



Hiring & Selection Policy

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent, fair, and transparent hiring and selection process for the City of Ellsworth. This policy is intended to promote equal employment opportunity, ensure merit-based hiring decisions, reduce bias, and select candidates who best meet the operational and organizational needs of the City.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all City of Ellsworth departments and all employment actions involving the recruitment, screening, interviewing, and selection of employees, except where otherwise governed by a collective bargaining agreement (CBA), state statute, or City ordinance. Where a collective bargaining agreement establishes an alternative hiring or selection process, the provisions of the applicable collective bargaining agreement shall take precedence and supersede this policy to the extent of any conflict.

III. Equal Employment Opportunity

The City of Ellsworth is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Employment decisions shall be made without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state, or local law.

IV. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Human Resources (HR):** Oversees compliance with this policy; approves interview questions and scoring tools; provides standardized forms; coordinates background and reference requirements; and ensures documentation is complete.

- **Department Head / Hiring Manager:** Participates in candidate screening, interviews, reference checks, and selection recommendations in accordance with this policy.
- **City Manager:** Provides final approval for all new hires and authorizes all employment offers.

V. Recruitment and Application Review

1. All job postings and recruitment efforts shall be coordinated through HR.
2. All applicants must submit a completed application and required materials by the posted deadline.
3. All Department Head job advertisements must be reviewed and approved by the City Manager prior to distribution.
4. If a position is covered by a collective bargaining agreement, the job advertisement must clearly state that the position is unionized and identify the applicable bargaining unit, where appropriate.

VI. Interview Process

1. A Hiring Committee shall be established for each vacant position.
2. The Hiring Committee must include, at a minimum:
 - At least one representative from Human Resources; and
 - At least one Department Head other than the hiring department, when practicable.
3. The Department Head for the vacant position may serve on the Hiring Committee but shall not be the sole decision-maker.
4. Interviews shall be structured and conducted in a consistent manner.
5. All candidates selected for interviews shall be asked the same set of interview questions. Appropriate follow-up questions may be asked based on responses.
6. Interview questions must be reviewed and approved by HR and the Department Head prior to the interview.

7. If initial screening interviews are conducted, they are not required to be scored. All subsequent interviews must be scored using a standardized interview scoring rubric approved by Human Resources.
8. Each Hiring Committee member shall independently score candidates using the standardized interview scoring rubric for all scored interviews.
9. Candidates shall be informed at the start of the interview if the position is covered by a collective bargaining agreement.
10. Interview rubrics shall be retained as part of the hiring record.

All interview notes and scoring documentation are subject to disclosure in accordance with the Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) and applicable state statutes.

VII. Reference Checks

1. All final candidates must provide three (3) professional references.
2. All references must be contacted prior to hire.
3. Reference checks shall be conducted by the Department Head using the standardized reference check form provided by HR.
4. Reference documentation shall be submitted to HR before an offer of employment is made.

VIII. Disclosure and Executive Review Requirements

The following circumstances must be disclosed to Human Resources and presented to the City Manager for review and approval prior to extending an employment offer:

- Significant gaps in employment history;
- Extensive criminal history or criminal charges that may be relevant to the position;
- Incomplete, inconsistent, or insufficiently detailed work history or resume;
- Strong personal, familial, or relational ties between the candidate and the Department Head or other City employees that may present a real or perceived conflict of interest;

- Any other factors that raise concerns regarding suitability, risk, or integrity in relation to the position.

No employment offer may be made until City Manager approval is obtained in these circumstances.

IX. Background and Conviction History Considerations

Background and conviction history information shall be evaluated in accordance with applicable federal and Maine law. A criminal record alone does not automatically disqualify a candidate. Consideration shall be given to the nature of the offense, its relevance to the position, and the time elapsed since the offense.

X. Offer of Employment

1. All offers of employment are contingent upon completion of the hiring process and required approvals. Prior to extending a final offer of employment, the City may issue a Conditional Offer of employment with City Manager approval. The conditional offer in addition to a completed background check form, authorizes the City to conduct background investigations, verify employment and education history, obtain criminal history information where permitted by law, contact references, and obtain any additional information or authorizations reasonably necessary to determine the candidate's suitability for employment.
2. All new hires must be approved by the City Manager or Deputy City Manager prior to extending an offer of employment.
3. Employment offers shall be made only through Human Resources following City Manager or Deputy City Manager authorization.
4. The City of Ellsworth reserves the right to rescind any offer of employment if, at any time, a candidate is determined not to meet the needs, standards, or requirements of the City.

5. Upon hire, employees are required to successfully complete a probationary period as a condition of continued employment.

XI. Documentation and Record Retention

All hiring records, including applications, scoring rubrics, interview notes, reference checks, and approval documentation, shall be retained by HR in accordance with record retention requirements.

XII. Policy Administration

HR is responsible for administering, interpreting, and enforcing this policy. Deviations from this policy require prior HR approval and, where applicable, City Manager authorization.

Adopted: 7/31/2026

Revised: _____