



Administrative Policy No. 18.16

Subject: DSHS Hiring Processes

Information Contact: DSHS Human Resources

Authorizing Source: Chapter [41.06 RCW](#) State Civil Service Law
Chapter [357-01 WAC](#) Definitions
Chapter [357-16 WAC](#) Recruitment, Assessment and Certification

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Purpose

This policy outlines responsibilities and provides guidance that will be applied to all activities related to pre-employment.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) provides equal employment opportunity to its employees, job seekers, and applicants for employment.

Scope

This policy applies to the process for recruiting, screening, and assessing, and hiring job applicants.

If a provision of this policy conflicts with a collective bargaining agreement ([CBA](#)), or where the CBA provides additional requirements, the CBA will supersede the provision in which it conflicts for represented employees.

Additional Guidance

[WAC 357-16-075](#) Can the employer apply screening methodologies that would limit the number of eligible applicants considered or admitted to an examination?

Administrative policy [7.01](#) - American Indian policy

Administrative policy [18.17](#) - employment of relatives or household members

Administrative policy [18.19](#) - appointments and reemployment

Administrative policy [18.26](#) - disability reasonable accommodation

Administrative policy [18.58](#) - Washington management service

Administrative policy [18.66](#) - discrimination, harassment, and other inappropriate behaviors

Administrative policy [18.75](#) - drug and alcohol - free workplace

Administrative policy [18.84](#) - employment references

Collective bargaining agreements

DSHS Form [03-425](#) request to convert non-permanent appointment to permanent

DSHS Form [03-475](#) release of information form

Flexible agency resource management (FARM) system

Definitions

Applicants: People who apply for jobs with DSHS.

Assessing applicants: A process where DSHS applies assessment methods to determine which applicants' skills and abilities, based on the information submitted, meet the criteria to be considered further or admitted to an examination.

Candidate(s): An applicant or applicants who meet the minimum qualifications for the position, and successfully complete all assessment requirements, if any, for a specific position and is considered eligible for further consideration. Assessment methods for candidates may include but are not limited to: screening, interviewing, testing, and reference checking/employment verification; employee personnel file review; or background checks. ([WAC 357-16-125](#), [WAC 357-16-130](#), [WAC 357-16-135](#), [WAC 357-16-140](#))

Contingent offer of employment letter: A letter sent by an appointing authority or designee to the chosen candidate with the terms of the offer of employment contingent on successful completion of an item (for example, background check, certification completion, or drug test).

Job seeker: An individual who has indicated to the employer an interest in employment by completing a preliminary profile or by submitting an application.

Screening: The processes used to determine an applicant's qualification match to job class specifications for a position to which they have applied. The screening process may include a variety of elements such as: the employment application, cover letter, or resume'. For

purposes of this policy, this definition applies to the screening processes used by the DSHS human resources division talent acquisition program.

Talent acquisition program: The program staff within DSHS that perform duties such as providing consultation to DSHS administrations on hiring permanent and non-permanent positions within DSHS; preparing job ads, sourcing and outreach efforts, and pre-employment review of applications to job class specifications.

Policy

A. General guidance

1. Job ads, sourcing, and outreach efforts must comply with applicable state and federal [Equal Employment Opportunities](#) rules and laws governing non-discrimination in pre-employment recruiting, while utilizing best practices that support equity, diversity, access, and inclusion. See administrative policy [18.66](#) discrimination, harassment, and other inappropriate behaviors.
2. An applicant or job seeker requiring reasonable accommodation in the process is responsible for requesting the reasonable accommodation. See administrative policy [18.26](#) disability reasonable accommodation.
 - a. The appointing authority or designee is responsible for providing the reasonable accommodation unless it can be demonstrated that the accommodation will cause undue hardship.
 - b. The appointing authority or designee must consult with HRD to determine undue hardship.
3. Applications for public employment, including the names of applicants, resumes, and other related material are confidential (). ([RCW 42.56.250](#)).

B. Human resources division talent acquisition program will:

1. Provide consultation for filling Washington general service (WGS), Washington management service (WMS), and exempt management service (EMS) positions. This includes permanent, on-call, project, acting, and non-permanent positions.
 - a. Use intake processes to gather information about the position, its requirements, and develop strategies for recruiting, including the review of positions as outlined in [WAC 357-16-130](#).
2. In collaboration with hiring managers and supervisors, set expectations for the processes, where appropriate for the position.

