

# Chatham County Recruitment & Selection Policy

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# Chatham County Recruitment & Selection Policy

## Purpose

In accordance with Article I of the Chatham County Personnel Policy, the County has established a personnel system that will promote a fair and effective means of employee recruitment and selection, develop and maintain an effective and responsible workforce, and provide the means to remove unsatisfactory employees. This policy is established under the authority of N.C. GEN. STAT. §153A Article 5 and N.C. GEN. STAT. §126 of the General Statutes of North Carolina. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the recruitment and selection of qualified persons according to the merit principle of personnel administration and concept of affirmative action.

## Policy

It is the policy of Chatham County to assure that equal employment opportunity is afforded to all without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, political affiliation, whistleblower activity, parental status, and military service (past, present, or future), and against retaliation for participation in EEO activity or opposition to discrimination. Chatham County believes that hiring qualified individuals based on education, experience, knowledge, skills and abilities contributes to the overall success of the County. Each employee, while employed, is hired to make significant, positive contributions to Chatham County through that employment.

In hiring the most qualified applicants for positions, the following hiring processes will be used. This is to ensure that Chatham County hires new employees based on their knowledge, skills and abilities. Procedures and letters may be changed periodically based on the needs of the organization without changing the entire policy. The Director of Human Resources and Risk Management and Department Heads are responsible for ensuring compliance with these hiring procedures and practices. The Assistant Human Resources Director is responsible for managing the recruitment policies and processes as well as, in conjunction with the EEO Working Group, monitoring for adverse impact. The recruitment and selection process will be consistently applied, nondiscriminatory, and promote fairness, diversity, and integrity. All vacancies will be filled through open competition.

## Communication

Chatham County will implement strategies to inform employees, applicants, and the general public of the merit-based recruitment and selection plan. A copy of the plan will be housed on the County's internal and external website, [www.chathamcountync.gov](http://www.chathamcountync.gov). Persons with questions can contact Human Resources at 919-542-8200.

## Training

Chatham County will provide merit-based recruitment and selection training to manager/supervisors and

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Human Resources staff on a scheduled basis. Updates and revisions to the plan will be communicated through written materials and training sessions.

## Definitions

- a. **Adverse impact** - Practices or policies that result in the selection of members of a protected class at a rate lower than that of other groups
- b. **Applicant** – The individual that has submitted an expression of interest in employment by completing an application through the County’s online or printed job application form.
- c. **Applicant Tracking System (ATS)** – Database that enables the electronic handling of employment applications.
- d. **At-will Probationary Period** – Initial employment period when newly hired employees can be dismissed from employment for any reason that is not an illegal reason.
- e. **Conditional or contingent** – Something that is not yet certain because it depends on the existence or occurrence of another thing or event.
- f. **Employee selection documentation** – Also known as hiring records. These include the documents and actions taken for the hiring of each position such as applications, cover letters and resumes, interview questions, reference checks, employment test results, etc.

These records must be maintained for candidates that are hired as well as those that are not.

- g. **Follow-up Question** – A question asked to get a better understanding following an applicant response that was missing detail (*e.g., What exactly did you do? Were your efforts successful? What was your role on the project?*).
- h. **Hiring Manager** – The individual who will ultimately be the direct manager of the new hire.
- i. **Internal Candidates** – Employees who are full time, temporary with or without benefits, part time, or working as an emergency hire.
- j. **Job Analysis** - the process of gathering and analyzing information about the content and the human requirements of jobs, as well as, the context in which jobs are performed.
- k. **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA’s)**
  - i. knowledge - information which makes adequate performance on the job possible
  - ii. skill - a proficiency that is readily observable, quantifiable, and measurable (examples include skill in typing; skill in operating a vehicle)
  - iii. ability - capacity to perform an activity at the present time

