

SCREENING AND HIRING GUIDELINES

This guideline is a resource for individuals serving on church, school and other boards of Seventh-day Adventists organizations who are involved in interviewing and selecting candidates for positions authorized by the Conference. These screening and hiring guidelines are intended to educate participants on their legal responsibilities as representatives of the Conference, to ensure that participants meet their legal, ethical, moral, and spiritual responsibilities, and to promote accountability, trust, and equal employment opportunities in the Church workplace.

- The Conference is an equal opportunity employer.

Equal Employment Opportunities

- The Conference has the right, under federal law, to restrict employment to Seventh-day Adventists.
- The Conference is subject to other federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination in recruiting, selection and hiring based on race, color, sex, age, ethnicity or disability.
- As a volunteer serving on a committee or Board for a church or school and participating in screening and selection of Conference **[DISCUSS: or “local hire”]** employees, you are also subject to these non-discrimination laws.
- Your failure to screen and recommend applicants in compliance with legal requirements and the Conference’s equal employment opportunity policy can result in significant liability and expense.

Employment Application

- An application form provided by the Conference should be completed for all positions.
- Ensure that the applicant answers all questions on the employment application and does not omit any information requested on the form.
- Review the application to determine if the applicant’s responses provide sufficient information on his/her background and qualifications.

- Review the applicant's work history to determine the existence of, and be prepared to request an explanation for, any "gaps" in employment.

Verification of Information Provided by the Applicant

- Confirm, if applicable, an applicant's current certification.
- Inquire regarding any complaints filed with the state agency or former employers against the applicant.
- Check references, especially those employers who employed the applicant in the same position which he is presently seeking.
- If the applicant is seeking a position of trust (e.g., with children or other vulnerable individuals or money), it should be made clear to the reference provider that the applicant is being considered for a position of trust.
- Review the results of the Conference's criminal background check, and the check of an applicant's driving record if the applicant is seeking employment in a position that involves driving responsibilities.
- Document in writing all information obtained regarding the applicant (especially verbal references) and include with the application.

Interview

- The focus of the interview should be the requirements of the position. The interviewer must understand the job, what it entails, its responsibilities, and the essential requirements for the job.
- If there are any gaps in employment history or inconsistencies on the application, question the applicant to confirm the validity of information.
- Take notes of all job-related information elicited during the interview (but not on the application form or resume).
- Limit your questions to those that are both relevant and legally permissible. Avoid asking questions about the applicant's national origin, sex, pregnancy status or future family plans, or age.

- Confirmation and consideration of an applicant's sex is only permissible where this characteristic is directly job-related (i.e., bona fide occupational qualification for residence hall staff).
- Examples of prohibited and permitted interview questions are attached for your review.

Uniform Hiring Criteria

- Use uniform and consistent selection criteria on which to base a hiring recommendation.

Recordkeeping and Confidentiality

- The information gathered for the purposes of screening candidate should be discussed only with the candidate and those directly involved in the screening and hiring process.
- Information on candidates should not be discussed or shared with persons outside of the selection committee or Board, including spouses.
- Notes taken during interviews should be provided to the Board chair and retained for all candidates for at least one (1) year.

Reasonable Accommodation Obligations

- The Conference is subject to the prohibitions against disability discrimination under federal and state laws.
- The Conference also has a legal duty under the Americans with Disabilities Act and similar state laws to "reasonably accommodate" persons with disabilities in the application and selection process, as well as for employment opportunities unless doing so would create any "undue hardship."