

Administrative Procedure

Hiring Process Standard Operating Procedures Revised October 1,2025

Purpose

The City of Hendersonville believes that hiring qualified individuals to fill positions contributes to the overall success of the organization. Each employee is hired to make significant contributions to the City of Hendersonville. In hiring the most qualified candidates for positions, this procedure should be followed.

Note: The process of hiring sworn Police Officers and Firefighters have exceptions to this policy depending on the approved procedures established by those respective departments and various requirements for screening and testing to meet required qualifications.

Procedures

1. Vacancies, Advertising and Recruitment

- The Hiring Manager shall be the person from the hiring department responsible for filling the position and the lead liaison between the hiring department and Human Resources. Note that the Hiring Manager, Human Resources, Department Head and Division Head shall be copied on all correspondence regarding the hiring process.
- When position vacancies occur, the Hiring Manager, Department Head and Human Resources should determine if the job description accurately describes the work being performed. Considerable changes will need to be approved by the City Manager/City Council.
- Any updates to the job description should be performed prior to posting the position.
- The Hiring Manager shall determine in writing from the Budget Office that funds are available to advertise and fill the position. An acceptable hiring range will be established in advance of advertising for the position by the hiring department and Human Resources. The hiring range will be part of the Hiring Plan and will be posted with the advertisement.
- The Hiring Manager should notify the Human Resources Recruitment Coordinator to discuss the Hiring Plan that includes a variety of recruitment sources, how candidates will be screened and the interview process (including the interview questions to be asked).
- Human Resources shall develop a Hiring Plan (see [example](#) and Appendix A) and provide to the Hiring Manager (others copied as listed above) . A Hiring Team shall be established prior to advertisement, which shall consist of at a minimum, the Hiring Manager, the Division Head, supervisor of the open position, and a Human Resources representative. Other members of the Hiring Team may include the Department Head or staff members from other departments as warranted (could include staff members that would work with position or Department or Division Heads from departments that help to fund the open position).In order to expand the talent pool, individuals shall be recruited from a geographical area as wide as necessary and for a period of time sufficient to ensure that well- qualified applicants are obtained. Human Resources and the hiring department shall coordinate where the position is advertised based on funding availability.

- Beyond the City conducting widespread/general recruitment campaigns, additional budget for specialized marketing for individual positions may be required to be paid from the department's individual budgets. The hiring department would need to work with HR and Communications on ad campaign design, funding and management.
- Open positions shall be advertised for a minimum of seven calendar days prior to any offer of employment being made.
- Applicable salary and employment qualifications will be publicized with the position advertisement.
- In rare situations because of emergency conditions, high turnover, etc. the City may hire or promote without advertising jobs, upon approval of the City Manager.
- In the event there is a hiring freeze, the department head and or the Human Resources Director will contact the City Manager to approve any advertisements.

2. Applications and Applicants

- All persons expressing interest in employment with the City shall be given the opportunity to file an application for employment for positions which are vacant and the most qualified candidate will be chosen.
- Applicants are required to apply through the City's career site except in cases where an outside firm is used for a recruitment process and may require only a resume. When an outside search firm is used, the successful candidate for the position will complete a City application through the City's career site during the hiring process.
- Resumes of applicants that have not applied through the City's career site will be stored within each department's secure SharePoint folder. If one of these applicants are chosen for interview, they will be required to apply through the City's career site for further consideration.
- Supervisors, department heads or other employees added as part of the hiring team to an open position will be able to view the applications for that requisition. The hiring team will receive emails as Human Resources or the supervisor makes changes to candidates.

3. Interview Procedures

- A minimum of three (3) staff shall be present at all interviews. One (1) staff member from Human Resources shall be present at all interviews. Note the same staff members shall be present at all interviews, where possible, so that the scoring is consistent between candidates.
- Human Resources and the Hiring Manager, in coordination with the hiring team, will discuss and confirm the candidates to be interviewed.
- The type and number of interviews will be determined, i.e. telephone, panel, etc.
- It will be determined if any work assignments, work samples or computer testing is needed or if the department has additional needs.
- An interview schedule will be established in coordination with the Hiring Manager, and Human Resources will schedule the interviews and inform candidates of the interview process.
- The candidates' names will remain confidential and not discussed outside the interview process.
- Human Resources will prepare the Hiring Manager and Hiring Team on the interview process/panel.
- Final interview questions will be determined by Human Resources and the Hiring Manager. Questions should focus on the person's ability to perform the essential functions of the position.

