

# Hiring Guide

**Human Resources**  
*Helping U Succeed*

**WORK. GROW. MATTER.**

Updated 10/22/21

Dear Hiring Manager,

Have a vacancy? **Human Resources Workforce Strategy 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 HR-Workforce Strategy staff
- Participation by HR-Workforce Strategy 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:

1. **Recruitment**
2. **Advertisement**
3. **Selection**
4. **Offer of Employment**
5. **Miscellaneous**

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](#)
- [Driver and Safe Driver Award Policy](#)
- [Drug-Free Workplace Policy](#)
- [Employment Reference Check Form](#)
- [Instructions to Enter a New Hire in OPUS](#)
- [Instructions to Transfer an Employee in OPUS](#) (*for current manager*)
- [Instructions to Transfer an Employee in OPUS](#) (*for new manager*)
- [Job Offer Letter Template](#)
- [Nepotism Policy](#)
- [New Employee Departmental Orientation Checklist](#)
- [New Hire Notification and Onboarding Form](#)
- [Personnel Rule 3 - Compensation](#)
- [Position Requirement Profile \(PRP\) Candidate Questionnaire Form](#)
- [Recruitment Request Form](#)
- [Release of Information Form: Drug and Alcohol Background Check](#)
- [Vehicle Driver Qualification Form](#)
- [Veterans' Preference Form](#)
- [Veterans' Preference Compliance Memo Form](#) (required)
- [Veterans' Preference Procedure](#)

# 1. Recruitment

- To begin your hiring process, complete the [Recruitment Request Form](#) to the right and a Workforce Strategy team member will contact you to discuss the **next steps**.
- HR-Workforce Strategy will create a **new requisition or clone a previous requisition** and discuss with you the **supplemental pre-screening questions** you want to include with the application, if not previously established.
- 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.



[Recruitment Request Form](#)

# 2. Advertisement

- Work with HR-Workforce Strategy on developing your **engaging lead**.
- HR-Workforce Strategy collaborates with the hiring manager on the final version of the website posting and **posts the job** to [www.pinellascounty.org/hr/opportunities](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/opportunities).
- If the hiring department would like **external advertisements** on job boards, publications, websites, etc., please consult with HR-Workforce Strategy.
- HR-Workforce Strategy promotes job postings on **social media accounts** ([LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#)). You will receive a link when your job has been posted to the careers website. Please feel free to share the link with your networks.

# 3. 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 qualify during the recruitment posting period will be considered.
- Contact HR-Workforce Strategy if you need to **extend the closing date** to allow more time for additional applicants to apply.
- The hiring manager shall screen and decide whether each applicant meets the **minimum qualifications** as identified under “Position Specific Requirements” on the advertised position description.
- The hiring manager determines **applicants** to be interviewed and at this time, the applicant is now considered a **candidate**.
  - Review and consider Eligible Individuals granted **Veterans’ Preference** (see the blue sidebar beginning on page 4 for more information), and compliance with the [Nepotism Policy](#).
  - For internal candidates, hiring managers may request to **review their personnel file**. Such requests should be emailed to [Records Administration](#).

*No offers of employment may be made prior to one week after the recruitment posting close date.*

## Interviews

- The hiring department may schedule interviews as resumes are received. **Interviews may be conducted by phone, video (Microsoft Teams or Zoom), or in-person.** HR-Workforce Strategy is available to offer assistance with the interview process and establishing interview questions.
- During the interview, discuss candidate's qualifications, salary expectations, detailed requirements for the position, etc.
- Inform each candidate 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.
- Provide each candidate with a copy of the **job posting** to review details of the position's physical and mental demands.
- **Provide the [PRP Candidate Questionnaire Form](#) only to the selected candidate to complete when a conditional offer is made.**
- **Driving:** If driving is an essential function of the position, the hiring manager should inform the candidate that a motor vehicle record check will be required if hired. This applies to a new employee or a current employee promoted/transferred from a non-driving to a driving position. Please familiarize yourself with the [Driver and Safe Driver Award Policy](#) so that you can inform the candidate of County requirements.
- **CDL:** If the position requires a Commercial Driver License (CDL), the hiring manager should inform the candidate 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 the four documents to the right. *Please note, this applies to a new employee or a current employee promoted from a non-driving or regular driving position to a driving position requiring a CDL.*
- **Drug screening:** If the candidate is interviewing for a position requiring a CDL or designed 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).



