

College of Behavioral & Community Sciences Internal Procedure for Employment References and Verifications

The College of Behavioral & Community Sciences (CBCS) has an internal process for employment references/verifications of potential candidates. This process includes two sections. The first section defines key terms and the second section is the actual step-by-step guide for performing an employment reference/verification.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions found in USF's official policy regarding employment references along with any definitions specified by the college, should be referred to when making an employment reference, as well as assessing the appropriateness of designating an individual as a "hiring manager."

Hiring Manager: A person or group of persons (including search committee members) involved in the recruitment and hiring of a USF System employee. At the beginning of recruitment, the department or college for which the recruitment is taking place is responsible for defining, identifying, and documenting who is the hiring manager responsible for conducting candidates' employment references. For the purposes of this procedure, the "hiring manager" will be designated specifically in the search plan or, if no search plan exists, will be the coordinator of HR functions for the department or other individual, as designated by the supervisor of record for the vacant position.

Employment Reference: The process by which individuals are contacted by a "hiring manager" to learn about an employment candidate's work history for legitimate business reasons including, but not limited to, verifying facts on the candidate's resume or application, and any job-related information provided during the interviewing process. The individuals contacted must be the current or former supervisor and other individuals who can attest to the candidate's job-related abilities. Personal references should be used ONLY when the candidate does not have a work history, such as when hiring a student employee, or when it is impossible to contact former supervisors. (See Attachment A)

Candidate: This reference check policy applies to all persons hired by the USF System, including all faculty, administration and staff, including candidates who are currently employed by the USF System and who have applied for a different position within the USF System. In addition to the USF policy, CBCS also requires at least one reference check for hourly student employees. The exceptions to who is considered a candidate are Graduate Assistants, **rehires if there is an employment gap of less than 120 days**, and persons hired for temporary positions that do not exceed (60) days of employment.

Employment Verification: Employment verification refers to the process used to confirm that a Staff or Administration candidate meets the minimum years of experience, qualifications, and skills for the position for which he or she has applied. The **Employment Verification Form** (See Attachment B) is **used only for verification purposes.**

Steps for Employment References

Step 1: The hiring manager will obtain three employment references and at least one employment verification *before* making final decision to hire the prospective internal or external candidate.

- The hiring manager will notify the candidate that they will be calling references, and ask for permission to call the current supervisor.
- The hiring manager will ensure an employment reference/employment verification is obtained from the current supervisor.
- The additional employment references/verifications may be professional, if there are no additional supervisors to contact.
- For faculty and adjuncts, letters of reference, which are provided by the candidate, may be used for two of the references. If letters of reference are typically acquired/requested, only a call to the immediate supervisor needs to be made before an offer of employment is finalized. The Faculty Hiring Reference Verification form (*see Attachment C*) will be used for Faculty and Adjunct hires. The immediate supervisor may have already supplied a letter; if so, the call will be considered a follow-up, with the emphasis being on the two main questions to be posed.
- If a non-faculty employee is being promoted to a new position, a reference must be obtained from the current supervisor.
- The call to the current supervisor can be delayed until after employee has accepted the position, if they do not want us to call before they accept; however, it will remain a condition of employment and must be noted in the offer letter.
- An employment reference is not needed for a re-classification.

Step 2: During the reference call(s), the hiring manager will use the appropriate form at the end of this procedure.

- In the event that the supervisor is unable or unwilling to verify employment, the hiring manager will contact the candidate's HR department for verification.
- If the reference is unsatisfactory, the hiring manager should document this on the employment verification form by writing, "not approved" on the signature line.
- If efforts to obtain an employment verification and/or reference fail, the hiring manager will document the efforts using the Employment Verification form.
- The form will be signed and dated by hiring manager.

Step 3: Upon obtaining three references and at least **one employment verification**, the supervisor or search committee will review them and determine whether the job offer should be extended.

Step 4: Upon approval, the original reference forms will be given to the HR Coordinator to be uploaded to the Job Opening in Careers. The HR Coordinator will then initiate the formal job offer.