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- l. **Minimum Qualifications** – The minimum training and experience requirements including knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA's) and competencies, and selective criteria included on the vacancy announcement.
- m. **Most Qualified** - the group of applicants who, to the greatest extent, possess qualifications which exceed the essential requirements described in the vacancy announcement
- n. **Performance Probationary Period** – A performance assessment period for employees who have changed jobs to allow sufficient opportunity for training, feedback, coaching and development in their new role.
- o. **Personnel Action Form** – a form used to report appointments, terminations, changes in status, compensation of an individual employee, etc. The Personal Action Form (PAF) should be used each time there is an action that should be recorded in the individual's personnel file or that requires payroll action. These forms are emailed to Human Resources staff.
- p. **Preferred Skills** - These skills include the ability and knowledge that would be favorable for the candidate during the application process. People who have preferred skills in addition with the required skills will be given more advantage than candidates who only have the basic requirement skills.
- q. **Qualified** - those applicants whose credentials indicate the possession of training and experience, selective criteria, and KSAs/competencies included in the vacancy announcement
- r. **Selective Criteria** - additional essential qualifications specifically related to the duties and responsibilities of the individual position.
- s. **Structured Interview** – An interview where the interviewer asks a specific set of questions of all applicants for a particular position. The main purpose of structured interviewing is to pinpoint job skills that are essential to the position.
- t. **Video Interview** - A face-to-face meeting that occurs with the participants in different locations using platforms such as Skype, GoToMeeting, Zoom, etc.

### Pre-recruitment activities

Job analysis is necessary only when there is a change in the duties and responsibilities that impacts qualifications required. Therefore, if a current, accurate job analysis already exists for a given job type, there is no need to conduct a new one for each individual vacancy. For example, in instances where there is a high volume of positions in a class, frequent turnover in a class, or little job change, there will likely not be a need to conduct a new job analysis each time a vacancy occurs. As long as there is a job analysis on file that accurately assesses the position, there is not a requirement to conduct another one.

The hiring manager and Human Resources staff should assure that the critical tasks, KSAs and training and experience requirements, including any selective criteria necessary to successfully perform the duties of the position, have been identified. In order to assure a timely and efficient process, generic KSAs (included on class specifications/job descriptions) may be utilized for recruitment and selection purposes where they are sufficient for differentiating qualifications of applicants.

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Information from the job analysis and/or the job description will guide the hiring manager in drafting the vacancy announcement. Human Resource staff will ensure the vacancy announcement meets the requirements of all state and federal policies.

The hiring manager and Human Resources staff will determine the appropriate option in posting a vacancy (internal or external). In addition, Human Resources staff consults with the hiring manager to determine additional recruitment sources, if needed, to target specific audiences, including professional listservs, newspapers, and specific colleges and universities.

Prior to the vacancy closing date, the hiring manager will determine any selection tool(s) that will be used in the final evaluation process. Any selection tool(s) utilized must objective, based upon job-related KSAs, and be consistently applied to all applicants in the final selection pool. Human Resources staff should be consulted for assistance and will be responsible for review of selection tools and procedures.

## Procedures

### ***Applicant Tracking System and Process***

1. Chatham County uses an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to electronically manage the recruitment and selection process in conjunction with the duties of the Human Resources Technician. Handwritten applications of employment are always accepted as long as they are received or postmarked by the closing date.
2. All job applications are sorted by position as they are received and placed in a folder by position and department. A customized link is sent to members of the interview panel to begin application review. The department head and/or hiring manager will be asked to provide the names of staff members who will need access to the job application folder.

### ***Request for Job Ad Publication***

1. An email request is sent to Human Resources to have a vacant position advertised. Human Resources staff will verify the vacancy.
2. After verification of the vacancy, Human Resources will send the last job announcement to the hiring manager for edits. The closing date will be set for two (2) weeks from date of publication unless otherwise requested. The posting will also be shared with the local Employment Security Commission as well as the County's social media sites and any other professional listserv or organization, college or university and other appropriate platforms.

### ***Personnel Action Forms***

1. A personnel action must be completed for every new hire at least three (3) days prior to the applicant's first day of work.
2. All applicable fields of the personnel action form should be completed and the hiring manager must ensure that the job advertisement is current and accurate.
3. Personnel actions may be initiated by a supervisor or manager, but must be approved electronically by the Department Head (or designee) prior to forwarding to the Human Resources Department.

## ***Job Postings***

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1. All job openings, except emergency hires, are posted on the employment section of the County's website and its social media sites.
2. The hiring manager should consult with the Human Resources Analyst in advance of creating job announcement, if the job description needs to be updated.
3. Hiring managers, in consultation with Human Resources, will determine if the job posting will be posted externally or as internal only, if applicable.
4. All County job postings must include the following information:
  - a. Job title, location and contact person
  - b. Job summary
  - c. Minimum qualifications
  - d. Salary
  - e. Position closing date
5. Job postings should contain any information critical for applicants to know, such as: irregular schedules, hiring range, deadlines for required certifications, subject to on-call or emergency call-back, or requirement for work during severe weather/emergency conditions.
6. Jobs will remain posted until the closing date. All positions, except emergency hires, must be posted for a minimum of seven (7) calendar days. Postings listed as "open until filled" can be removed from the website after seven (7) days without any advanced notice at the discretion of the hiring manager. If a hiring manager would like to change a posting with a specific defined end date, he or she must obtain the Department Head's written approval; positions still must be posted for the minimum seven (7) day period.

