



City of Somerville

Non-Civil Service Hiring Process / New Employees

Purpose

This policy reflects the City's non-Civil Service recruitment and selection policy to ensure the City of Somerville fills vacancies with the best qualified candidate.

Philosophy

The City of Somerville is committed to maintaining an inclusive working environment that values the diverse backgrounds and characteristics of all people. The City embraces the different perspectives and experiences, increased innovation, expanded skills pool, and enhanced teamwork created by a rich environment that reflects the community it serves. These values are integral to the City's provision of services and broad vision for its future.

The City of Somerville believes in equal opportunity in employment practices without discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, marital status, genetics, active military personnel, and source of income or family status.

Responsibility

The Human Resources Department is responsible for ensuring that the City's employment practices conform to Federal, State, and Local laws, regulations and HR policies. The hiring department works in partnership with Human Resources in the candidate selection process.

Recruitment

Internal Candidates: The City of Somerville encourages the development of existing talent for promotion. When a vacancy occurs, the City will first consider qualified internal department employees prior to publicly advertising an opening. The City will advertise positions that are not filled by an internal department candidate for at least one week on the City website. The City will select non-departmental internal candidates who apply for an interview provided that they meet the minimum qualifications for the position.

External Candidates: The City will recruit through advertising in an expansive geographic area, partnerships with community groups, school and educational groups, professional affiliations, and affinity organizations to strive for a rich pool of diverse, qualified candidates. Somerville residents shall receive preferential consideration. In cases where the City does not generate a diverse candidate pool, the City may extend the search to further expand the candidate pool or fail the search and repost the position.

- The selection process includes interviews by a panel that consists of representatives from the Human Resources Department and the hiring department. At times representatives from the Mayor's Office, SomerStat Department, or other relevant departments may participate in the process.
- The Mayor may conduct a final interview as his or her schedule allows.

The City hires Public Safety personnel (Police and Fire) pursuant to the Civil Service Commission's statutory hiring process.



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The City of Somerville fills vacant positions of Police Officers and Firefighters through the Massachusetts Human Resources Division (HRD), Civil Service Commission as required by the Commonwealth. Please refer to the City of Somerville's Civil Service Hiring Policy for more detailed information.

Qualification Requirements

At the time a position vacancy occurs, the City Human Resources Department will ask the hiring manager to update/review the job description and required qualifications. The Human Resources Department will review the updated job description and specifications for compliance with job requirements. Additionally, where applicable, the position may be reclassified by Human Resources based on changes made by the hiring department. After the advertisement closes, the Interview Panel will review the application materials, select candidates for further consideration, conduct interviews, contact references where applicable, and select finalists for the job. As schedules allow, the Mayor's Office may conduct final interviews of the finalists for manager level positions and above.

Application and Eligibility for Employment

All candidates applying for employment in the City of Somerville must submit a resume and/or complete an official application form located at the Human Resources Department, or on the City web page, prior to the end of the working day of the closing date specified for the position in the announcement. The Human Resources Department will seek the most competent, best qualified person that will fit the needs of the organization. All candidates who accurately complete the application forms will be reviewed for the position by the designated authority.

The hiring committee will conduct a relative ability assessment among the applicants and forward the best qualified applicants for an interview. Some candidates who meet the minimum qualifications for a position may not be interviewed if other applicants in the pool are more qualified.

All applicants selected for an interview are required to complete a formal application.

Examinations

The City may administer job skills examinations to candidates applying for job vacancies in the City. Examinations can be written, oral or both. Human Resources considers this screening information to be a personnel record, but candidates should understand that this information, or a redacted version of it, may be a public record.

Appointment

Where applicable, vacancies shall be filled by permanent appointment, temporary appointment, promotion, provisional appointment, emergency appointment, seasonal appointment, transfer or demotion. Some appointments may be subject to confirmation by the Board of Alderman.



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Conditional Offer

All offers of employment are contingent upon the success of the following: Background checks, driving history (if applicable), MA State Ethics Training Program, and drug screen (unless as otherwise specified and subject to this Policy's Medical Marijuana procedures) are to be processed after a conditional offer of employment has been extended to the applicant. Depending on the duties of the position, some candidates may have to undergo a physical examination.

NEW HIRES: All new hires are required to successfully complete and/or pass background checks, reference checks, possible driving history check, and MA State Ethics Training Program. This applies to all full-time, part-time, seasonal and temporary employees. New hires who will perform safety sensitive functions (such as running a camp or using motorized equipment) are required to successfully pass a drug screen. New hires who will work 20 hours or more are also required to successfully pass a pre-employment physical (if applicable based on the position's duties) and drug screen, subject to this Policy's Medical Marijuana procedures. The background check, physical (if applicable based on the position's duties), driving history (if applicable), ethics training, and drug screen must be completed and results verified before any employee begins work. At no time should an employee begin work until the Director of Human Resources or designee has verified results of the background check, driving history (if applicable), physical (if applicable), and drug screen.

REHIRES: Rehired candidates who have been separated from the City for longer than 90 days must successfully complete and/or pass any applicable pre-employment items identified above.

