

Merit-Based Hiring Program Step-By-Step Guide

Step 1 - Vacant Position:

In order to begin the hiring process there must be an open position available, either an existing vacancy or a newly created position. Positions are classified as part of the County's Position Classification Policy. If essential job functions of a position change substantially, the position is reviewed to ensure it is classified in the appropriate pay range.

Step 2 - Approval Process:

A department wishing to fill an existing vacancy must submit a Personnel Action Form (PAF) to the Human Resources Department.

A department wishing to create a new position must submit a Job Description Form to the Human Resources Department. If an equivalent position does not exist within the County, the Human Resources Department will evaluate the new position and assign a position title and pay grade. The Human Resources Department will forward the new position to the appropriate state funding agency for review and approval. Following the state funding agency's approval the position will be submitted to the Salary Board for approval.

All vacancies and new positions must be approved by the state funding agency to ensure reimbursement for the position, and further, be approved by the York County Board of Commissioners or Salary Board, respectively, at their regularly scheduled meetings. Salary Board consists of the three (3) County Commissioners and the County Controller; additionally, the President Judge, Public Defender, or a Row Officer has a right to vote on salary board requests affecting their departments.

Step 3 - Posting of the Vacancy:

Following Salary Board approval to create a new position or Board of Commissioners approval to fill an existing position, recruitment of candidates to fill vacant positions will be initiated by posting the vacancy internally within merit hire departments or County-wide to all employees and the public. Posting of positions will be in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement between the County of York and the Pennsylvania Social Services Union - Service Employees International Union (PSSU-SEIU).

The decision as to whether to post internally or county-wide externally is based on the position to be filled and the availability of candidates with the requisite skills among those promotable, transferable, and trainable within merit hire departments. Internal applicants will be given first consideration. Any preferred skills specific to the position, including the need for a bilingual employee with the ability to translate or transcribe, will be listed on the job posting in addition to the minimum education, training, and work experience requirements. **Applications will be accepted during the posting period only.**

Internal Postings: When recruiting internally within merit hire departments, a position will be posted according to the process established by any applicable collective bargaining agreement or on employee bulletin boards in all of merit hire departments. Only current county merit hire employees will be eligible to respond to this type of posting. Interested employees must complete a York County Employment Application upon request.

County-wide/External Postings: When it becomes necessary to recruit externally to fill a position, a county-wide posting will be placed on the County's website, on County Employee Bulletin Boards, to resource agencies for minorities, older adults, disabled individuals, and veterans; local higher educational institutions, job fairs and newspaper advertisements. County-wide/external postings are posted for a period of seven (7) calendar days, or as deemed appropriate. Interested individuals must complete a York County Employment Application through the county's website by the deadline date indicated on the posting.

Applicants may also visit the Department of Human Resources to review job postings and submit a completed employment application for each posted position. A separate employment application must be submitted for each posted position. A resume may supplement an application but cannot be substituted for an employment application.

Step 4 - Screening of Candidates:

The applications will be submitted to the Human Resources Department for screening to ensure the candidates satisfies the minimum education, experience and training requirements (MEETs) for the vacant positions. Each MEET is designed to fulfill the standards established by the appropriate state funding agency. Transcripts will be requested and reviewed to confirm education based upon the minimum requirements of the position. Applicants who do not satisfy the MEETs of the vacancy applied for, will not be considered nor advance through the selection process.

The department may use certain preferred skills to reduce the number of candidates considered for interview. These skills must be identified on the job posting for the particular vacancy. All candidates that meet the minimum qualifications and preferred skills if applicable will be interviewed. Any preferred skills that have been included in the job posting will be taken into consideration after the MEETs.

Once the employment application screenings have been completed, all remaining qualified applicants will be scheduled for assessments/interviews correlating with the vacant positions.

The order of criteria to screen candidates responding to a job posting is as follows:

1. The established minimum education, experience and training requirements for the job title listed in the job posting.
2. Any identified preferred skills that have been included in the job posting.
3. All candidates that pass the first two (2) filters will then be scheduled to complete any and all assessment(s) as indicated below:
 - a. Assessments
 - i. Management Readiness Profile (MRP), Management Success Profile (MSP), and Office Skill Assessment Battery (OSAB) "non-recommended" candidates will not be included in the candidate pool for interviews.
 - ii. All candidates that are "recommended" consequent to the MRP, MSP, or OSAB will be granted an interview for the vacant position.
 - iii. The "recommended" candidates and all fiscal candidates will be given a score in the assessment scoring section of the Applicant Tracking Worksheet.
 - iv. All candidates that receive a score on the fiscal assessment will be granted an interview.

