



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

**Effective Date: August 1, 1993**

<b>Owner</b>	Human Resources
<b>Reviewer(s)</b>	Human Resources
<b>Approver(s)</b>	County Manager
<b>Applicable Policies</b>	Progressive Discipline Policy
<b>Applicable Documents</b>	Request for Exception from Hiring Freeze Form
<b>Storage Location</b>	DCo Services Hub, DocTract
<b>Last Review Date</b>	07/01/2025
<b>Next Review Date</b>	07/01/2028
<b>Review Cycle</b>	3 Years

## 1. PURPOSE

Durham County provides guidelines for the recruitment and selection of employees to meet the operational needs of the organization.

## 2. POLICY

The County provides a centralized recruitment and selection process which ensures equal employment opportunity to all persons, without regard to race, sex, age, religion, creed, national origin, physical or mental impairment, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or other non-merit factors, except where they constitute a bona fide occupational qualification necessary for job performance or as required by statute or for occupational necessity.

## 3. APPLICABILITY

All County employees covered by the Personnel Ordinance, and all those pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

Applicant - A person who submits a complete Durham County employment application for a position that is open for recruitment in accordance with County guidelines.

Bona-fide Occupational Qualification (BFOQ) -- A quality or an attribute that Employers are allowed to consider when making decisions on the hiring and retention of employees that when considered in other contexts would constitute discrimination and thus in violation of civil rights employment law.

Calendar days - Refers to all days in a month or year, including weekends and holidays

Candidate - An applicant who meets or exceeds the minimum requirements for the position for which s/he has applied and has been referred to the hiring department for further consideration.



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

Competitive Demotion - Status change of internal applicants who have applied and accepted a position through a recruiting process in a lower pay band

Demotion - The movement of an individual to a position in a lower pay band with a decrease in the level of skill requirement and responsibility.

Employee - A person who performs services or labor for the County in return for some form of compensation, and who is treated as an employee for purposes of withholding social security and tax payments in accordance with Internal Revenue Service and the NC Department of Revenue regulations.

Hiring Freeze Exception - The granting of permission to fill a position during a hiring freeze to avoid jeopardizing public safety, general public welfare or critical departmental operations; to satisfy legal requirements; or because the position does not require County funding.

Interim Appointment-The status given to an employee temporarily holding a vacated position who has authority to make decisions which significantly impact services, programs or staff of organization, i.e. supervisory or management level for at least 60 days.

Internal Recruitment - Recruitment process for which only current full-time, part-time and provisional County employees may apply.

Position Description - A document describing the duties, responsibilities, and essential functions of a specific position. It may include statements concerning the position(s) supervised, supervision received, department, minimum qualifications, experience and skills needed to perform the duties, physical requirements and other pertinent information.

Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) - The initial document used to describe the duties, responsibilities, and complexity of work being performed; must be completed by the employee and/or supervisor; and is used to determine the position title and build the position description.

Position of Influence - When an individual can directly or indirectly impact another individual's employment. This includes but is not limited to management and personnel decisions (i.e. performance reviews, promotion, compensation, assignments, and access to training).



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

Probationary Period - The timeframe at the start of employment during which a new hire's performance and suitability for the role are evaluated. During this period, the employees do not have the right to appeal disciplinary actions.

Promotion - The movement of an individual to a position in a higher pay band with an increase in the level of skill requirement and responsibility as a result of a competitive process.

Provisional Hire - The status given to an employee in a position created for a specified period of time which must be at least twelve (12) months but is not expected to continue indefinitely. A joint City/County transitional program allows participants to work up to six (6) months and be eligible for benefits.

Relief Hire - The status given to an employee hired to perform the duties of a regular employee for short-term absences (i.e. EMS, Youth Home).

Regular Status - The status given to an employee who is retained in a position after completion of a probationary period.

Seasonal Hire - The status given to an employee hired to cover peak periods of work activity for a defined duration of time no longer than six months per year (i.e. Board of Elections).

Temporary Hire - The status given to an employee hired for a period not to exceed eleven (11) months.

Trainee Hire - The status given to an employee hired in a position who does not meet the minimum education and experience requirements for the job.

Transfer:

- Administrative Transfer - the movement of an employee from one position to another in the same department, typically below the employee's current pay band. The Administrative Transfer can only be authorized by the Department Director.
- Executive Transfer - the movement of an employee from one position to another, which is above the employee's current pay band. The Executive Transfer is limited to employees/positions that report directly to the County Manager and such transfer can only be authorized by the County Manager.
- Lateral transfer - the movement of an employee from one position to another in the same pay band.



