



City of Pittsburgh Operating Policies

Policy: Pre-employment and Promotional Background Investigations	Original Date: 9/1986
	Revised Date: 3/1/2010

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines when conducting background investigations for prospective new hires, rehires and internal promotional candidates.

POLICY STATEMENT: It is the policy of the City of Pittsburgh to conduct background investigations on all prospective new hire and rehire City employee positions and internal promotional candidates. Our policy is a proactive effort to maintain a reliable and quality workforce, and to ensure that selected candidates are free of negative or illegal history which may conflict with the requirements of their position, or adversely affect their ability to perform at the necessary standards. This policy is in accordance with The Criminal History Record Act and the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

Disclaimer: No statements in this policy are intended or set forth as contractual commitments or obligations of the City to any individual employee or group of employees, or to establish an exception to the employment-at-will doctrine beyond that specified in the Civil Service Statutes and Rules or pertinent collective bargaining agreement. If there are differences between the various collective bargaining agreements and this policy, the pertinent collective bargaining agreement takes precedence.

PROCEDURE

PRE-EMPLOYMENT

- 1) In accordance with The City of Pittsburgh employment policies all considered applicants will be made aware of our Pre-employment Background Investigation Policy at the time of application.
- 2) Once the applicant selection process has identified specific candidates and/or at the time of the second round of interviews, but before the position is offered, the hiring authority will re-inform candidates of the City's Pre-Employment Background Investigation Policy and issue the City of Pittsburgh Authorization for Release of Information form for the candidate's completion.

- 3) The hiring authority will ensure that the Authorization for Release of Information form is completed in its entirety and collected. The hiring authority will also collect from the candidates their official educational/training transcripts which are required to be submitted at the time of interview. Transcripts are required to be submitted for each/any interview candidates have with the City of Pittsburgh.
- 4) The hiring authority will forward the completed City of Pittsburgh Authorization for Release of Information forms and the collected official education/training transcripts to the Department of Personnel and Civil Service Commission (P&CSC), to the attention of the Supervisor of Applications and Records immediately following the collection. **NOTE:** Candidates who do not present their transcripts may not be hired until the transcripts are presented to P&CSC.
- 5) The Supervisor of Applications and Records will verify the individuals, for whom completed forms were submitted, are eligible candidates to be considered for selection.
- 6) The Supervisor of Applications and Records will enter the investigation request to the investigating authority and copy the appropriate Personnel Analyst staff member.
- 7) A third party expert investigation organization or The City of Pittsburgh Office of Municipal Investigations (OMI) will conduct all pre-employment background investigations.
- 8) All completed background investigation result reports are delivered directly to the Director of Personnel & Civil Service Commission (P&CSC) for review and employment approval. All background investigation results are valid for six (6) months from the date of the original request.
- 9) The Director of P&CSC will review all results and formulate final determinations based on the information obtained in the results report and the description and requirements of the position.
- 10) The Director of P&CSC will communicate final determinations directly to the hiring authority Director(s). The hiring authority may then proceed to extend employment offers to any approved candidate of their selection. Under no circumstances may an employment offer be made prior to the determination approval of the Director of P& CSC. Without a completed background check, a new employee is unable to receive a pay check. For temporary seasonal hires, it is the prerogative of the Director of the hiring authority to permit the seasonal employees to begin work while background investigations are being conducted. Continued temporary

seasonal employment is contingent upon the results of the background investigation.

- 11) If there is a felony conviction and a candidate has falsified his/her application by denying a felony conviction, the Department of P&CSC may prohibit the candidate from any future submission of applications and/or consideration of employment.
- 12) Candidates who do not successfully pass the background investigation do not have the right to an appeal process, unless there are exceptions under civil service regulations.
- 13) Candidates being considered for civil service competitive positions (Police Officer & Firefighter) do have appeal rights based on Section 10 of the General Civil Service Act. Notifications will be sent in these cases to inform candidates of their Civil Service right to appeal.
- 14) All Release forms and collected results will be filed in the P&CSC office in the personnel files for selected candidates and/or in candidate's application record along with the official applications for employment.

PROMOTIONAL

- 1) In accordance with the City of Pittsburgh background investigation policy all employees applying for or being nominated for a promotion will be made aware of our Background Investigation Policy at the time of application and/or before nomination.
- 2) Once the selection process has identified specific candidates for promotion and before the position is offered, the hiring authority will re-inform promotional candidates of the City's Background Investigation Policy and issue the City of Pittsburgh Authorization for Release of Information form for the employee to complete.
- 3) The hiring authority will ensure that the Authorization for Release of Information form is completed in its entirety by the employee and returned to the hiring authority. The hiring authority will also collect from the candidates their official educational/training transcripts which are required to be submitted at the time of interview. Transcripts are required to be submitted for each/any interview candidates have with the City of Pittsburgh.

- 4) The hiring authority will forward the completed City of Pittsburgh Authorization for Release of Information forms and the collected official education/training transcripts to the Department of Personnel and Civil Service Commission (P&CSC), to the attention of the Supervisor of Applications and Records immediately following the collection. **NOTE:** Candidates who do not present their transcripts may not be promoted until the transcripts are presented to P&CSC.
- 5) The Supervisor of Applications and Records will verify the individuals, for whom completed forms were submitted, are eligible candidates to be considered for promotion and will verify their current job title and if the position is a promotional advancement.
- 6) The Supervisor of Applications and Records will enter the investigation request to the investigating authority and copy the appropriate Personnel Analyst staff member.
- 7) A third party expert investigation organization or The City of Pittsburgh Office of Municipal Investigations (OMI) will conduct all promotional background investigations.
- 8) All completed background investigation result reports are delivered directly to the Director of Personnel & Civil Service Commission (P&CSC) for review and employment approval. All background investigation results are valid for six (6) months from the date of the original request.
- 9) The Supervisor of Applications and Records will provide the original application, the personal data form and the personnel file of all internal applicants to the Director of Personnel and Civil Service Commission once the investigation result report is complete.
- 10) The Director of P&CSC will review all results and formulate final determinations based on the information obtained in the results report and the description and requirements of the position.
- 11) The Director of P&CSC will communicate final determinations directly to the hiring authority Director(s). The hiring authority may then promote the employee. Under no circumstances may an offer of promotion be made prior to the approval of the Director of P&CSC. In order for an employee to receive a promotional increase in pay, a background check must be completed.
- 12) If there is a felony conviction and a candidate has falsified his/her application by denying a felony conviction, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. If the employee is

terminated the Department of P&CSC may prohibit the candidate from any future submission of applications and/or consideration of employment.

13) Candidates who do not successfully pass the background investigation do not have the right to an appeal process, unless there are exceptions under Civil Service regulations.

14) Candidates being considered for civil service competitive positions (Police promotional and Fire promotional), do have appeal rights based on Section 10 of the General Civil Service Act. Notifications will be sent in these cases to inform candidates of their Civil Service right to appeal.

15) All Release forms and collected results will be filed in the P&CSC office in the personnel files for selected candidates and/or in candidate's application record along with the official applications for employment.