



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CITY OF CHICAGO

CITY OF CHICAGO CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY FOR THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Effective Date: June 5, 2019

Policy Statement

This policy provides the procedure for an Interviewer to disclose an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest they may have regarding a specific candidate.

Overview

The City of Chicago follows the Hiring Plan and is committed to ensuring the fair and equitable treatment of all candidates for positions with the City. It is the responsibility of the Interviewer to opt out of conducting an interview or disclose to the Human Resources Liaison (“HRL”) any personal or other relationship that would allow their objectivity to be questioned. Further, the Department of Human Resources (“DHR”) Recruiter “shall ensure that the selection is based on the Hiring Criteria, the interviewers’ evaluation forms, test results, the applicable terms of a CBA, if any, and other relevant factors and not on any Political Reasons or Factors or other Improper considerations.” [City of Chicago Hiring Plan Chapter V, Section B (12)]. In order to ensure the integrity of the hiring process certain procedures have been established for disclosure of any personal or other relationships between every individual involved in the hiring/selection process and prospective candidates.

This Policy is enacted to ensure that each Department Head, HRL, DHR Recruiter, Hiring Manager, and Interviewer understands and follows the proper procedures for disclosure by the individuals involved in the hiring/selection process of any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest that may exist and when recusal is required and when recusal is not necessary.

Procedures

I. Guidelines for Recusal

A. Relationships Requiring Automatic Recusal include:

1. Family Relationships including a spouse or any of the following, whether by blood or by adoption: parent, child, brother or sister, aunt or uncle, niece or

nephew, grandparent, grandchild, cousin, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather or stepmother, stepson or stepdaughter, stepbrother or stepsister, half-brother or half-sister.

2. Romantic Relationships including former romantic relationships

3. Legal and Quasi-Legal Relationships

a. Examples include when an individual involved in the hiring/selection process and a candidate are participants in a lawsuit, work-related or private; or when an Interviewer has reason to know he or she is the subject of an administrative complaint filed by the candidate such as an EEO or Violence in the Workplace complaint.

b. Business or contractual relationships

B. All other types of relationships will be assessed on a case by case basis.

1. Friendships, including work friendships, where individuals socialize outside of work. This would not include a mere work acquaintance, an internal candidate, a supervisor/supervisee relationship, or a former employee, unless additional factors are present.

2. Any other relationship where an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest may exist

II. Disclosure Process

A. The Hiring Department's HRL shall give each Interviewer the resumes and other relevant application materials of all the qualified candidates scheduled for interviews at least seven (7) days before the interviews begin.

B. For Senior Manager titles, the HRL shall give each Interviewer the resumes of all qualified candidates set for interviews at least four (4) days before the interviews begin.

C. Interviewers shall review the resume(s) within 24 hours of receiving them from the HRL in order to determine if they have any personal or other kind of relationship with one or more of the candidates.

D. If the Interviewer does have a personal or other kind of relationship with one or more of the candidates, as listed in Section I of this Policy, they are to disclose this relationship to

the HRL, in writing, a minimum of 48 hours prior to the scheduled start time of the interviews.

- E. If there is any question or concern about an Interviewer's actual, probable or perceived ability to remain objective to the candidate, they should provide the written disclosure.
- F. The written disclosure, preferably done via email, should be sent to the HRL and must contain the following information:
 - a. The name of the Interviewer and the candidate;
 - b. A description of the relationship between the Interviewer and candidate;
 - c. The length of time the Interviewer has known the candidate; and
 - d. A description of why the Interviewer believes there would be or would not be a conflict of interest if they were to interview the candidate.
- G. Once the HRL receives the written disclosure from the Interviewer, they are to immediately send that disclosure to their Department Head or his or her designee as well as their DHR Recruiter.
- H. The Department Head or their designee and the DHR Recruiter will discuss and assess the disclosure in relation to the guidelines explained above and determine whether a recusal is appropriate. If the Department Head and Recruiter disagree on recusal, then the final decision will be made by the Commissioner of the Department of Human Resources or his/her designee.
- I. The Department Head or their designee and the DHR Recruiter will inform the Interviewer in writing, within 24 hours of the scheduled interview time, whether or not a recusal will be necessary.
- J. It is the responsibility of the Interviewer to make sure the conflict is resolved before the interview is set to begin. If the Interviewer has not received a response in writing within 24 hours of the scheduled interview time they are to immediately contact the HRL and/or Recruiter. If they are unable to reach the HRL or the Recruiter they should contact the Deputy Commissioner of Employment Services in the Department of Human Resources.
- K. The HRL and/or Recruiter shall add a copy of the written disclosure as well as the written response to the Hiring File.

III. Failure to Disclose a Conflict of Interest

A. Consequences of individuals involved in the hiring/selection process failing to disclose an actual, potential or perceived conflict include:

1. The hiring sequence may be stopped pursuant to the Hiring Plan.
2. Any individual who fails to disclose an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.