- For Staff and Administration jobs, the HR Coordinator may request other documents necessary to verify minimum requirements have been met (such as licensure and transcripts verifying highest degree earned) at this stage of the process.

Policy 0-616 – Employment References – Providing and Obtaining Employment Reference Information



Employment Reference Check Form
Administration, Staff and Temporary Employees
 Division of Human Resources

Date: _____

Name of Candidate: _____

Position Applied For: _____

Posting Number: _____

Last Position Held:
 (per application/resume) _____

Dates of Employment: Start: _____ End: _____

Number of hours worked/week: _____

Salary: Start: _____ End: _____

Name of Reference: _____

Title: _____

Relationship to Candidate: Supervisor Co-Worker Other

Explain: _____

Contact Method: Phone Email Letter Other

Employment Reference conducted by:

Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

How long have you known the candidate and in what capacity?

Briefly describe the duties of the position held by the candidate:

In considering him/her for this position, what are the strengths demonstrated in the past?

What areas were identified as areas for improvement or what would need further development?

Describe any training or certifications the candidate obtained.

Verification of any required licenses, certifications, or degrees.

Excluding FMLA or an Approved Leave of Absence how would you describe this candidate's attendance/absenteeism/punctuality?

Has the candidate ever been the subject of any workplace investigation or disciplinary action? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

What was the candidate's reason for leaving your organization?

Is the candidate eligible for re-employment with your organization? Yes No

Comments:

If you are unable to obtain the reference check per the reasons stated in the policy, provide your explanation here:

Employment Reference conducted by:

Signature

Date

Print Name

Date

Obtaining complete job-related employment reference information is a mandatory step in the recruitment and job offer process. Professional reference checks (not a personal friend, neighbor, acquaintance) must be conducted for both external candidates and for current employees who are applying for transfer and/or promotion. Please visit the following link for the full reference check policy: <http://regulationspolicies.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/policy-0-616.pdf>

Here are some important steps to follow to enhance your ability to get quality and useful information:

- Identify yourself and USF as the organization that you represent.
- Inform the reference of the reason for your call.
- Ask questions/follow-up questions that will solicit information about the candidate's ability to perform in the position.
- If the reference is unwilling to comment on the candidate's performance, please document your attempts and request additional references from the candidate who will attest to the candidate's work-related performance.



Employment Verification Form
Administration, Staff and Temporary Employees
Division of Human Resources

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Position Applied For: _____

Posting Number: _____

Last Position Held:
(per application/resume) _____

Dates of Employment: Start: _____ End: _____

Number of hours worked /week: _____

Salary: Start: _____ End: _____

Major Duties:

Name of Reference: _____

Title: _____

Relationship to Candidate: Supervisor Co-Worker Other

Explain: _____

Organization Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Address/Email: _____

Contact Method: Phone Email Letter Other

Employment Verification conducted by:

Signature

Date

Print Name

Job Title:



**USF FACULTY HIRING VERIFICATION OF TELEPHONE CALL
TO CANDIDATE'S IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR**

Name of Candidate:

Position #:

College:

Dean:

Department:

Person making call*:

[*Typically, the search committee chair or chair/director of the department/school.]

Date contact made:

Name and title of person providing reference:

Suggested questions:

1. How long and in what capacity have you known the candidate?

2. What would you describe as his/her strengths?

3. What would you describe as any weaknesses he/she might have?

4. How would you characterize this candidate as a leader?

5. What are their strengths in relating to diverse individuals including faculty, administrators, students and community members?

6. How is this candidate regarded in their field?

7. I would like to describe to you the position for which we are hiring. Do you feel that this individual would be: a good fit an acceptable fit a poor fit please explain:

8. What roles might this candidate struggle to fulfill?

Mandatory Questions:

9. Are you aware of any facts regarding the candidate that might cause concern or could bring embarrassment to USF?

10. Is there any other job-related information, including interpersonal behaviors or disciplinary actions that you believe we should know about this candidate?

By my signature, I verify that nothing in the conversation with the person listed above would be a matter of concern in issuing a letter of offer to the candidate.

Signature of Person Making Call and Date

Dean's Signature and Date