- b. Interviews
 - i. Interviews will be rated by the interview panel and given a composite score.
 - ii. Department-specific writing samples will be given immediately after the interviews for writing sample assessments only.
 - iii. Candidates will be given a score in the assessment scoring section of the Applicant Tracking Worksheet for the assessment and interview, and the top combined total of the assessment and interview score will determine which candidate is extended a conditional offer of employment.

Step 5 – Assessments and Interviews:

Applicants within the social services support categories, and the Drug & Alcohol Case Management Specialist, Caseworker, Aging Care Manager, Information Specialist, Information Generalist, Prevention Program Specialist and Program Specialist job titles will be interviewed first followed by a department-specific writing sample assessment.

Applicants within the fiscal, entry level supervisor, and advanced management job titles will be assessed first and then interviewed.

The Human Resources Department will follow the Commissioners’ guidance regarding the selection process for department director positions in accordance with the state action plans for recruitment of key positions.

The following job categories will entail interviews followed by assessments:

Case Aides/Social Service Aides: Process includes an interview along with a department-specific writing sample provided by the candidate immediately following the interview. The writing sample will address written communications and reasoning skills. The scenario provided will be the same for the applicants in each specific pool. Additional assessments may be selected using an approved testing tool in addition to the writing sample.

Caseworkers/Care Managers/Case Management Specialists/Prevention Program Specialists/Information Specialists/Community Health Nurse/Information Technology Generalist: Process includes the interview, along with a department-specific writing sample provided by the candidate immediately following the interview. The writing sample will address written communications and reasoning skills. The scenario provided will be the same for the applicants in each specific pool.

The following job categories will entail assessments followed by interviews:

Clerical Staff: Assessments will consist of a timed typing test and/or OSAB.

Fiscal Staff: Applicants will be assessed using an approved testing tool. Modules include: Accounting-Business Documents; Accounting-Cost Accounting; Accounting-Credits and Debits; Accounting-Math Skills; Accounting-Terminology; Accounting-Accountant; Accounting-Accounts Receivable; Accounting-Advanced Accounting and Accounting-Bookkeeper.

Administrative Officer I/Entry Level Supervisors/Program Specialist I/Social Work Training & Development Specialist: Applicants will be assessed first using an approved testing tool (MRP). Only candidates that are “recommended” by this skills assessment will proceed in the interview process. The candidate with the top score of the interview will determine which candidate is extended a conditional offer of employment.

Program Specialist 2s/Casework Managers/Case Management Supervisor III/Administrative Officer II & III/Fiscal Officers/Program Specialist II: Applicants will be assessed first using an approved testing tool (MSP). Only candidates that are “recommended” by this skills assessment will proceed in the interview process. The candidate with the top score of the interview will determine which candidate if extended a conditional offer of employment.

A minimum three-member panel will be utilized for the interviews. This three-member panel will serve as the panel for all of the interviews of which the particular posting applies. The questions asked in the interviews will be uniform for each candidate for the particular vacant position. Job descriptions will be provided to candidates for review at the beginning of the interviews. Using the Interview Scoring Form, each interview panel member should individually score the candidate to determine the degree to which they possess the necessary experience, knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential functions of the vacant position. Second level interviews will occur if there is a “tie” in the ratings and no preference has been identified. The second level interview panel may consist of the three (3) panel members that initially interviewed the candidates or a new three-member panel. Once a panel is selected to conduct second level interviews, that panel will conduct all of the second level interviews for that position. New scoring sheets and questions will be necessary for second level interviews.

All applicants will be assessed using the same tools for consistency and fairness in rating candidates. Assessments within each category will be periodically reviewed. York County will cover the cost of the assessments and scores will be maintained by the Human Resources Department.

Step 6 - Candidate Selection:

Promotions and recruitment selections are made on a competitive basis. The candidate with the highest combined score will be offered the position first, followed by the next highest scoring candidate if the first candidate declines the extended employment offer. Multiple candidates may be hired for vacancies in the same job title, being extended offers in order of highest to lowest composite scores.