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

## 5. PROCEDURES

### A. Position Review

- Before beginning the recruitment process, the hiring supervisor should review the position description questionnaire (PDQ), or position description and performance standards to ensure that all information is relevant and current.
- The supervisor must consult with Human Resources (Classification & Compensation) before any changes are made.

### B. Recruitment

- The recruitment process begins when the hiring department submits a job requisition intake request form.
- The vacancy may be advertised internally to give current employees an opportunity for advancement or transfer. Internal recruitment is strongly encouraged when filling positions for which an obvious career path exists.
- Consultants, independent contractors, or other contractual workers (i.e., temporary agency workers), temporary, relief, seasonal, interns and volunteers are not eligible for employment consideration as internal applicants.
- The County ensures that notices of available positions are published widely to attract a diverse pool of applicants.
- All employment advertisements must contain assurance of equal employment opportunity and must comply with federal laws and regulations and state statutes.
- Durham County strives to attract a highly qualified pool of candidates, with a strong emphasis on building a workforce that reflects a wide range of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences in compliance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as all applicable federal and state laws.
- The minimum recruitment period for all internal and external recruitment efforts will be five (5) calendar days. If a sufficiently qualified talent pool has not been developed within, the job posting will be extended for a minimum of 5 additional calendar days.



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

- All applicants interested in employment with the County must submit, via the County's Careers' website, a completed application. Applications must be received by the established closing date.
- A separate application must be submitted for each recruited vacancy for which the applicant applies, except when the posting reflects multiple vacancies of the same position within the same department, and the department requests pooling of the positions.
- Completed applications are required; however, resumes may be used as a supplement. All relevant information such as employment history, education and training must be listed on the application.
- Applications, resumes, transcripts, letters of reference and other accompanying information will become the property of the County and will not be returned.

## C. **Vacancy Postings**

- All vacancy announcements will include at a minimum, the position title, position number, posting period, a summary of essential job activities/functions, minimum educational and experience requirements, the hiring and/or salary range associated with the vacant position and the related knowledge, skills and abilities needed to successfully perform the essential job duties.

## D. **Screening and Referral**

- Human Resources is responsible for the initial screening of all applications, and for determining which applications will be forwarded to the hiring department for further consideration unless there is a written agreement to do otherwise.
- Human Resources will use the following standards when screening applications:
  - Applications of individuals who meet the minimum education requirements for positions in which no experience is required will be forwarded to the hiring department for further consideration.
  - If Human Resources is not able to readily discern whether the education meets the requirement, the application will be forwarded to the hiring department for review and for possible further consideration.



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

- In this instance, the hiring department serves as the subject matter expert to evaluate and determine if an applicant's education and/or experience will qualify the applicant for the position.
- When a combination of education and experience is required to meet the minimum requirements, the application will be forwarded to the hiring department for review and for possible further consideration.

## **D. Provisional Hire Trainee Hire**

- After an unsuccessful search (or searches) for a suitable candidate, the hiring department may submit a written request to hire a trainee.
- In the event that the original posting does not reflect the trainee appointment, the vacancy must be re-advertised for a minimum of five calendar days.
- When the search is completed, and a candidate is recommended, the hiring packet that is submitted to Human Resources must include a comprehensive training plan, along with a salary progression timeline.
- The training timeline will be in effect until the employee meets the full job requirements and cannot exceed two (2) years.

## **E. Tests/Examinations/Skills Assessments**

- All tests administered should represent the tasks performed on the job or the knowledge, skills, abilities, or work behaviors, which are necessary for successful job performance.
- These examinations, whether written, oral, or physical, must be reviewed and approved by Human Resources prior to being administered during the requisition intake process to ensure that they are job-related and valid.
- Any approved assessments must be administered to all interviewed candidates.



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

## **F. Interviewing**

- Interviews are conducted to:
  - A. give the interviewer an opportunity to collect enough information to determine the candidate's suitability for the job and
  - B. to give the candidate an accurate and complete picture of the job responsibilities so that they can make an informed decision about their suitability for the job.
- Interviews are scheduled by the department.
- Depending upon the size of the pool, hiring managers should interview between 3 - 5 candidates for each vacancy when possible.
- Candidates selected for interviews should meet the minimum qualifications of the position and have the competencies and skills to perform the duties of the position.
- Interview questions must be job-related, free from bias, and consistently asked of all interviewees.
- To grant each candidate an equal opportunity to present their credentials and to equip interviewers with consistent, job-relevant data to support objective decision-making, thorough and comparable data, hiring supervisors are required to submit all interview questions to Human Resources for review and approval prior to conducting interviews.
  - This includes both newly developed questions and modifications to previously approved ones.
- Responses to interview questions must be documented. Interview evaluations should be based on pre-determined selection criteria that must be consistently applied.
- Interviewers should independently compare each candidate against the selection criteria and not to other applicants.