### ***Applicant Selection***

1. Applicants must meet the minimum qualifications for the position for which they applied to be considered. Hiring managers can indicate specific preferred skills, certifications or experience that can also be used to pre-screen applicants. Human Resources staff will evaluate the candidate's qualifications based on the minimum job requirements.
2. For some positions, the hiring manager may wish to offset the minimum educational qualification if the applicant has additional years of related work experience; this is referred to as an "Equivalency". [Guidelines for using equivalencies are attached.](#)
  - a. Hiring managers are not required to phone screen or interview all of the applicants that meet the minimum qualifications and manager preferences. Some positions generate large numbers of applicants, and interviewing each referral would be impractical. The hiring manager(s) should interview only the qualified applicants who possess the mix of skills and experience that would add the most value to the department, and would make the applicant successful in the position.
3. Employee selection documentation must be submitted to the Human Resources Technician within three (3) days of the applicant's accepted offer of employment.

### ***Internal Candidates***

1. Internal candidates may apply for any posted position.
2. Completion of the probationary period is not required prior to applying for a posted position. Employees must apply by completing an application on the Chatham County website. If the employee's application on file is less than two (2) years old, they may request that application to be used. The application must be completed and submitted

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before the closing date for the position to be considered.

3. All applicants must meet the minimum requirements and hiring manager preferences for a posted vacancy to be considered. Applicants are considered on the basis of their qualifications as compared to those of other applicants, both internal and external, in the applicant pool.
4. Once identified as a finalist for the position, internal candidates will have their references checked including the employee's direct supervisor and/or other supervisors the employee may have had while employed by the County.
5. Once an employee transfers to a new position, the employee will enter into a performance probationary period for the new position unless employed by Public Health or Social Services.

### ***Recruitment Advertising***

1. The Human Resources Department is responsible for advertising the job on the employment section of the Chatham County website and social media pages. Job vacancies are also shared with the Employment Security Commission (ESC), NC Works and other appropriate professional organizations and listservs.
2. Positions can be advertised externally to other professional listservs/organizations based upon need and available budget. Chatham County runs one (1) block advertisement year-round in the local newspaper.
3. The requesting department is responsible for payment for any external advertisement. External advertisements placed by departments must be reviewed by a Human Resources Department representative prior to placement. External advertisements should not be placed until the position is officially posted on the County's website.
4. Departments that fall under the Office of State Human Resources (OSHR) (i.e. Public Health Department and the Department of Social Services) are allowed to post job vacancy announcements internally. Internal job postings will be posted for a minimum of seven (7) calendar days on the employee internal website and in the department's common areas. Internal postings must be approved by the Human Resources and Risk Management Director. All other departments are required to post externally.

### ***Interview Process***

- a. The hiring manager, with assistance from the Human Resources staff (if the hiring manager desires), will screen applications and/or resumes prior to scheduling interviews. Phone screenings with applicants are strongly encouraged to further narrow the applicant pool.
- b. Initial interviews may be conducted either by:
  - i. One-on-one interview with hiring manager
  - ii. Panel interviews, as needed for some positions
  - iii. Video interview (i.e. Zoom, GoToMeeting, Skype, etc.)
  - iv. Structured interviews are required; however, follow-up questions are allowed and encouraged. This straightforward approach makes it easier for the interviewer to evaluate and compare applicants fairly.
- c. Human Resources staff members are available to provide technical assistance in interview and test

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question development, process development and interview scheduling and coordination.

- d. Employee selection documentation used in the hiring process must be maintained by the Human Resources Department for a minimum of three (3) years. All interview materials need to be submitted to the Human Resources Technician within three (3) days of the applicant's accepted offer of employment. Hiring managers are responsible for attaching the following items:
  1. All interview questions and notes from all panel members
  2. Reference forms and reference checking notes for all applicants
  3. Any interview-related tests taken by the applicants

The hiring manager is responsible for making sure that all interview panels are diverse and inclusive. For assistance with this area, the hiring manager may contact Human Resources.