3. Develop job ads that:
 - a. Describe the job; and
 - b. Adhere to the [writing for the web guidelines](#) established by the office of communications.
 4. Ensure that job ads are placed on the required state job board and distributed widely to ensure inclusion.
 5. Track all applicants and retain applications as required for retention purposes.
 6. Perform pre-screening review to job class specifications of employment applications, applying job class specification criteria, when applicable.
 - a. Per [WAC 357-16-110](#) identify and apply veterans preference in accordance with [RCW 41.04.010](#) and [RCW 73.16.010](#);
 - b. Include up to 3 affirmative action applicants if 3 applicants are not already identified ([WAC 357-16-135](#)).
 7. Use screening and assessment methods determined to best evaluate whether an applicant's qualifications match a class or a position. Screening methods must be based on job analysis and may include, but are not limited to, reviewing resumes, interviewing applicants, and developing supplemental questionnaires for applicants to provide additional information. ([WAC 357-16-070](#)).
 8. Provide the applicant documents to the hiring manager.
- C. Hiring manager or supervisor:**
1. Is strongly encouraged to use the talent acquisition program to recruit for non-permanent, WMS, and EMS vacancies.
 2. Will consider all eligible applicants.
 3. Will collaborate with the talent acquisition program when using job based and inclusive assessment methods ([WAC 357-16-070](#)).
 - a. Assessment methods may include one or more of the following:
 - i. Preliminary interactions to determine applicants' qualifications and obtain clarifying information;
 - ii. Structured interview process; or
 - iii. Job related activities to determine skills, ability, and suitability.
 4. Will collaborate with the human resources division to remove the name of an applicant from an applicant pool.

- b. Requests will include information explaining the basis for the request.
 - c. When a name is removed from an applicant or candidate pool under [WAC 357-16-155](#), the hiring manager or supervisor must notify the applicant at the time of the removal.
 - i. The notice must be in writing, specify the reason for the removal, and explain the right to request a review of the removal under the provisions of [WAC 357-16-170](#), [357-16-175](#) and [357-16-180](#).
- 5. Will obtain a signed DSHS 03-475 [release of information form](#).
 - a. Complete reference checks prior to an employment offer as outlined in administrative policy [18.84 employment references](#).
 - b. Guidance on appropriate and non-discriminatory reference check questions is provided by the talent acquisition program upon request.
- 6. Will conduct a personnel file review on current and former state employees in accordance with administrative policy [18.84 employment references](#).
- 7. Will conduct employment verification, reference checks, background checks, and applicable character, competency, and suitability review for DSHS covered positions, when applicable for chosen candidate(s).
- 8. Will consult with HRD if considering sponsoring an individual in connection with an employment-based visa.
- 9. Will submit a hiring packet to their appointing authority or designee for approval. The hiring packet at a minimum will contain:
 - a. Resume’;
 - b. Interview notes;
 - c. Application; and
 - d. Reference checks.
- 10. Will submit all hiring documentation to the imaging unit to be placed into the management operations document imaging system (MODIS) to MODIS for each hiring decision within 30 days of hiring decision, unless they receive an extension from HRD.
 - a. The talent acquisition program will provide instructions on how to prepare documents for retention.
 - b. To request documents from MODIS, reach out to your [HRD business partner](#)
- 11. Will be accountable for completing all appropriate actions. ([FARM](#))

D. Appointing Authority or designee:

1. Will conduct character, competency, and suitability reviews on DSHS covered positions where applicable.
2. Will provide hiring decision, to include approval, to hiring manager or supervisor.
3. Will endorse [best practices](#) that support equity, diversity, and inclusion; eliminate barriers; and improve employment opportunities in hiring processes.
4. Will follow [HRD guidelines](#) when determining whether and how to make a contingent offer of employment.
5. Will consult with HRD for contingent offers of employment deviating from background checks and drug test process (i.e. educational, licensure requirements, vaccine requirements).
6. Will use talent acquisition program to fill vacant WGS positions with a permanent appointment.
7. Is strongly encouraged to use the talent acquisition program to recruit for non-permanent, WMS, and EMS vacancies.
8. Will review and adhere to administrative policy [18.17](#) employment, relationships, and the hiring structure.
9. May convert a non-permanent appointment to permanent appointment using [DSHS Form 03-425](#) if the vacancy was initially advertised by the talent acquisition program, and that applicant participated in the competitive hiring process.

⁰¹ Housekeeping updated links throughout policy due to SharePoint migration.

⁰² Link updates 2024 SharePoint move.

ⁱ Housekeeping update to section A.3 to correct a statutory reference.

¹ Removed references to AP 18-25.