## **G. Reference Checks**

- A minimum of two (2) references for external candidates is required.
- A minimum of one (1) reference is required for internal candidates, which must come from a current or recent supervisor within the organization, the current supervisor.



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

- Permission must be obtained by the recommended candidate to conduct a reference check. If permission is not granted and a reasonable explanation is not provided, the candidate should not be considered for the position.
- References should be able to attest to the candidate's competencies, skills, work ethics etc.
- If possible, one reference should be from the current employer/supervisor.
- Written references from previous employers/supervisors or anyone able to attest to the candidate's competencies etc. are acceptable.
- Newly minted graduates with no work history or individuals returning to the work force after a long hiatus may provide alternate forms of recommendations (i.e. letters from teachers, college professor, ministers, community leaders etc.).

## **H. Background Investigations**

- The County requires all recommended candidates, both internal and external, to undergo a background investigation, which includes but is not limited to:
  - A. a criminal background check, verification of driving record (when appropriate),
  - B. status of payment of Durham County taxes,
  - C. verification of highest degrees earned.
- For internal candidates, the investigation is initiated after the recommended candidate gives written consent to conduct the investigation.
- For external candidates, the investigation will commence after the candidate accepts the verbal conditional offer of employment from Human Resources.
- The investigation should be completed before the new hire commences employment with the County.
- While a candidate with a criminal history may not be barred from employment with the County, the history will be reviewed to determine whether the offer of employment should be rescinded, which will be determined by the Human Resources Director or their designee.





# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

- Falsification of information may result in the rescission of the offer of employment, disciplinary action or dismissal.
- The Human Resources Director or their designee will make the final decision as to whether the offer will be rescinded.

## **I. Pre-Employment Drug Screening**

- All recommended external candidates, who accept a verbal and written conditional offer of employment, must undergo a drug screening.
- All recommended candidates must sign a release form authorizing the County to conduct the drug screening. Human Resources will schedule the drug screening with a certified laboratory.
- After confirmation of negative test results, the recommended candidate must commence employment with the County within 45 calendar days from the date the test result was received by Human Resources.
- In accordance with State regulations, Human Resources will notify the recommended candidate of positive test results and the procedure to request a second screening of the same sample at their expense.
- A recommended candidate, who does not submit to a second test of the same sample, will no longer be considered for the position.
- A final positive test result of an illegal substance will disqualify a candidate from employment consideration.
- If a recommended candidate experiences a negative dilute drug screening result, then a second test of a new sample is allowed after the initial screening.
  - However, the cost of any additional test after the second test is the responsibility of the recommended candidate.
- Candidates who refuse to submit to drug screening will be disqualified from employment with the County for a period of 12 months.

## **J. Recruitment and Selection Documentation**

- The hiring department may only submit a recommendation after the vacancy has closed.



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

- The recommended candidate must have applied via the County's on-line job employment application system.
- All materials used in the recruitment process, including referred employment applications, interview questions and candidates' responses, notes, documents, rating forms, and reference information must be submitted to Human Resources.
- All recruitment and selection documentation will be maintained and accessible in accordance with the state and federal rules, regulations and laws.
- The hiring supervisor must submit a written justification which clearly indicates why the selected candidate was the best suited for the position based on the previously determined selection criteria.
- The hiring manager must inform all candidates interviewed that secondary employment must be disclosed and if hired, the secondary employment must be approved by the Department Director.

## **K. Credentials and Education Verification**

- Human Resources will verify all credentials required for the position.
- Degrees, foreign or domestic, must be obtained from accredited institutions.
- Falsification of application information will disqualify a candidate from employment consideration.

## **L. Approval of Recommended Candidate**

- Human Resources will notify the hiring manager of the approval of the recommended candidate.

### **1. Offers of Employment**

- Human Resources will extend to the candidate a verbal conditional offer (external candidates only) followed by a written conditional offer letter (both internal and external).
- The conditional offer letter will include the following:
  - a. salary
  - b. employment start date



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

- c. statement explaining that the candidate will serve a probationary period and that their performance will be evaluated at the end of the period for regular status
- d. conditional statement that unfavorable information uncovered during a background investigation etc. may result in the rescission of the offer of employment
- e. candidate must accept and return the signed offer letter

## **2. Re-advertisement of Positions**

- o The hiring supervisor may request re-advertisement of a position if a selection cannot be made from the original pool of referred applications.

