

Procedure: 4.1.1p3. (III.B)

Interviewing and Selection Guidelines

Revised: July 20, 2021; and July 20, 2016.

Last Reviewed: September 16, 2022; November 18, 2019; and July 20, 2016.

Adopted: July 20, 2016.



I. PURPOSE:

The Technical College System of Georgia provides equal employment opportunities concerning all employment practices, including recruitment. It administers these practices without regard to race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, religion, disability, age, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, disabled veteran, protected Veteran, or citizenship status (except in those particular circumstances permitted or mandated by law).

TCSG is committed to efforts to maintain a qualified workforce reflecting the diverse community it serves/represents. The guidelines outlined in this procedure are designed to promote effective interviewing and selection practices within all TCSG work units, to provide equal employment opportunities, and provide promotion and leadership opportunities for current TCSG employees.

II. RELATED AUTHORITY:

O.C.G.A. § 20-4-11 – Powers of Board.

O.C.G.A. § 20-4-14 – TCSG Established; Powers and Duties.

Military Selection Service Act – 50 U.S.C. App et seq., as amended.

TCSG State Board Policy 2.1.1. – Statement of Equal Opportunity.

State Personnel Board Rule 6 – Recruiting, Screening, and Hiring.

TCSG Procedure 3.3.14p. – Open Records Requests.

TCSG Procedure 4.8.1p1. – Drug Testing – Non-U.S. DOT-Regulated Positions.

TCSG Procedure 4.8.1p2. – Drug Testing – U.S. DOT and FMCSA Regulated Positions.

TCSG Procedure 4.1.9p. – Background Investigations.

TCSG Procedure 4.7.2p. – Drivers Qualifications.

III. APPLICABILITY:

All work units and Technical Colleges are associated with the Technical College System of Georgia.

IV. DEFINITIONS:

Applicant: For this procedure, an individual who applies for a vacant position in any TCSG work unit should include current State of Georgia employees and those who do not currently work for the State of Georgia.

TCSG Work Unit: the TCSG System Office, Quick Start Headquarters, Quick Start Regional Offices or training centers, or an associated Technical College.

V. ATTACHMENTS: N/A

VI. PROCEDURE:

A. General Provisions:

1. The goal is to ensure that the process is fair to all candidates and that the most suitable candidate is selected for the vacant position.
2. Except for categories of positions identified within 4.1.1p1 *Recruitment*, all other vacant full-time, part-time salaried positions, adjunct faculty, and those categories of hourly- paid, part-time/temporary positions encompassing an indefinite period of employment must be posted for a minimum period of five (5) business days.
3. It is the responsibility of the hiring official(s), in conjunction with staff in the System Office or Technical College Office of Human Resources, to follow the guidelines addressed in this procedure to ensure that the goals of objectivity and fairness of the application screening, interviewing and selection process are met. For these reasons, only job-related, non-discriminatory criteria may be used in the application screening, interviewing, and selection processes. Additionally, all such criteria must be established before beginning the selection process.
4. Any test in the applicant screening or interview processes (as differentiated from a demonstration of skills) is not permitted unless approval is first obtained from the TCSG General Counsel or Legal Services Officer. Included are soft skills tests (e.g., a personality test or a test that measures communication skills), general intelligence (math, reading, or writing), or other cognitive, physical ability, or aptitude tests. In addition, any test used in a selection process must be directly job-related and reasonably predictive of successful job performance.
5. The initial screening of applicants using established Minimum and Preferred Qualifications should be accomplished by the System Office or Technical College Office of Human Resources staff. However, in the event, this determination is made by other college official(s), the list of applicants meeting these qualifications must be reviewed and approved by a designated Office of Human Resources representative before any interviews are scheduled.
6. An individual who does not submit a completed application per the procedure outlined in the job announcement by the established closing date (if applicable) may be excluded from consideration for the position.
7. An applicant who does not meet the established Minimum Qualifications (including any required licensure, certification, or other requirement established in the state or federal law) shall not be interviewed or considered for an available position.

