

County of Butler Employment Framework Based on a Merit-Based Hiring System:

The County of Butler operates a merit-based hiring system. The key purposes of the system is to recruit, hire, and retain the candidates who can best meet the needs of the organization and support the public's interests. We believe the recruitment process of attracting qualified individuals to apply within the organization of Butler County government is paramount in providing a long-term basis for a high-quality workforce capable of accomplishing the institution's mission now and in the future.

Our employment process will include the following procedures and selection processes throughout the course of recruitment, hiring, training, and retaining of employees who will work in the capacity of Butler County government.

Our various county agencies and departments plan through service planning, their annual plan and budget process, as well as, through ongoing department head meetings and when collaborating with other agency department heads to assess workforce/occupational planning needs relative to county government.

We have defined all of the jobs relative to the County of Butler and have defined all of the job requirements through a respective job description. If a new classification is required, we will create new job descriptions and have them evaluated through our job evaluation system and recent salary/compensation study results.

Butler County has hired an independent firm to begin conducting a salary study and compensation plan. Both salary and benefits have been taken into consideration during their evaluation as we worked together to develop a tool by September of 2013 to be utilized by the County. Currently, our compensation plan is linked to our job classifications to which the County of Butler has approximately 100. Our current compensation is comparable to both fourth class counties as well as counties demographically and regionally situate to our county. Our class specifications for all our job titles were developed through job analysis and reflect the level, scope, and complexity of the work performed by that job title. Our job specs and job descriptions were recently updated countywide and are available to public review at anytime. Job descriptions will continue to be adjusted any time there is a change and we will review them annually. Compensation is linked to the classification plan and is negotiated through our collective bargaining agreements reflecting the responsibility and complexity of the work, and labor market conditions which exist in the county and in comparison to adjacent market conditions to which we are comparable as the corresponding range of pay, which we supply to DPW annually. As part of our merit hire process, job descriptions are shared with new hires and there is employee sign-off, as well as, sign-off at annual employee performance reviews.

We have instituted an employee orientation checklist with employee sign-off to ensure receipt of all required elements and this checklist is maintained in official employee records. Every department has an employee orientation checklist. In addition, all newly hired employees will be asked to sign a memorandum of understanding at the time of

their hiring date, which will explain the federal background requirements under the Affordable Health Care Act of 2010 related to Medicaid exclusion. (By federal law, the County is required to do monthly background checks on employees who perform activities that are in any way funded through Medicaid.)

Job vacancies will be posted internally throughout each department and government center as a whole, as well as, placement of advertisements in local newspapers, minority, publications, local Bureau of Employment offices and appropriate professional and technical journals will be determined by the vacancy and the organization's workforce needs. Our County follows the Pennsylvania Military Affairs Act. All advertisements for positions within Children and Youth, MH/ID and Aging will include veteran's preference language. Aging positions will include aging preference language. All advertisements will contain the standard equal employment opportunity employer language. Our County's employment application has been revised to contain an indicator for applicants claiming to be veterans preference. This resolved the issue moving forward in order for veterans to be identified in the candidate pool. All other things being equal among the top candidates, the applicant who has stated veteran status on their application will be recommended for the position. "All other things" means education, experience, quality of and performance of interview, and substance of references. The County will place the hiring process rules and procedures in all departments to make them accessible to the public and employees, as well as, place them onto the county website.

The County will review the applications upon receipt to ensure they meet the minimum requirements for the position as stated in the job description. Performance standards are conveyed to employees upon their hiring and they are requested to sign off, to ensure they have a good understanding of the position's expectations. Our performance standards accompany our employment offer letter and memorandum of understanding regarding Medicaid Exclusion.

We have standardized testing mechanisms to assess all technical areas such as accounting, clerical, information technology, and managerial. There are different tests depending upon the job position and job description of that specific job. Our testing mechanisms rely on the competency and talent developed through previous work experience of the applicants.

The successful candidates will be interviewed during a structured interview and ranked based on a combination of education, experience, knowledge, skills, abilities, and test results. Structured interviews support merit when they are based on a solid job analysis and are relevant to the position being filled. Implemented correctly, they treat candidates fairly and objectively with little or no adverse impact. They provide more focused interviews, making them more consistent and less subjective.

Based on the interviews conducted by the appropriate department, candidates will be selected, made a contingent job offer and placed in our pre-employment screening process which includes a drug screen, physical, reference checks which include educational checks, and a criminal background investigation. Upon successfully passing

the pre-employment screening, selected candidates will be contacted to schedule a start date. After successfully passing the pre-employment screening, the hiring manager requests approval to hire.

All new employees must report to H.R. within 48 hours (preferably the first day) of the start of their first shift to complete all necessary new hire paperwork and forms.

All our employees receive basic orientation and training as needed to maintain and improve current job skills. All our County Departments have training AND professional development opportunities available through their state associations, as well as, training opportunities made available for the purposes of certification and licensure which are encouraged for our employees to partake in. We have a training coordinator who internally reviews and ensures that our employees are updated on state mandated training and once they have achieved that, the system of oversight shifts to the supervisor at their annual reviews, who then if necessary, contacts and coordinates with the training coordinator for updated professional development needs for that respective employee.

All Alternative Dispute Resolution Employee Communication Appeal Forms are available in our Personnel Department for accessibility throughout the year to enable all our employees to be granted a relatively speedy hearing and quick adjudication. All appeal processes are included on our Employee ADR Communication Form and are integrated into our processes and procedures. These personnel actions affecting employment include termination from employment, suspension from employment, involuntary demotion, furlough from employment, or discrimination. Discrimination is defined as actions based on, “political or religious opinions or affiliations because of labor union affiliations or because of race or national origin”. All adjudicatory hearings and decisions will be issued in writing and will contain the reasons for the decision. All adjudicatory decisions are shared with DPW as well as appeals to ADR decisions.

As in all of its employment practices, the County of Butler is committed to following state and federal regulations including the Hatch Act 5 U.S.C. All employees are annually notified and informed of their rights and responsibilities under the State and Federal laws. Employees are also informed at the onset of employment verbally and through written communications by the County’s personnel department of their political rights available through The Hatch Act as all employees are covered by the Act regardless if they are union or non-union as this is a federal law as it pertains to agencies that receive federal funds. We assure that our employees are protected against coercion for political purposes and are prohibited from using their official authority for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or nomination for office. Our County’s written policy statements concerning political activity are consistent with all State and Federal laws.

We have two separate grievance processes for employees, as we were advised through our state association, CCAP, (see attachment) that the ADR process “does not apply to employees represented by a union” and to develop an alternative dispute resolution process comparable to the same high standards as the grievance process via the collective

bargaining units. We have already informed all our SCSC employees that they have access to the ADR process while union covered employees have access to their union's collective bargaining agreement grievance process. Our appeal and adjudicatory process is established and separates the two groups of employees so that neither groups infringes upon the other's principles.

Procedures that we have in place to ensure that our collective bargaining agreements do not infringe upon our merit principles are that our county's collective bargaining agreements are based upon seniority and non-classification and that our merit principles are based on classification by the lowest evaluation being merit based; meaning we would be eliminating a position and not a person.

One of the most important objectives of a merit-based hiring process is the systematic identification and selection of the best candidate for the job position. Good selections can lead to higher productivity, increased employee morale, improved teamwork amongst the organization and reduced turnover...which all are key ingredients in increasing organizational performance and the organization's ability to meet the needs of the public.

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