Hiring Guide

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Dear Hiring Manager,

Are you considering recruiting a new employee? Human Resources is your partner in hiring. This guide will help you through the process. Contact us at any step in the process if you would like to discuss:

- Future needs of your organization and options to consider when filling a position
- Details about your position-specific requirements
- Developing and weighting the applicant pre-screening (supplemental) questions
- Establishing position-specific questions for phone and on-site interviews
- Interview scheduling by Human Resources staff
- Participation by Human Resources staff in the interviews
- Pre-employment testing options
- Conducting employment reference/verification checks
- Recruitment strategies for hard-to-fill positions

Here’s an outline of the details you can expect in the guide:

- Recruitment
- Advertisement
- Selection
- Conditional Offer of Employment
- Hiring

You will also find useful links (see an alphabetical listing below). Please note that some are internal links available only on a County computer.

- Alcohol and Controlled Substance Testing Policy
- BTS Request to Create New User Account
- CDL Driver Job Offer Letter Template
- Clerk’s Service Request for New User Account
- Consent for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse
- Drug-Free Workplace Policy
- Eligible Register Content
- Instructions to Enter a New Hire in OPUS
- Instructions to Enter a Requisition in Taleo iRecruit
- Instructions to Transfer an Employee in OPUS (for current manager)
- Instructions to Transfer an Employee in OPUS (for new manager)
- Interview Scheduling Reference Guide
- Job Offer Letter Template
- New Employee Departmental Orientation Checklist
- Personnel Rule 3 - Compensation
- Position Requirement Profile (PRP) Sample
- Position Requirement Profile (PRP) Candidate Questionnaire Form
- Vehicle Driver Qualification Form
- Release of Information Form: Drug and Alcohol Background Check
- Telephone Reference Check Form
- Veterans’ Preference Procedure
- Veterans’ Preference Form
- Veterans’ Preference Compliance Memo Sample (required)

Human Resources Workforce Strategy Team
Recruitment

- To begin the process, enter a Requisition/Position Requirement Profile (PRP) in the Talent Center for each vacancy to be filled (classified/exempt/temporary) including the detailed physical requirements associated with the specific position and then submit to Human Resources for review and processing.

- If the hiring manager determines that driving is an essential function of the position (i.e., the position requires driving a County vehicle at any time or using a personal vehicle for County business at least 20% of the time, such as one full day a week), the supplemental questionnaire will indicate that the position requires either a Florida Driver License or a CDL (Commercial Driver License) and ask if the candidate is able to fulfill the requirement. A response of “No” will disqualify the applicant.

- Human Resources will review the Requisition/PRP and consult with the hiring manager regarding supplemental pre-screening questions the hiring department may choose to include on the application, if not previously established.

Advertisement

- Human Resources collaborates with the hiring manager on the final version of the website posting and posts the job to www.pinellascounty.org/hr/opportunities.

- If the hiring department would like external advertisements on job boards, publications, websites, etc., please consult with Human Resources.

- Human Resources promotes job postings on social media accounts (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). You will receive a link when your job has been posted. Please feel free to share the link with your networks.

Selection

Application Review/Screening

- The hiring department may view applications and begin interviewing as the applications are submitted, rather than all at once at the end of the recruitment posting period. All applicants who apply and qualify during the recruitment posting period will be considered.

- No offers of employment may be made prior to the recruitment posting close date.

- Contact Human Resources if you need to extend the closing date to allow more time for additional applicants to apply.

- The hiring manager shall screen and make a determination whether each applicant meets the minimum qualifications as identified under “Minimum Qualification Requirements” on the position classification and job description.

- The hiring manager determines applicants to be interviewed.
  - Review and give consideration to Eligible Individuals granted Veterans’ Preference (see the blue sidebar beginning on page 4 for more information), and compliance with the nepotism statute.
  - For internal candidates, hiring managers may request to review personnel files. Such requests should be emailed to Records Administration.
Interviews

The hiring department may schedule interviews, or request assistance from Human Resources. Interviews may be conducted by phone, video (Microsoft Teams or Skype), or in-person. Refer to the Interview Scheduling Reference Guide. Human Resources can also assist with developing interview questions.

- During the interview, discuss an applicant’s qualifications, salary expectations, detailed requirements for the position, etc.
- Inform each interviewed applicant that a **background check** including a national criminal record check will be conducted after a conditional offer is made and that material falsification of any information presented in the application or during the interview will be grounds for removal from consideration and/or termination if hired.
- Discuss with each applicant interviewed the **Position Requirement Profile** (PRP) details regarding the position, physical requirements, working conditions, and location. *NOTE: The PRP Candidate Questionnaire Form should only be provided to the selected candidate when a conditional offer is made.*
- **Driving:** If driving is an essential function of the position (i.e., the position requires driving a County vehicle at any time or using a personal vehicle for County business at least 20% of the time, such as one full day a week), the hiring manager should inform the applicant that a motor vehicle record check will be required if hired. This applies to a new employee or a current employee promoted from a non-driving position to a driving position.
- **CDL:** If the position requires a Commercial Driver License (CDL), the hiring manager should inform the applicant that, if hired, they will need to comply with Pinellas County and federal regulations for background checks and drug and alcohol queries. At the interview, the hiring manager should review: (1) Pinellas County Alcohol and Controlled Substances Testing Policy, (2) General Limited Consent for Queries of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse (new form), (3) Drug-Free Workplace Policy, and (4) Pinellas County Government Release of Information Form: Drug and Alcohol Background Check.