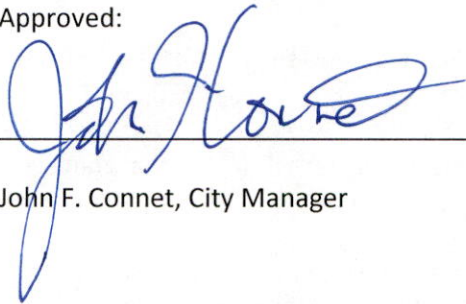
- Human Resources will discuss what questions are acceptable to ask and not ask.
- Human Resources will provide an interview form with the interview questions with a scoring matrix (example provided).
- Interviews must be conducted fairly and objectively. An interview should provide as much information as possible about an applicant's potential to perform the duties of a particular position. The most valuable interview is objective and permits the interviewer(s) to determine the knowledge, skills and qualifications of a prospective employee.
- The interview process must comply with both federal and state law, including non-discrimination laws. Federal laws as well as the law of most states prohibits discrimination based upon, race, sex (including LGBTQ+ individuals), religion, color, gender, national origin, age, disability or genetic information.
- Human Resources will compile all paperwork related to the interview process (applications, interview forms, notes, etc.) for recordkeeping purposes.

4. Post Interview

- After interviewing all candidates, a summary of the interview forms shall be provided by Human Resources to the hiring team and a decision will be made to make an offer, schedule follow-up interviews, keep the opening posted, or cancel the hiring process.
- Once interviews are completed and the panel agrees on a candidate, the findings should go to the department head for recommendation.
- For competitive hires the following salary offerings are allowable with concurrence from Human Resources:
 - The Human Resources Director has the flexibility to extend salary offers to new hires up to 15% above the minimum salary of the grade.
- If a hiring salary is proposed higher than 15% above the minimum salary of the grade the department head should make the request in writing to the City Manager and copy the Human Resources Director.
- When a candidate is chosen, Human Resources will contact the candidate to verbally make the conditional offer and then send a written conditional offer letter, the appropriate background documents and a copy of the City's benefit package. The department head and hiring manager should review this package prior to it being sent to the applicant. A response will be requested within five (5) business days. If the offer is accepted, a pre-employment drug screen shall be performed within forty-eight hours from the time the conditional job offer is made or as soon thereafter as possible but no longer than five (5) business days and before the candidate begins performing the job in question.
- The candidate must return the background authorization and required documents to Human Resources to begin the background check.
- In compliance with G.S. 160A-164.2 (b) the City will require applicants for positions that may involve working in any capacity with children, must undergo a criminal background check conducted by the State Bureau of Investigation. This applies to all applicants sworn and unsworn positions in public safety and job specific personnel as determined by the Human Resource Director.
- The Candidate will need to provide proof of a High School Diploma/GED or a University Degree if applicable.

- Human Resources or the Hiring Manager with the consultation of Human Resources will conduct reference checks after a conditional offer is made.
- The candidate's current employer must not be contacted without the consent of the candidate. Contacting the current employer should be the last step in the pre-employment process. Human Resources will provide reference questions to ask.
- After references have been checked, drug screen and background checks completed, Human Resources will inform the supervisor if the candidate passed or did not pass pre-employment. If the candidate passed, a preferred start date will be determined. Human Resources will contact the candidate to ensure that the start date meets their schedule.
- The Police and Fire departments may conduct background checks on candidates and will have a longer turnaround time due to the in-depth steps involved in the hiring process.
- Candidates not chosen will be notified by Human Resources .
- Human Resources collects all paperwork related to the post interview process (Background documents, reference check documents, notes, etc.) for recordkeeping purposes.

Approved:



John F. Connet, City Manager

Date:

10-7-25

Appendix A

HIRING PLAN

Position Title: EXAMPLE – Position A

Pay Grade/Salary: 15

Salary Range:

Posting Date: --/--/----

Notify Candidates selected for interview: --/--/----

Panel Interview: HR, Hiring Manager, Name, Name, etc.

Recommendation: Name

Extend Offer: --/--/----

Passed Pre-employment: --/--/----

Preferred Start Date: --/--/----

Candidate Name-

Skills Needed

Trouble-shoots problems and performs semi-skilled to skilled carpentry, plumbing, and electrical repairs. Building and grounds maintenance. Carpentry, painting, electrical, and plumbing repairs buildings, and swimming pool. Keeps records of work activities.

Experience and Education:

One (1) – Three (3) years' experience in general maintenance of facilities and buildings; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. CDL Preferred.

The position will be posted in the following locations:

1. Indeed
2. NCWorks
3. Our social media and website
4. Handshake
5. NCLM
6. Etc.

List of Oracle Candidates and Status

Candidate Name – email- phone -status

Candidate Name – email- phone -status

Candidate Name – email- phone -status

List of Indeed Candidates and Status

Candidate Name – email- phone -status

Candidate Name – email- phone -status

Application- Review

Selection for the interview phase will be based on the following:

- Work Experience (relevance to posted position, demonstrates ability to meet job description)
- Education
- Work History - Progression of responsibility
- Provide Panelist copy of job description and interview rating form.

