

Streamlining Pre-Employment Steps

Important pre-employment steps in the transit operator hiring process can include safety-related screenings like drug and alcohol testing, medical examinations, criminal background checks, and motor vehicle record reviews, as well as verification of prior employment. This checklist provides best practices for streamlining these pre-employment steps, based on our research with transit agencies of all sizes across the U.S.

- ☐ Enable candidates to complete steps concurrently wherever possible. For example, a candidate could undergo the drug test and the medical examination at the same appointment or complete the drug test on-site right after an in-person interview if a conditional offer is made. Similarly, background check release forms or other paperwork can be completed right after an interview during the same visit. Of the transit agencies surveyed, more than 60% said that at least some of their hiring process steps occur concurrently.
- ☐ Consider limiting the background check, both in terms of time frame and type of offense, to what is legally required and what the transit agency feels is essential and job-related. State on applicant paperwork what types of offenses will be considered, as sometimes applicants will drop out of the process because they believe a prior offense will be problematic that actually would not have been a disqualifier.
- ☐ Help applicants schedule appointments for drug tests, medical examinations, etc. or arrange for a walk-in partnership somewhere your applicants will be seen promptly.
- ☐ For steps that the applicant must complete on their own (for example, in some locations scheduling the drug test or completing certain paperwork is done independently), ask applicants to conduct these steps promptly and give a specific requested timeframe (e.g., within four days). Explain clearly that the sooner they complete such steps, the sooner they can start paid training.
- ☐ Manual review of gray-area criminal background issues can be a best practice, but an efficient system for these checks is essential to keeping the process moving. Prioritize conducting checks as soon as the information is available rather than waiting weeks to collect and process all candidates' results at once. Talk through the results with candidates as needed to understand the context in which incidents occurred.



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