

Quarterly Report

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Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center

Employment Plan Training

The Human Resource Director, Chief of Staff, and personnel analyst(s) were provided comprehensive mandatory employment plan training on August 10, 2023. The training is required annually to assure human resource personnel tasked with reviewing and validating applications follow the employment plan guide associated with recruitment, screening, selecting, and retaining personnel based on merit and fulfillment of specified qualifications. This quarter, human resource personnel received a refresher comprehensive training by the DOC on January 10, 2024, in order to reinforce the general employment-related procedures to ensure the general principles govern the CCJTDC's hiring policies.

In Section VI, *Interview Panel Selection*, no employee, including the Department Head, may be assigned to the interview panel without receiving interviewer training. The DOC created a pre-recorded interview training module for the individuals selected to participate on the panel. The training objectives included mitigating the impact of cognitive biases and the employment plan principles. The Human Resource Director prepared training material to enhance the overall quality of hiring and ensuring fairness throughout the interview process. The training material was reviewed, and the post training report will be provided to the DOC and reported to the Office of Chief Judge in the fourth quarterly report.

Interview panelist have completed training on political discrimination and the employment plan, in addition, they have reviewed and acknowledged the political discrimination and reporting retaliation policy.

Request to Hire/Job Descriptions

The Request to Hire (RTH) is used to initiate the hiring process when departments determine the operational need to fill a vacancy and/or create a new position. The previous reporting period and this current reporting period no RTH's were forwarded to the DOC.

Interview Preparation and Monitoring

The CCJTDC (Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center) human resource personnel scheduled interviews and provided the DOC notice at least 48-72 hours prior to the date of the first set of interviews during the month of November and December. Interview panel members consisted of the department head and employees who possessed knowledge and competence in the skills and abilities sought for the specialized position. The individuals selected for the panel represented the diversity of the facility and its residents.

Panelist aligned their interview process with the interview structure guide provided by the Human Resource Director. Panel members used the guided questions for each candidate and followed the weighted evaluation criteria to ensure consistency. Following the guide of the employment plan, the Human Resource Director or his/her designee is required to send the final list of questions to the DOC at least three days prior to the interview for review and comment. The department head or his or her designee in conjunction with Human Resource Director curated questions that measured the candidate's willingness and ability to do the job, factored prior job performance, the knowledge and understanding of the position, relative qualifications for the position in comparison to other validated candidates, and overall cultural credibility.

The admission release specialist job description and interview guide, assistant team leader job description and interview guide, security specialist job description and interview guide, custodial supervisor job description and interview guide, quality assurance and compliance job description and interview guide, resident internal affairs (gang specialist) job description and interview guide, youth development specialist job description and interview guide, and the rapid response team job description and interview guide were reviewed prior to each set of candidate interviews. The Human Resource Director and Department Head(s) curated questions to assess the candidate's behavior responses and intersections associated with a candidate/applicant ability to adapt to trauma informed team dynamics in a detention facility. Many positions require the candidates to possess effective communication skills, technical competence, reliability and flexibility for employment with a 24/7 facility, the ability to collaborate with diverse perspectives, learning agility essential for trauma informed operations, and problem solving skills that adhere to policies and procedures were critically sought.

Recommendation Letters

The employment plan explicitly states that written recommendations for any applicant, candidate or employee shall be reviewed for compliance with the plan and placed in the individual's employment file if selected for employment or promotion. Recommendation letters that meet the requirements of the employment plan should be shared with the interview panel at the ranking meeting.

This quarter, no recommendation letters were submitted to the DOC.

Provisional Appointments

The emergency provision of Section IX of the Employment Plan, Provisional Appointments, allowing the Superintendent to hire full time, part time, or temporary employees in emergency situations or to address personnel shortages in accordance with CCJTDC or Circuit Court policies was not utilized or reported to the DOC this period.

Screening and Validation of Candidates

In Section VI, *Notice of Validation*, prior to starting the validation process, the Human Resources Director or the designee must provide written notice at least 7 days in advance of the date and time the validation of applicants begins. Random audits were conducted in TALEO due to the DOC not receiving notice regarding the initiation of screening and validation of various applicants for posted positions.

There were 142 applicants curated in TALEO for the position of Admissions & Release Specialist in October. At the stage of screening, 140 applicants were dispositioned by the personnel analyst. Two candidates were validated and received interviews. One candidate received an employment offer.

In the month of November a requisition for Supervisor in Charge was audited. Twenty six applicants applied and one received an interview but was not selected. All the applicants were dispositioned. The tracking system curated another 39 interested applicants. Two candidates were hired and the remaining were dispositioned.