**Veterans’ Preference**

Human Resources reviews documentation submitted by the applicant and determines preference eligibility and indicates on the list which applicants are qualified for Veterans’ Preference if they meet the minimum qualifications for the job. Such persons will be referred to as Eligible Individuals throughout this guide.

- At every step in the selection process, the hiring department must grant Eligible Individuals a preference pursuant to Pinellas County’s Veterans’ Preference Procedure and to Florida Statute Chapter 295 Laws relating to veterans.
- All Eligible Individuals who do not meet the minimum qualifications for the job must receive an interview at each step of the interview process until a final selection is made.
- If the hiring manager determines an Eligible Individual does not meet the minimum qualifications for the job, the applicant will be excluded from further consideration. In this instance, a higher level of management (as determined by the hiring department) upholds the hiring manager’s determination.
- Eligible Individuals currently employed by Pinellas County, are eligible for Veterans’ Preference when being considered for a vacant Pinellas County position that is open for recruitment and available to all applicants (not positions limited to internal candidates).

(continued)
This applies to a new employee or a current employee promoted from a non-driving position to a driving position.

- **Drug screening:** If the applicant is interviewing for a position requiring a CDL or designated as “safety sensitive” (including certain positions at the Airport, Air Quality and Medical Examiner), the hiring manager should inform them that successful passing of a drug screening will be required.
- Discuss **emergency assignments** (if applicable).
- The hiring department may also conduct second or additional interviews for applicants.

**Further Evaluation of Applicant**

- If pre-employment testing is desired, the hiring manager should contact Human Resources.
- Additional assessments (written assessments, demonstrated skills tests, physical agility assessment, behavior assessment, etc.) may be administered. The hiring manager should request assistance from Human Resources prior to administering additional assessments.

**Selection Process Documentation for Veterans’ Preference**

- A hiring authority must be able to demonstrate what preference was given to each Eligible Individual at each step of the selection process and may be required to demonstrate why an Eligible Individual was not selected.

**Public Records Compliance**

- The hiring manager must retain interview questions, notes and score sheets for 4 years for any public records request.
- This is also appropriate documentation to maintain to support the Veterans’ Preference requirement.

**Employment Reference Checks**

- The hiring department conducts at least 3 employment reference/verification checks per finalist and determines the preliminary selection of which applicant to hire.

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**Veterans’ Preference Continued**

- If there are evaluation steps beyond screening and interviews, contact Human Resources for assistance in how to apply a preference to those steps.
- After all interviews are completed, the following must be applied:
  1. The best qualified applicant may be selected without regard to preference.
  2. If there is more than one equally qualified applicant and one is an Eligible Individual, that Eligible Individual must be selected (i.e., in the event of a tie, the Eligible Individual is selected).
  3. If there is more than one equally qualified Eligible Individual, the following selection hierarchy must be applied (the categories 1 to 7 mentioned below are detailed on the Veterans’ Preference Form):
      a. First preference to those Eligible Individuals in categories 1 and 2.
      b. Second preference to those Eligible Individuals in categories 3 to 7.
Veterans’ Compliance Memo

- **Before extending an offer of employment:** Under all circumstances, regardless of whether there are any Eligible Individuals on the list, the hiring manager shall notify Human Resources of the preliminary selection by sending a memo/email to hiring@pinellascounty.org. If Eligible Individuals are on the list, the email should include the name of the selected candidate and details about actions taken to provide a preference to qualified Eligible Individuals during each step of the selection process.

- Human Resources will review the preliminary selection memo/email and notify the department to proceed with a conditional offer of employment or advise if additional steps are required.

| Conditional Offer of Employment |

**Verbal Offer and Letter**

- Human Resources will notify the hiring manager upon review of the Veterans’ Preference Compliance Memo to extend a conditional offer of employment to the selected applicant.

- **Negotiating starting pay** is an important aspect of hiring. Personnel Rule 3 provides guidance on starting pay (see link at right). Contact Human Resources if assistance is needed to establish the appropriate starting pay rate.

- Hiring manager will make an offer to the selected applicant in person or by phone. At that time, they will ask the selected applicant for their social security number and date of birth (for OPUS new hire data entry).

- The hiring manager will follow up the conditional offer of employment conversation by emailing an offer letter, referencing the position title, pay rate, and expected start date. See Job Offer Letter Template and CDL Driver Job Offer Letter Template.

