Policy: The Division will obtain thorough and job-relevant background information on all new hires and transferees.

Purpose: To ensure that MHDS agencies access the best information available to make hiring decisions.

Procedures:

I. Each applicant or transferee must provide a current and complete state application form [NPD-1] that will be filed in the agency personnel jacket.

II. Central Records Checks:

A. When an application does not show previous state employment, agency personnel staff must confirm this report with the Central Records office of State Personnel.

B. Agencies are to obtain Central Records checks for all applicants with current or previous state employment.

C. For agencies without easy access to Central Records' office in Carson City, Division central office personnel staff will complete these reviews.

D. If there are no employee evaluations available from Central Records for a person who has worked for the state, the hiring agency is expected to contact the state agency with whom the applicant has worked.

III. Reference Check Requirements:

A. The agency must document at least three reference checks for each applicant or transferee, at least one of which is to be from the current or last previous employer.

B. It is expected that all of these references will be from current or previous supervisors.

C. Personal and/or educational references may be used for applicants having either no work experience or fewer than three previous employers. Agency discretion may be used for applicants who have a long history of employment with a single employer.

D. References from past employers may be obtained in writing or through telephone calls. References obtained through telephone calls must document the date of the reference check and the name and title of the individual giving the reference.

E. It is generally helpful to ask applicants to identify and provide contact information for references, specifying that these should be supervisors if possible.

F. In addition, it is also acceptable for supervisory or personnel staff to use information provided on the application to contact supervisors whose names have not been provided by the applicant.

G. The only restriction on this is when applicants have requested (through checking a box on the application) that their current employer not be contacted unless necessary to determine their qualifications for the position. When this request has been made, it is recommended that agencies inform applicants of the intention to contact the current employer before doing so, and only if the applicant is being seriously considered for a position.

IV. Reference Check Information on New Hires or Transferees Should Include:

- Employee name and title while in their employ;
- Length of employment (full-time or part-time);
- Reason for leaving;
- Would employer rehire employee;
- Completion of assigned duties;
- Quality of work;
- Flexibility in adapting to change;
- Ability to accept criticism;
- Cooperation/Dependability;
- Judgment ;
- Leave usage (vacation/sick leave). Caution must be taken <u>not</u> to inquire about the extent of <u>personal</u> sick leave, which could elicit information about a disability. Additionally, use of FMLA leave may not be used to adversely affect an applicant's status;
- Ability to communicate orally;
- Ability to communicate in writing (when relevant to the job); and
- When relevant to the job, interest and skill in working with persons with disabilities.
- Reference checks may include additional job-related questions relevant to the job content or work environment of the specific position.

V. <u>Written documentation of the above questions must be submitted to the agency personnel representative prior to employment being offered.</u>

VI. After the Central Records check and/or agency reference checks are completed for persons with State work history, an MHDS agency's hire of that person is subject to approval by the Division central office (Deputy Director or Personnel Officer).

VII. The agency director or designee shall review all applications and references on all new employees or transferees prior to employment. If all required documentation has not been obtained, the agency director is responsible for having the employee placed on the payroll.

VIII. Appointments to positions at grade 40 and above, with certain exceptions, must also be approved by the DHHS Director's Office. Completed packets of information for this purpose are to be forwarded to the Personnel Technician in the MHDS central office.

IX. The agency director may postpone obtaining reference checks prior to placing an employee on the payroll as an emergency hire.

X. Agencies will use a Liability Risk Questionnaire for prospective hiring of licensed clinicians. The questionnaire should be completed by the applicant and submitted to the agency prior to an offer for hire.

XI. Each agency shall develop policies and procedures to implement the provisions of this policy or shall incorporate this policy into the agency policy and procedure manual.

Administrator

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