In the month of November a requisition for Management Analyst IV was audited. TALEO curated 36 applicants and 6 were interviewed. One candidate received an employment offer.

In the month of December a requisition for Administrative Assistant III was audited. There were 72 applicants curated in TALEO. Six applicants received interviews and one was extended an employment offer. The remaining candidates were dispositioned.

In the month of December a requisition for Assistant Team Leader was audited. There were 61 applicants curated in TALEO. Three candidates were extended an offer of employment and the remaining applicants were dispositioned. Another requisition curated 56 applicants, 3 received interviews, one candidate received an employment offer while the remaining were dispositioned.

In the month of January a requisition for Youth Development Specialist was audited in TALEO. TALEO curated 73 interested applicants. Seventy one applicants were screened and dispositioned. Two applicants progressed to the interview stage but were dispositioned. One applicant did not meet the educational requirement and the other was not recommended by the panel.

In the month of January a requisition for Security Specialist I was audited. There were 66 interested applicants but only one moved to the interview stage and received the employment offer. The remaining 65 applicants were screened and dispositioned.

Ranking Meetings

Ranking meeting notes provided by the Personnel Analyst IV-Recruiter were audited for the position(s) of Security Specialist I, Custodial Supervisor, Attorney, and Youth Development Specialist. The personnel analyst(s) in addition to the Human Resource Director have received training on the documentation of ranking meetings. The objective notations, interview evaluation form, and the panel ranking form must be placed in the posting files per the guide of the employment plan. An audit of the above-mentioned posting files will occur next quarter.

Employment Actions

The DOC has the right to monitor any and all employment actions in order to assess the CCJTDC's compliance with the Supplemental Relief Order (SRO) and progress toward substantial compliance with the SRO. In Section V of the employment plan, ***Monitoring of Employment Actions***, legally requires the DOC to be given two days advance written notice of all employment actions including, but not limited to hiring, training, demotion, change in job assignment, temporary assignment, cross-training, promotion, transfer, reclassification, layoff, assignment of overtime, and other benefits of employment, discipline, including grievance hearings, and/or termination.

In the division of [Admissions, Security and Control](#) the Director of Human Resources reported two new hires for the position of custodial worker. There were two promotions for the position of [Supervisor in Charge](#). There was one resignation for the position of [Custodial Worker](#) and one resignation for the position of [Supervisor in Charge](#). There was one termination for the position of [Security Specialist](#). These employment actions were not reported to the DOC following the guide of the employment plan.

In the division of [Resident Daily Life](#), the Director of Human Resources reported 10 new hires for the position of [Youth Development Specialist](#). There were three resignations for the position of [Youth Development Specialist](#). Two promotions were reported for the position of [Case Worker II](#) and [Assistant Team Leader](#). These employment actions were not reported to the DOC following the guide of the employment plan.

In the division of [Resident Advocacy and Quality of Life](#) there were two new hires for the position of [Admissions and Release Specialist I](#) and one resignation for the position of [Admissions and Release Specialist I](#). There was one promotion for the position of [Management Analyst](#). These employment actions were not reported to the DOC following the guide of the employment plan.

In the division of [Administrative Services](#) there was one new hire for the position of [Administrative Assistant III](#) and one [Food Service Worker](#). There was one resignation for the position of [Cook](#). These employment actions were not reported to the DOC following the guide of the employment plan.

Employment offers extended to external and internal candidates, promotions, resignations, and terminations were not communicated with the DOC two days in advance to ensure policies and procedures are being followed despite repeated follow through by the compliance officer.



Internal Candidate Preference List and Impact Promote Testing

An internal candidate preference is defined in the employment plan as an internally experienced candidate who possesses both minimum and preferred qualifications and is given priority over qualified external candidates. External candidates who possess preferred qualifications are to be considered in a separate cohort; following a third cohort of candidates sorted by the number of preferred qualifications and the remaining cohort consisting of candidates who possess minimum qualifications.

Following the guide of the employment plan, the Human Resource Director, Division Head(s), and the DOC must create and maintain an internal candidate preference list and designate a position “Internal Candidate Preference”. The notice of job opportunity for identified positions must designate the position as internal candidate preferred. Designating a position “Internal Candidate Preference” does not preclude an external applicant from applying.

The superintendent encourages promotion of internal candidates with preferred qualifications and leadership potential. A competitive number of qualified internal candidates with professional tenure express interest in career mobility and routinely apply, re-apply, test and re-test for middle management and administrative opportunities. A number of strongly qualified internal candidates are proficient in meeting the requirements for specialized positions however many continue to face a barrier with employment testing and interviewing.