**Driving**

- If driving is an essential function of the position, when the applicant comes to Human Resources for fingerprinting, they will be given a Vehicle Driver Qualification Form to be completed. Human Resources will send the completed signed form to Risk Management for a motor vehicle record check. The applicant should not contact Risk Management directly. The applicant will need to attend a Driver Awareness Training with Risk Management before driving a County vehicle or even their own vehicle on County business. This applies to a new employee or a current employee changed from a non-driving position to a driving position.

- If the position requires a Commercial Driver License (CDL), ask the applicant to bring their last 3 years of work history (company name, address and phone) to Human Resources when they go for fingerprinting. At that time, Human Resources will give the applicant 3 forms for completion: (1) Vehicle Driver Qualification Form, (2) General Limited Consent for Queries of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse, and (3) Pinellas County Government Release of Information Form: Drug and Alcohol Background Check. Human Resources will forward the 3 signed forms to Risk Management, along with assurance that the driver is registered with the Clearinghouse. Risk Management will request drug and alcohol information from previous employers and run a motor vehicle record check. Risk will request a full query through the FMCSA Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse will email the new hire asking them to log into the site to give consent. If consent is not given, the job offer would be withdrawn. If the query results show no issues, the driver is good to go and may begin driving for the County as soon as they complete their Driver Awareness Training with Risk Management. If the query shows results, Human Resources will be notified. For those who do not yet have a CDL, inform them that once they get the CDL permit, they will need to register with the FMCSA Clearinghouse and complete the necessary paperwork.
**Screening/Background Check**

- The hiring manager informs the applicant that the offer and employment is conditional upon review of the background check which may include previous employment, education, and criminal records checks or other screening depending on the area of assignment.
- Instruct the selected applicant to contact Human Resources to schedule an appointment to be fingerprinted as part of our background screening.
- For positions requiring a CDL or designated “safety sensitive” (including certain positions at the Airport, Air Quality and Medical Examiner), a drug screening is required. When the applicant comes to Human Resources for fingerprinting, they will be given a drug testing form and a list of testing locations and notified that the drug testing must be completed within 2 business days to ensure timely processing.
- Human Resources or Risk Management will notify the hiring manager if there are issues with a background check or screening.

**PRP Candidate Questionnaire Form**

- The hiring manager should have already provided the selected applicant with the Position Requirement Profile (PRP).
- At the time of the conditional offer, the hiring manager will provide the PRP Candidate Questionnaire Form to the selected applicant with a request that they complete, sign, and return it to the hiring manager within 2 business days.
- In the event an applicant requests an accommodation, the hiring manager should contact the County Attorney’s Office at (727) 464-3354 for legal advice on how to proceed/respond to the request.
- The hiring manager will keep the PRP Candidate Questionnaire Form in a separate file to protect any private information from inappropriate disclosure in response to any future public records request.
- If the hiring manager/department receives a public records request or subpoena, they are to consult with the County Attorney’s Office on how to protect the PRP Candidate Questionnaire Form.

**Hiring**

**New Hire**

- **OPUS:** The department MUST enter new hire information in OPUS before their fingerprinting appointment. See instructions.
- You will need the new hire’s social security number and date of birth.
- Complete the OPUS entry before the new hire’s fingerprinting to ensure that all accounts are set up by the time the new hire reports to work.
- Delaying the entry into OPUS has a domino effect and negatively affects the setup of all IT needs such as computer, telephone, email, OPUS access, and Taleo FACE and Recruit access. The delay also interferes with the Human Resources New Employee Orientation.
- Internal promotion: The current hiring manager initiates the personnel action in OPUS by inputting the effective date, reason, and the new manager’s name. The new manager may then complete the OPUS data entry. See instruction links at right.
• **New user account**: The department must complete a request for computer access.
  o Clerk: Use [Clerk’s Service Request for New User Account](#)
  o Other agencies: Use the [BTS Request to Create a New User Account](#)

• **Taleo update**:  
  o The hiring manager changes the applicant’s Taleo status to *Hired*.  
  o Human Resources changes the requisition status in Taleo to *Filled*.

• **HR letter**: Human Resources will provide the new hire with a welcome letter and information about attending the new employee orientation.

• **Department orientation**: The hiring manager reviews the items on the [New Employee Departmental Orientation Checklist](#) with the new hire during the first week.

## Not Hired

• Human Resources notifies *applicants not interviewed* by email to inform them the position has been filled.

• The hiring manager notifies *interviewed applicants* that the position has been filled:
  o A hiring manager may notify a *non-Veteran’s Preference* applicant who was interviewed using **phone**, **email**, or **letter**.
  o A hiring manager will also notify any *Veteran’s Preference* Eligible Individuals who were interviewed. By law it is required that the individual be notified in **writing** (email or letter) within 14 days of when the selected candidate has accepted the position and agreed up on a start date.