Panel Interview Overview:

- A panelist must be fair, consistent, and transparent.
- Each candidate is given the same consideration and respect.
- Each candidate is given the same questions and attention. Each candidate is rated with the same level of scrutiny.
- The panelist's notes should support the ranking.

The role of each panelist is to independently assess each response the candidate provides to the questions given. Panelists are expected to take notes during each response to determine the ranking.

Score each question from Poor - Exceptional. Total the score at the bottom of the candidate's interview notes. Panels will discuss strengths and weaknesses of each candidate.

Avoid these Interview Panelist Errors:

1. **1st Impression Effect:** A candidate may do very well at the beginning of the process but "runs out of steam." The panelist may become so impressed in the beginning and ranks the candidate high when an overall rating would be lower. This also applies to the last impression.
2. **Halo Effect:** The tendency to allow a candidate's performance relating to one core quality to influence the rating on the other dimensions, even where there is little evidence for such ratings on those dimensions. It is important that raters try to keep the dimensions as distinct as possible. For example, a candidate may show a great deal of oral communication skill, but this does not necessarily imply an equal amount of skill in decision making, problem analysis, or judgement skill.

Some of the dimensions are closely related, of course, and skill in one area often goes along with the skills in another.

3. **Leniency Effect:** Tendencies to be an easy rater. It is often less offensive to be generous than it is to make objective, but lower, ratings. Conversely, there is also the tendency to be excessive and unjustifiable harsh. The key is to focus attention on each candidates experience and education related to the job description needs.
4. **Central Tendency Effect:** This error shows itself in the predisposition to avoiding the use of extreme ratings, even when they are called for and just.
5. **Contrast Effect:** This error shows itself when a particular candidate's evaluation is influenced by the evaluation of the preceding candidate. For example, when two candidates are rated consecutively who are quite far apart due to the differences between them, an average candidate can appear excessively good or excessively bad in contrast to the other very low or very high candidate, respectively. Once again, the key is to focus upon each candidates experience, and education related to the job description needs.
6. **Similar-to-me-effect:** This error, shows itself when candidates remind you of your own approach to situations thereby resulting in higher ratings than are justified. The reverse situation can also occur resulting in lower ratings than the actual behavior would dictate.

Additional Guidelines:

In terms of content:

- Did the candidate understand the relevant issues posed by the question?
- Did the candidate deal effectively with the issue?
- Did the candidate deal with the obvious but not the more subtle issues and problems?
- Were the candidate's judgements sound and based on logical reasoning.
- Was the candidate able to adequately justify and defend their responses?
- Was the candidate able to expand on their answers when asked follow-up questions?
- At any time did the candidate offer conflicting information?

We are representing the City of Hendersonville in all interviews. We need to be professional, polite, and respectful of each candidate. Please be careful of your responses and body language. Please keep copies of all answers and notes taken.

Here are some questions that we cannot ask. If the candidate speaks on any of these topics DO NOT engage in any further conversation/ follow up questions.

- Were you born here?
- Where are you from?

- How old are you?
- Are you married?
- Do not speak about pregnancy
- Do you have any children?
- How old are your children?
- How will you afford to live in this area?
- Do you have family in this area?
- Don't ask about reliable transportation or their commute
- When did you graduate from high school/college?
- What church do you go to?
- Do not discuss any disabilities or medical conditions
- Do not ask any questions on National Origin, Race, Religion, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation

All Candidates should be asked the same questions. If necessary, repeat the question, but try not to rephrase it or prompt the Candidate towards the right answer.

Below are examples of ways to ask non-leading follow up questions:

- Could you please tell me more about..... ?
- I'm not quite sure I understood. Could you tell me more about that?
- I'm not certain what you mean by..... Could you give me some examples?
- Could you tell me more about your thinking on that?
- You mentioned....Could you tell me more about that? What stands out in your mind about that?
- Can you give me an example?

Thank you for your time helping us interview Candidates.

4.	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Below Average</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Above Average</i>	<i>Exceptional</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Below Average</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Above Average</i>	<i>Exceptional</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6.	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Below Average</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Above Average</i>	<i>Exceptional</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7.	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Below Average</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Above Average</i>	<i>Exceptional</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8.	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Below Average</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Above Average</i>	<i>Exceptional</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9.	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Below Average</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Above Average</i>	<i>Exceptional</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10.	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Below Average</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Above Average</i>	<i>Exceptional</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for your time today. We hope to have a decision by _____

Additional Comments
If offered the position when would be the soonest you could start?

Recommendation

Do Not Hire	Not Recommended	Indifferent	Recommend	Highly Recommend
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name: _____

Signature: _____

<i>For Staff Use Only</i>				
Poor (1)	Below Average (2)	Average (3)	Above Average (4)	Exceptional (5)
			Overall Score:	