

CHECKING REFERENCES

We suggest at least three telephone references be documented for the applicants selected. If the person giving the reference says the candidate would not be eligible for rehire, you will want to consider removing that candidate from further consideration.

- Do not put anyone's current job in jeopardy. Only contact the references that are given. Ask the applicants' permission to contact other individuals not listed as references. You may use this tool when the recruiting period starts. However, we recommend the committee delay contacting the applicant's current employer until it is determined that the applicant is a finalist for the position.
- Search committee members should not raise any questions that fall under the EEO discriminatory practice areas, such as questions regarding sex, race, color, national origin, age, disability, or religion. The same questions should be asked for all references. Questions and answers should be recorded.
- Search committee members should use the most immediate employers or their representatives as references. He or she may also use the employer(s) for whom the applicant has worked the longest in a related position. If an unsatisfactory reference is received, he or she should contact another reference.
- Should phone numbers or contact persons not be specified on the application or resume, the hiring supervisor should ask the applicant to provide the reference information.
- Search committee members should not tell the applicant or the reference source(s) that he or she is conducting reference checks because the applicant has "been selected" for the position. He or she should only indicate that the applicant is "being considered".
- Search committee members should not accept references from friends, relatives, or persons who have not had the opportunity to observe job-related performance.
- Written letters of reference may be attached to the paperwork, but should not substitute for telephone contacts.
- A previous employer may, on occasion, have rules regarding supplying references and may provide only the position title, dates of employment, salary, and eligibility for rehire. If this is found to be true, the search committee member should document this information.