[Alcohol and Controlled Substances Testing Policy](#)



[FMCSA Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse Form](#)



[Drug-Free Workplace Policy](#)



[Release of Information Form: Drug and Alcohol](#)

## Veterans' Preference

HR-Workforce Strategy 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 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)

- The hiring department may also conduct second or additional interviews with candidates.

## Further Evaluation of Applicant

- If **pre-employment testing** is desired, the hiring manager should contact HR-Workforce Strategy prior to administering.
- **Additional assessments** may include written assessments, demonstrated skills tests, physical agility assessment, behavior assessment, etc.

## Employment Reference Checks

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



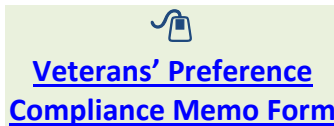
## Selection Documentation for Veterans' Preference and Public Records Compliance

- A hiring authority must be able to demonstrate that **preference was given to each Eligible Individual who meets the minimum requirements of the advertised position at each step of the selection process** and may be required to demonstrate why an Eligible Individual was not selected.
- The hiring manager must retain interview questions, notes, and evaluation criteria for **4 years** for any public records request.

## 4. Offer of Employment

### Veterans' Compliance Memo

- **Before extending an offer of employment, the hiring manager shall complete the [Veterans' Preference Compliance Memo Form](#).**

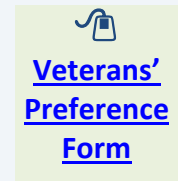
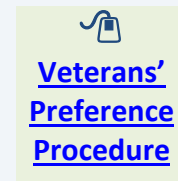


- Please provide the name of all non-selected veterans and the reason for screening them out during the recruitment process.
- All veterans on the requisition must be documented in the form, and you are required to re-submit the form in the event that a veteran is missed.
- If there are **no Eligible Individuals on the list**, indicate N/A for the Veteran's Preference Compliance Reasoning question on the form.
- **Submitting the form is required for all filled positions** with or without veteran applicants.
- **HR-Workforce Strategy will review the preliminary selection form** and notify the department to proceed with a conditional offer of employment or advise if additional steps are required.

## Veterans' Preference

*Continued*

- *If there are evaluation steps beyond screening and interviews, contact HR-Workforce Strategy 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 candidate may be selected without regard to preference.*
  2. *If there is more than one equally qualified candidate 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.*



## Conditional Offer and Letter

- **Starting pay** is an important aspect of hiring. Be sure to follow the protocol established by your Appointing Authority and department for hiring above the minimum. In addition, Personnel Rule 3 (see link at right) provides guidance on starting pay, consultation with Human Resources, and Appointing Authority approval for hiring about the minimum for classified positions before a conditional offer is extended. Contact HR-Pay and Class if assistance is needed to establish the appropriate starting pay rate.
- Hiring manager will make a **conditional offer to the selected candidate in person or by phone**. All offers are contingent upon the successful completion of the background check which may include previous employment, education, and criminal records checks or other screening depending on the area of assignment.
- The hiring manager will follow up with the conditional offer of employment conversation by **emailing an offer letter** referencing the position title, pay rate, and expected start date. See the Job Offer Template link at right.
- At the time of the conditional offer, the hiring manager will also provide the **PRP Candidate Questionnaire Form** to the selected candidate with a request that they complete, sign and return it to the hiring manager within 2 business days. See the Questionnaire Form link at right.
- See additional details about the PRP under [Miscellaneous](#).