The IMPACT Promote Supervisory Exam consists of a video-based employee observation component and a series of written situational judgment questions. It is an evidence-based assessment tool used by the CCJTDCHR to measure specific leadership skills necessary to become an effective supervisor or manager. The DOC was able to review a portion of the dated video and recommends CCJTDC consider a customized evidence-based leadership assessment tool for evaluating trauma informed leaders.

Meetings

One meeting occurred with the personnel analyst regarding the tracking system. One virtual ranking meeting for the position of Resident Internal Affairs (Gang Specialist) was monitored. One compliance meeting with the appointed designee in December was conducted via the TEAMS platform.

Discipline

The employment plan defines discipline as any action taken by the CCJTDC in response to an employee's conduct or performance, including verbal or written reprimands, suspensions, terminations or resignations in lieu of termination. The DOC was not provided any electronic notification(s) of grievances this quarter.

There were 4 verbal warnings, 5 written reprimands and 3 suspensions forwarded for my review.

The DOC notes that there were no complaints associated with unlawful political discrimination in the area of discipline and political consideration certification forms were signed by the chain of command.

Ineligible for Rehire

Section IV, *Ineligible for Hire/Rehire List*, states the Human Resource Director or his or her Designee shall maintain a list of individuals who were previously employed with the CCJTDC ineligible for employment with the CCJTDC. There are 14 former employees currently ineligible for hire. Any internal candidate suspended during the 18th month period prior to submitting an application shall not be considered eligible for the position subject to the terms of any applicable CBA. Former employees employed by the CCJTDC within the 36 months preceding the date of an application who was suspended, terminated, or resigned while under investigation for misconduct shall not be considered eligible for a position.

Complaints/Investigations

Complaints under my authority are not limited to unlawful political discrimination but also include allegations of a violation of the employment plan. CCJTDC personnel have access to the employment plan in PolicyTech. The contact information for the DOC is also uploaded in PolicyTech. The following written complaint was forwarded to my office this quarter:

Complaint #2023CCJTDC3:

An internal candidate alleged an employment plan complaint regarding the hiring processes for the position of caseworker. The employee indicated that he has been employed by the CCJTDC for over 13 years and has repeatedly applied for the position of caseworker while remaining in good standing. Despite meeting specified qualifications there was no interview granted to this internal candidate. Auditing the screening and validation of caseworker requisitions revealed that the candidate was overlooked utilizing the CCJTDC candidate tracking system. The investigation did not uncover unlawful political discrimination, but it did reveal that the Human Resource Department must create transparent and workable processes that comply with the legal requirements when sorting applicants. All internal applicants who apply should receive a notification in the tracking system or via their employee email if they do not meet the specific qualifications for the position applied for.



Recommendations:

The Director of Human Resources will take steps to ensure every recruiter/personnel analyst, or any employee engaged in hiring-related tasks are available for comprehensive training and require refresher training designed to assure substantial compliance with the Employment Plan. As of the typing of this report the training has been completed.

The Director of Human Resources or her designee will provide the sorted results of the validation process (validated applicant eligibility list) to the DOC for each posting until quality assurance updates are completed in the tracking system (TALEO).

The Director of Human Resources or her designee will schedule interviews of all sorted candidates listed on the final interview list and provide the schedule at least 72 hours prior to the date of the first interview along with all posting identifiers for auditing by the DOC.

The Director of Human Resources or her designee will forward the ineligible for hire/rehire list to the DOC. As of the typing of this report the list has been forwarded to my office.

The Director of Human Resources will notify the DOC of any employment offers and promotions.

Updating testing material for internal promotions and external candidate testing is essential and strongly recommended when screening new applicants to ensure there is a basic understanding of trauma and its impact for both employees and youth.

The DOC is recommending the Department of Human Resources maintain an internal candidate preference list. The interview process is competitive for many qualified internal candidates interested in upward mobility. Section VI, *Interview Panel Ranking Form*, openly states the ranking of candidates may be used for purposes of filling future vacancies for a period of 12 months. During this quarter a validated internal candidate preference list or qualified ranking list has not been submitted to the DOC for review, but it is highly recommended.

Conclusion

Familiarity and consistency with the employment plan guide are vital in reaching substantial compliance. The Human Resource Director and personnel analyst(s) have received a second comprehensive training in addition to an interviewer training in an effort to improve transparency and collaboration.

Exempt Employees of the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center



Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent

Special Assistant

General Counsel

Assistant General