Consideration must be given in the following instances:

- *Veteran's Preference* – Non-applicable to promotional actions. Veteran's Preference is applicable to all merit hire departments. If a candidate self-identifies as a veteran of the United States Armed Forces and all other things are equal in assessing and interview scores, the position must be offered to the veteran. The Human Resources Department will be responsible for verification of veteran's status.
- *Spousal Preference* – Non-applicable to promotional actions. Spousal Preference is applicable to all merit hire departments. If a candidate self-identifies as a widow or widower of a deceased veteran or the spouse of a fully (100%) disabled veteran and all other things are equal in assessing and interview scores, the position must be offered to the spousal preferred candidate. The Human Resources Department will be responsible for verification of spousal status.
- *Aging Preference* – Non-applicable to promotional actions. Aging Preference is only applicable to the Area Agency on Aging (AAA). If a candidate self-identifies as being sixty (60) years of age or older and all other things are equal in assessing and interview scores, the position must be offered to the age preferred candidate. The Human Resources Department will be responsible for verification of age.

- *York County Preference* – Non-applicable to promotional actions. York County Preference is applicable to all merit hire departments. If a candidate is a York County resident and all other things are equal in assessing and interview scores, the position must be offered to the York County resident. The Human Resources Department will be responsible for verification of County residence.

If there is a tie of the top composite score on the Applicant Tracking Worksheet, the following should then be granted weight in the following order for the tie-breaker:

1. Candidate qualifies for a Veteran's Preference or Age Preference (for AAA positions only).
2. Candidate qualifies for a Spousal Preference.
3. Candidate qualifies for a York County Preference.

Following the interviews, a department representative will send copies of the Interview Scoring Forms and applicable writing sample results to the Human Resources Department.

External candidates who successfully complete the interview and assessment process, but are not selected, will be mailed a letter by the Human Resources Department and will be encouraged to re-apply to future postings.

External candidates who complete the assessment and are "not recommended" by the results will be mailed a letter by the Human Resources Department notifying them of this outcome. Scores from the assessment will be kept on file with the Human Resources Department. Candidates must wait six (6) months before being eligible to re-take the assessment for the same job title.

Internal candidates who successfully complete the interview and assessment process, but are not selected will be mailed a letter by the Human Resources Department and will be encouraged to re-apply to future postings. Scores from the assessments will be kept on file with the Human Resources Department. Candidates are encouraged to apply for future postings, but must wait six (6) months before being eligible to re-take the assessment for the same job title.

When previously assessed and recommended candidates apply for positions within the same job title, copies of their current assessments will be provided to the respective merit hire department. Interviews must be performed each time a new position opens, due to changes in the interview panel from position to position.

Departments can use the results from a previous hiring process to consider a candidate, but must meet the following criteria:

1. The job description is the same as the previous vacancy.
2. The interview panel must be the same as the previous vacancy's panel.
3. The candidate must submit a new application for employment for each adjusted posting.
4. The candidate has not received a "not recommended" on the MRP or the MSP.
5. Consideration must be within ninety (90) days of the original posting to hire the next candidate on an established list.

Assessment results will be retained by the Human Resources Department. External candidates who were not recommended based on the assessments may not apply for the same job title until after a six (6) month period has elapsed. The company that administers the assessments will retain the assessments for seven (7) years. All other results from the process will be retained by the Human Resources Department in conjunction with the County's Records Retention Policy.

Selected candidate(s) will be extended a verbal contingent offer of employment by the Human Resources Department. The contingent offer of employment is based upon the successful completion of the pre-employment screening process. Following the acceptance of a contingent offer of employment, the pre-employment screening process begins. The pre-employment screening process is required of every selected candidate, which includes but is not limited to criminal background checks, federal health care programs exclusion screening, drug screen, and reference checks. Following the successful completion of the pre-employment screening process, the Human Resources Department will confirm the verbal contingent offer of employment through an official written offer of employment to the candidate.

New employees will be scheduled to attend New Hire Orientation. Department specific training will be provided by each merit hire department in accordance with their regulations.

Job descriptions will be provided to new employees upon hire and will be made available to employees annually with the Employee Performance Reviews and throughout employment by request.