[Personnel Rule 3  
Guidance on  
Starting Pay](#)



[Job Offer Letter  
Template](#)



[PRP Candidate  
Questionnaire Form](#)

## Offer Acceptance, Background Check and OPUS Administration (External Candidates)

- Upon the offer acceptance of an external candidate, the hiring manager will ask for the individual's full Social Security number and date of birth and **enter the new hire in OPUS**. See the instructions link at right. A new hire must be entered and approved through the OPUS/EBS chain-of-command to create the system generated employee number.
- Once the employee number is generated, HR-Workforce Strategy will create the **employee's ID badge** and email both the ID badge number and employee number to the hiring manager.
- At the same time, the hiring manager will submit the [New Hire Notification and Onboarding Form](#) at least 8 business days prior to the new hire's start date to prompt the scheduling of the onboarding/fingerprinting appointment.
- A representative from HR-Workforce Strategy will contact the new hire within 24 hours to schedule the **onboarding/fingerprinting appointment**. The hiring manager will be copied on the appointment as confirmation.
- HR-Workforce Strategy will notify the hiring manager when the **background check is successfully completed**.
- At this point, the hiring manager contacts the new hire to **welcome them and discuss first day activities**.
- **New user account:** The department must complete a request for computer access.
  - Clerk: Use Clerk's Service Request for New User Account (link at right)
  - Other agencies: Use the BTS Request to Create a New User Account (link at right)



[Instructions to Enter a  
New Hire in OPUS](#)



[New Hire Notification  
and Onboarding Form](#)




[Clerk's Service Request  
for New User Account](#)




[BTS Request to Create a  
New User Account](#)

## Offer Acceptance, Background Check and OPUS Administration (Internal Promotion/Transfer)

- Upon an **internal candidate** (County employee) accepting the offer and informing their current manager, the new manager will reach out to the current manager to discuss the **transition period**.
- The **current 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.

  
[OPUS Transfer  
Instructions  
for CURRENT manager](#)

  
[OPUS Transfer  
Instructions  
for NEW manager](#)

### Not Hired

- Be sure that **all applicants and candidates are notified in a timely manner**. Coordinate with HR-Workforce Strategy on how communications will be handled for those who were interviewed and those not interviewed.
- A hiring manager or HR-Workforce Strategy may notify a **non-Veteran's Preference** candidate who was interviewed using **phone, email or letter**.
- A hiring manager or HR-Workforce Strategy will also notify any **Veteran's Preference** Eligible Individuals who were interviewed. According to the Florida Statute Chapter 295 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 upon a start date.

## 5. Miscellaneous

### Driving

- If **driving** is an essential function of the position, the new hire will be given a [Vehicle Driver Qualification Form](#) when they meet with HR-Workforce Strategy to complete onboarding paperwork.
- If the position requires a **Commercial Driver License (CDL)**, HR-Workforce Strategy will inform new hires what is needed to complete the following forms during their onboarding paperwork appointment: (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](#)
- 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. HR-Workforce Strategy will coordinate the scheduling of the drug screening for the individual within 2 business days.
- HR-Workforce Strategy will send all completed driving-related forms to Risk Management. Risk will complete a **motor vehicle record check**. 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.
- Risk Management will also request **drug and alcohol information from previous employers** (for CDL driving) and request a **full query through the FMCSA Clearinghouse**. If the query shows results, HR-Workforce Strategy and the hiring department will be notified.

### PRP Candidate Questionnaire Form

- In the event a candidate 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 information on the PRP Candidate Questionnaire Form.

## ***Onboarding After New Employee Starts***

- The hiring manager may review the items on the **Department Orientation Checklist** (to the right) with the new employee during the first week.
- Human Resources **New Employee Orientation (NEO)** is a half-day session your new hire will be scheduled to attend soon after they start.
- For the NEO schedule and other information provided to new hires, see [New Employees](#).

