checks should be identified prior to posting the position.

- c. All offers of employment are made contingent upon the positive outcome of these background checks. An FBI check (which requires fingerprinting) will be conducted immediately following appointment for all employees appointed to top management positions, for all employees and volunteers who will be working directly with children, developmentally disabled persons, or older adults, and for employees who will have access to a work area which houses a LEADS computer terminal.
4. Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) Records Checks:
 - a. For all positions which involve driving as part of the job, Human Resources shall conduct DMV checks.
 - b. The DMV check should normally be performed prior to appointment, but may be obtained after appointment for some job classifications as determined by Human Resources in consultation with the hiring department. Information obtained from DMV should be forwarded to the department head, or designee, for evaluation. No County employee may operate a County car or personal motor vehicle on County business unless he/she possesses a current, valid driver's license and proper insurance.
 5. Drug Testing:

Pre-employment, post-offer drug testing may be performed for selected positions permitted by law as designated by Human Resources.

E. SELECTION

1. A job offer may be made by the department head, or designee, contingent upon the candidate's passing a pre-employment drug screening test, a post-offer medical exam and/or resolving any requests for reasonable accommodation, if applicable. If the candidate accepts the offer, the department head, or designee, shall notify HR by forwarding a completed and signed Notification of Selection form, along with the candidate's employment application and signed DMA form.

2. Once the selected candidate has cleared all background, reference and educational checks that are required prior to appointment, Human Resources will prepare the appointment letter and personnel action to execute the appointment. (See E.3. below for special instructions.)
3. Appointments to positions of *top management, commissioner aides and secretaries, and clerk of the board and assistant to clerk of the board* are processed as follows:
 - a. Top management appointments are made by the County Administrator who prepares and signs the appointment letter. (The County Administrator will provide HR with all the information on the selected candidate and HR will execute the personnel action.)
 - b. Appointments to commissioner staff positions (currently commissioner aide and secretary), the clerk of the board position, and assistant to the clerk of the board position are made by resolution at a regular weekly Commissioner meeting. (Human Resources will execute the personnel action upon receipt of all information on the selected candidate.)
4. Human Resources will send a welcome letter to the appointee confirming the start date and giving instructions for reporting to work. For employees appointed to a position in the unclassified service, the welcome letter sent by HR will include a written description of the nature of employment in the unclassified service.
5. Human Resources will promptly notify unsuccessful candidates of their status.