B. Applicant Screening

1. Methodology to Establish Criteria to Identify Qualified Candidates:
 - a. The position's job description and, if available, the most current performance plan and/or established performance standards of the previous incumbent should be reviewed to assist the hiring official(s) and, as applicable, human resources staff in establishing the knowledge, skills, abilities and/or competencies predictive of successful performance.
 - b. The identified job-related knowledge, skills, abilities, and/or competencies may be

evaluated using the following methods to identify the most qualified interview candidates. If used, the following methods should be applied consistently to all qualified candidates:

- i. An evaluation of an applicant's knowledge, skills, abilities, and/or competencies as demonstrated by related education, training (including military service), and paid or unpaid experience outlined on their r employment application;
 - ii. An applicant's qualifications are evaluated in a preliminary screening interview conducted in person or by telephone. It is permissible to ask each applicant participating in a preliminary screening interview if they can perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodations.
 - iii. an evaluation of an applicant's qualifications obtained through a job-related questionnaire (e.g., Pre-Employment Questionnaire – P.O.S.T. Certified Law Enforcement Positions);
 - iv. an evaluation and verification of an applicant's qualifications, including performance and conduct, obtained from a current or previous employer(s), e.g., obtained through a current or previous immediate supervisor; and/or,
 - v. an evaluation of an applicant's qualifications as demonstrated by the presentation of work samples or a job-related demonstration of skills (e.g., keyboard skills for a position whose primary duty involves computer use). NOTE: This method requires the approval of the System Office or Technical College Office of Human Resources before utilization.
 - a. As referenced in Paragraph VI.A.4., the use of any test in the applicant screening process must first be approved by the TCSG General Counsel or Legal Services Officer.
 - b. All criteria used to identify qualified candidates to be interviewed must be documented.
 - c. Hiring official(s) or human resources staff may require applicants to provide proof of required education credentials, a license, or certification as a screening measure prior to conducting personal interviews. NOTE: all such materials/documents must be provided before the selected candidate begins employment.
2. P.O.S.T. Certified Positions
- a. Following the initial HR screening, the Chief of Police, in consultation with the College's Human Resources, will narrow the applicant pool based upon preferred qualifications.
 - b. Human Resources will then send the Pre-Employment Law Enforcement Questionnaire to the candidates the Chief of Police has selected to be interviewed.
 - c. Interviews should only be scheduled for those applicants who submit a completed Pre-employment Law Enforcement Questionnaire.

- d. Prior to the interview date, Human Resources will provide the Chief of Police with the dates of birth and social security numbers of the chosen applicants so a P.O.S.T. records verification check can be completed to determine whether the:
 - i. P.O.S.T. certification is valid and current, and
 - ii. P.O.S.T. certification is the type required by the job posting.

Should either of these requirements be deficient, cancel or do not schedule the interview.

- e. For the hiring of Police Chiefs, the P.O.S.T verification will be completed by the TCSG Chief of Police.

C. Interviewing

1. Interviews may be conducted by a hiring official or an interview panel.
2. If an interview panel is utilized, its composition should reflect the diverse nature of the System Office or Technical College workforce. It is permissible that the panel include individuals from other TCSG work units, other areas of the System Office or Technical College, or, dependent upon the uniqueness of the position, individual(s) not associated with the TCSG or those on governing boards.
3. The same hiring official or interview panel should conduct all interviews for the available position.
4. All interviewer(s) should know the position, its assigned duties and responsibilities, and successful performance measures.
5. A series of open-ended interview questions based on relevant, job-related criteria should be developed and asked of all applicants. Interview questions should be designed to gather in-depth responses with an accompanying description or explanation; Questions that can be answered with a "Yes or NO" response should generally be avoided.
6. It is permissible to ask each applicant interviewed if they can perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodations.
7. Interviewers have the flexibility to ask follow-up questions, as needed, based on an applicant's initial response.
8. As previously indicated, the use of any test in the interview process must first be approved by the TCSG General Counsel or Legal Services Officer. In addition, any job-related skills demonstration conducted at the interview stage of the selection process must be approved prior to its use by the System Office or Technical College Office of Human Resources.
9. It is permissible for the hiring official or an interview team to develop/use a response key to permit responses to be rated in a numerical or non-numerical (e.g., excellent, satisfactory, or not acceptable) rating scale/rubric. However, any rating scale used during the interviewing process must be approved by the System Office or Technical College's Office of Human Resources, as appropriate.

D. Applicants with Disabilities

1. TCSG has a legal obligation to provide a qualified applicant with a disability with reasonable accommodation(s) to permit their participation in the interview process. For this procedure, a qualified applicant meets established minimum, as applicable, preferred qualifications and can perform the position's essential functions with or without accommodations. An example of a requested reasonable accommodation could be arranging for an interpreter for an applicant with a hearing impairment.
2. In instances where a qualified candidate does not disclose a request for a reasonable accommodation until the date of their scheduled interview, and the hiring official or chair of the interview panel believes that the applicant cannot be reasonably accommodated to participate in the interview process, In that case, the hiring official or panel chair should contact the System Office or Technical College Office of Human Resources immediately.