- e. The hiring manager or supervisor has ultimate responsibility for making a hiring recommendation; the Department Head has the final hiring decision. Personnel actions must be submitted to Human Resources within three (3) days of the applicant's first day of work.
- f. Human Resources will notify any applicants who are interviewed, but not selected for each position upon notification from the hiring manager that the position has been successfully filled.

### ***Reference Checks, Background Checks, and Drug Testing, Physical Exam***

1. The hiring manager will check references for all internal and external finalists, prior to submitting the personnel action form. Human Resources can also check references upon request. Finalists are the top candidates identified for the position. One to a maximum of three finalists may be identified for each open position.
  - a. Three references are required to be provided by candidates and these references should be contacted by the hiring manager or Human Resources.
  - b. Three attempts are to be made to contact each reference. In the event that the hiring manager or Human Resources is unable to contact all three references, a minimum of two reference checks are required. If unable to contact and conduct the required minimum of two reference checks, the hiring manager will contact the applicant for additional references.
  - c. If a letter of recommendation is provided in lieu of a reference, a hiring manager will contact and confirm the letter of recommendation.
  - d. Professional references are strongly preferred, in some instances personal references will be accepted such as references from former professors, teachers, or volunteer work supervisors, if the candidate has no, or very limited, work experience.
2. For internal candidates or candidates that previously employed by the County, the hiring manager will contact the selected employee's direct supervisor and/or other supervisors the employee may have had while employed by the County. These current or previous supervisors can be used as the required references, but still the minimum must be completed (Three references are required, and two references must be successfully contacted).
3. Reference forms, reference checking notes, or other reference documentation are to be submitted to the Human Resources Technician.
4. The hiring manager and/or Human Resources will provide the appropriate information to the applicant for completion of substance abuse testing and, if applicable, a physical exam. No pre-employment testing may occur until an applicant has been given a conditional offer of employment. Exceptions to this part of the policy include positions that are financially sensitive, are in direct

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contact with minors, or Public Safety positions.

5. Release forms must be completed prior to conducting background checks for both internal and external candidates.
6. Employment with Chatham County will be made contingent upon successful clearance of reference checks, educational verification, background checks, and substance abuse testing. There may be other conditions that are applicable depending on the requirements of the position (e.g., physical exam, TB testing, etc.).

## ***Security of Information***

1. Human Resources and Risk Management is responsible for securing information such as Social Security numbers, birthdates and addresses received for conducting background checks, educational verification, etc. Exceptions to this provision should be discussed with Human Resources prior to collection of this information, and the request will be reviewed and considered on a case-by-case basis.
2. Human Resources is also responsible for ensuring that after the three-year (3) period, the information is shredded or otherwise destroyed to reduce the possibility of identity theft.

## ***Confirming Job Offers***

Before offering employment, Human Resources must evaluate the applicant's qualifications based on the minimum requirements. New employees must also pass a criminal record check and driving history. Some departments also require pre-employment drug testing. Once the hiring supervisor receives clearance from Human Resources, the hiring manager/supervisor may confirm the job offer with the applicant.

## ***New Hire Pay***

1. Human Resources will evaluate all salary offers above the minimum of the salary grade. Salary approvals will be processed subject to the following:
  - a. The Department Head must approve the hire and indicate the amount of salary approved.
  - b. There must be adequate budgeted funding to cover the salary.
  - c. The salary must not create or exacerbate pay equity or compression issues (this means the Department Head must consider the pay/experience of the departments' current employees in making the salary recommendations.) The Human Resources and Risk Management Director will review the offer for cross-departmental equity.
2. All approvals must be obtained prior to a job offer being made.
3. Department Heads are responsible for ensuring consistency in hiring individuals above the minimum rate. Offers above the hiring rate must obtain approval by the Human Resources Director and County Manager.

## ***Orientation***

4. New employees are required to participate in New Employee Orientation at the first available session. New Supervisors Training is offered monthly.
5. New employees should also be oriented to their particular job and department by the supervisor (or

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designee), including an overview of departmental policy and procedures. New employees must be informed at the time of employment of their probationary period requirements.

## **Miscellaneous Information & Attachments**

Technical Assistance is available from the Human Resources Department.

[Background Check Form](#)

[Sample Reference Check Form](#)

[Structured Interview Guide for Hiring Managers](#)

[Applicant Ranking Form](#)

[Interview Question Template](#)

[Educational Equivalencies](#)

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