## **3. Exceptions to Vacancy Posting Requirement**

- o Situations which may warrant waiving the recruitment process include:
  - a. Temporary Hires-
    - The posting requirement may be waived for a temporary hire if approved by Human Resources in advance.
    - Maximum length of employment for a temporary hire is no more than eleven (11) months.
  - b. If a new hire separates within 90 calendar days of hire,
    - departments may be allowed to select a candidate from the same applicant pool.
  - c. If there is a same position vacancy within 90 calendar days of hire,
    - departments may be allowed to select a candidate from the same applicant pool.
  - d. Positions created due to a reorganization.

## **M. Demotions and Transfers**

- An employee may be demoted or transferred by management due to departmental needs, a reduction in-force, at the employee's request, or due to the employee's unsatisfactory job performance.



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

- The employee must be notified in writing of the demotion or administrative transfer, the reason(s) for the action, and the effective date, new supervisor, and salary.
- The employee must meet the necessary qualifications for the position to which they are demoted or transferred.
- Demotions or transfers as a result of the disciplinary process must be documented using the steps outlined in the disciplinary process. [See Progressive Discipline Policy]
- An executive transfer which results in an increase in salary above the employee's current pay band is allowed only when authorized by the County Manager, or designee.

## **N. Interim Appointment**

- Interim appointments may be made for at least 60 calendar days, and less than one year, at the request of the Department Director and by approval of the Human Resources Director or County Manager.
- When an employee is placed in an interim appointment, there will be a written understanding that they will return to their former position and previous salary at the end of the interim appointment.
- All individuals appointed to serve in an interim capacity must meet the established minimum qualifications for the position to which they are appointed.
- Exceptions to this policy may only be granted under extraordinary circumstances and must be approved by the Human Resources Director or their designee.
- It is the responsibility of the Department Director to submit the appropriate paperwork by the deadline to ensure that the appointment does not extend past the one-year time frame.

## **O. Hiring Freeze Exception**

- The County Manager may impose a hiring freeze on all regular and seasonal/temporary positions.



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

- During a hiring freeze, Human Resources will not process a request to create a new position; fill an existing vacant position; reclassify a position; promote, demote, or transfer a position; advertise a position, or make an internal equity adjustment, unless a position has been approved for an exception.

## **P. Requesting an Exception from a Hiring Freeze**

- A Department Director may request that a position be exempted from a hiring freeze if the position meets one of the following criteria:
  - a. Public safety or the general welfare of the public will be put at risk if the position is not filled.
  - b. The position fulfills a critical function for the department and there will be a significant adverse effect on departmental operations if the position is not filled.
  - c. The position is funded from a source that does not obligate County funds.
    - Departments may be required to submit proof of the grant funding.
  - d. The position is mandated by federal, state, or local law or the position is necessary to meet federal or state reporting requirements.

## **Q. HIRING FREEZE EXCEPTION PROCEDURE**

- The hiring department must submit a Request for Exception from Hiring Freeze Form to Human Resources.
- All requests for exception must include position, position number and the financial implications associated with filling the position, if applicable.
- Human Resources will process and submit the request to the County Manager's Office.
- The County Manager's Office reviews the form(s), approves or denies the request, and notifies Human Resources of the decision.
- Human Resources will notify the Department Director, and the Budget Office of the decision, and if approved, the position will be posted for recruitment.

## **6. RESPONSIBILITY**

- It is the responsibility of Durham County supervisors and managers to uniformly administer, communicate, and ensure compliance.



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

- It is the responsibility of the Human Resources Department to interpret, monitor, and update the policy content.
- It is all employees' responsibility to comply with policy guidelines.
- Any violation or policy misuse may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

## REVISION HISTORY

Version ID	Revision Date	Author	Reason for Revision
v.1.0-1993	08-01-1993	Human Resources	Adopted
v.2.0-2014	01-20-2014	Human Resources	Reformat
v.3.0-2016	02-26-2016	Human Resources	Reformat
v.4.0-2016	09-01-2016	Human Resources	Reformat
v.5.0-2018	03-28-2018	Human Resources	Reformat
v.6.0-2019	10-01-2019	Human Resources	Reformat
v.7.0-2025	07-01-2025	Human Resources	Reformat, wording