AUTHORIZATION BY APPLICANT: The candidate must authorize the background checks, physical (if applicable), driving history (if applicable), and drug screen by completing the appropriate forms. The candidate must complete the CORI authorization form to initiate the City's criminal record checks. This form is available to the applicant at the Human Resources office.

Note: All applicants must complete an Application for Employment and C.O.R.I. form as this is required to be submitted to the third party administrator conducting the background check.

Note: Candidates for the position of per diem poll worker will be subject to a CORI check and MA State Ethics Training Program.

Background Checks

The City of Somerville conducts background checks on candidates post-offer (conditional offer). The City of Somerville may also use a third party administrator to conduct background checks. For purposes of this policy, a "background check" may mean a criminal background check, education verification, employment history confirmation, credit history for financial positions, public web-based information, public information review, and professional / personal references. The City conducts background checks to verify the accuracy of the information provided by the candidate and determine his/her suitability for employment.

The City of Somerville takes precautions to ensure that background checks comply with applicable federal and state statutes, such as the Fair Credit Reporting Act. All criminal background screens are conducted



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post-offer (conditional offer). Candidates who have events on their background screen will be assessed pursuant to the City's CORI policy. As required by statute, some positions may require a national finger print background check.

In addition to the above, the City will generate a driving history report for all candidates conditionally offered a position that requires safe operation of a motor vehicle, regardless if it is a City vehicle or a personal vehicle.

Drug Testing and Medical Marijuana

The City will evaluate a positive drug test result for the use of marijuana as follows:

- Safety-sensitive position with a medical marijuana card: the City will engage in an interactive dialog around alternate treatment options. Should an alternative option be available and acceptable to the candidate, the employee's hire date may be delayed until they have successfully taken and passed a drug screen within 45 days of implementing the alternative treatment option. However, if there is no alternative to the use of marijuana or the employee continues to test positive for marijuana after the implementation of alternative treatment, the City will withdraw its employment offer.
- Non-safety-sensitive position: candidate's employment offer will stand.

Any candidate the City rejects due to a positive drug test will be removed from the hiring process, and the City will not consider the applicant for employment with the City of Somerville for a period of six months from the date of the positive drug test.

Pre-Employment Physical Examination

Candidates conditionally hired into jobs that have certain physical duties will be required to undergo a physical examination as a condition of employment, at the City's expense. Positions requiring this screenings will be marked as such on the posting. The examining physician shall advise the Human Resources Director or their designee as to whether or not, in their professional opinion, the applicant is physically-qualified to perform the duties of the position for which the City has made a conditional offer.

Additional Requirements

All offers of employment are contingent on verification of the applicant's ability to work legally in the United States. Prior to a new hire's first day of work he or she will be asked to provide original documents verifying their right to work and, as required by federal law, to sign federal Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification Form. If the applicant, at any time, cannot verify his or her right to work in the United States, the City of Somerville may need to terminate your employment.

Prior to or on a new hire's first working day, he or she will be asked to complete employment paperwork in the City Human Resources office. Copies of documentation will be required for this paperwork to be completed. A new hire will be required to present any of the following listed documents: a valid driver's license, social security card and/or United States issued passport.



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Conflict of Interest

All candidates must complete the MA State Ethics Training at <http://www.muniprogram.eth.state.ma.us/> prior to their first day of work.

Benefits

The City of Somerville offers health insurance, life insurance, dental insurance, retirement plans and other benefits to permanent full and part-time employees working more than 20 hours per week. Please see the benefits section on the City's Human Resources Department web page for detailed up to date information.

Anniversary Date

A new hire's first day of work is his or her official anniversary date. The City uses the anniversary date to compute various conditions and benefits.

Early Evaluation Period (EEP)

The City regards the early evaluation period as an integral part of the new employee process and shall be utilized by supervisors and Department Heads for closely observing the employee's work and conduct, establishing supervisory and work product expectations, securing the most effective adjustment of a new employee or a current employee to a new position, counseling an employee whose performance does not meet the required work standards, which may include discipline or discharge.

Every person hired or appointed to a full-time or part-time classified position must undergo an early evaluation period to enable the Department Head to observe the employee's ability to perform the various principal duties and provide contemporaneous job feedback to the employee. Department Heads conduct performance evaluations at a minimum of two intervals during the early evaluation period, once at the approximate mid-point of the EEP and once at the end. The Department Head may elect to conduct more frequent performance evaluations during the EEP at their discretion.

The early evaluation period begins immediately upon assumption of duties or promotion. Prior to the end of the early evaluation period the Department Head may recommend that the early evaluation period be extended to allow the Department Head to conduct additional performance evaluations or allow more time for the Department Head to work with the employee. If an employee's job is temporarily interrupted during the early evaluation period, upon return, they will be required to complete the remainder of the early evaluation period.

Note: Employees must maintain a position within a department for a one (1) year period before becoming eligible to bid/apply into a posted position in another department, unless waived by the Director of Human Resources.

Approved by:  Title: Director of Human Resources

Date: ~~July 8, 2015~~ Revised: October 17, 2018