E. Reference Checks

1. When possible, reference checks on the selected candidate for employment must be conducted with the individual's current employer (i.e., their immediate supervisor) and at least one (1) other former supervisor. In addition, hiring official(s) may extend the scope of the reference checks to other candidates/finalists (e.g., the top three [3] applicants).
2. Reference must be with a current (when possible) or former supervisor and cannot include co-workers. Family, friends, and other personal acquaintances should not be considered professional references.
3. Applicants are to be advised that reference checks will be conducted, and all associated questions will be limited to job-related inquiries to verify such job-related information as:
 - a. Name;
 - b. Employment dates;
 - c. Job-title held and duties;
 - d. Beginning and ending salaries;
 - e. Training completed;
 - f. Job performance;
 - g. Disciplinary history;
 - h. As applicable, eligibility for re-hire; and,
 - i. As applicable, the reason for leaving a past employer.
4. All collected documentation should be confidential and only released on a "need to know" basis (e.g., to those employees or individuals participating in the selection process) unless any such release is required according to state or federal law.

5. According to applicable provisions of State Personnel Board Rule 6, the PeopleSoft records of a former State employee to be provided a contingent offer of employment must first be reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate for re-hire and to determine whether the individual has ever been dismissed from a State position. A “no-rehire” designation in PeopleSoft will not automatically exclude an individual from employment. In all instances, the information discovered should be reviewed in conjunction with information provided on the individual’s employment application.
6. In cases involving P.O.S.T. certified positions, the reference checks will be conducted by the Chief of Police or the TCSG Chief of Police when hiring a Chief of Police.

F. Contingent Offer of Employment

1. All full-time or part-time or temporary employment offers will be extended in writing to the selected candidate with notice that the candidate must accept the offer in writing or through e-mail.
2. The contingent offer of employment letter must also reference:
 - a. All post-offer requirements must be completed before a hiring decision is finalized to include criminal history records check as provided in the TCSG Procedure governing Background Investigations (4.1.9p.);
 - b. other relevant information to include the anticipated start date; the accompanying salary, hourly rate of pay or, for adjunct faculty, the hourly rate or lump sum payment for each course taught; and,
 - c. as applicable, the need to produce verification of a required license, certificate, verification, college or university transcript, diploma, etc.
3. Other post-offer requirements may include: a pre-employment drug test, a motor vehicle records check, a credit history check, a medical examination, and a psychological examination.
4. For P.O.S.T. certified positions, once the top candidate has been identified and approved by the President, Human Resources will extend a conditional offer of employment in writing, noting all pre-employment requirements, i.e., criminal history, drug testing, fingerprinting, driving history, physical fitness test, and medical and psychological evaluations, if the College elects to do so, psychological evaluations.
 - a. The Chief of Police, in consultation with Human Resources, will conduct the entire background investigation only after Human Resources confirms the applicant's acceptance of the conditional offer of employment.
5. When the selected candidate for employment is a male between the ages of eighteen (18) and twenty-six (26), the Military Selective Service Act stipulates that the applicant present proof of having registered with the Selective Service System or, instead, to present proof of being exempt of such service. According to this statute, such proof must be presented within fifteen (15) calendar days of the contingent offer of employment.
6. If the selected candidate completes all stipulated conditions of employment, they will be notified, in writing, that the hiring decision is finalized.

7. TCSG has a legal obligation to provide reasonable accommodations in employment for applicants with disabilities who are qualified to perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodations. Therefore, if a System Office or Technical College hiring official or representative of the Office of Human Resources believes that a qualified candidate who has participated in the interview process cannot be reasonably accommodated, the representative should contact TCSG General Counsel or Legal Services Officer before finalizing the selection decision.

G. Reasons for Non-Selection

1. Reason(s) for non-selection may not be related to:
 - a. Race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, religion, disability, age, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, veteran status, or citizenship status (except in those particular circumstances permitted or mandated by law);
 - b. a physical or other disability that does not interfere with the applicant's ability to perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodations; or,
 - c. any other factor that has no bearing on established job-related requirements.
2. In addition to the reason(s) referenced in Paragraph VI.G.1., non-selection should not typically be based on the absence of a particular skill or a knowledge that can be learned during the normal job orientation or training period that regularly follows a new employee assuming the identified position.
3. Reasons for non-selection should, instead, pertain directly to established job requirements and/or an applicant's qualifications.

H. Notification of Non-Selection

1. Each applicant interviewed but not selected for an available position should be notified, in writing, of this decision unless the applicant withdrew from consideration or declined an offer of employment.
2. The written notification should not contain the reason(s) for an applicant's non-selection.

VII. Records Retention

- A. All records shall be maintained per the Georgia Records Retention Schedule maintained by the Georgia Archives, University System of Georgia.
- B. Any written or verbal request for the release of selection-related documents or materials shall be managed according to TCSG Procedure 3.3.14p. (Open Records Act).