

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
STATE HUMAN RESOURCES
PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

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SUBJECT: EEO/AA Staffing Requirements

SECTION: Recruitment

I. PRACTICE

The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) is committed to equal employment for all persons regardless of race, creed, ancestry, religion, color, gender, national origin, age, disability, arrest or conviction record, marital status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, membership in the armed forces, or any other protected class category as covered under state, federal, and local laws.

The DMA will use the procedures in this bulletin to: 1) ensure that Equal Employment Opportunity awareness and principles are present and applied in recruitment and selection activities and 2) to further the long range Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) / Affirmative Action (AA) objective of attaining a workforce that mirrors the general population of the overall labor force from which the DMA hires and serves.

II. PROCEDURE

A. Composition of the Interview Panel:

The DMA believes that diverse, balanced interview panels help provide equal opportunity in the hiring and selection process. Balanced interview panels help minimize cultural, racial, gender and disability differences between interviewers and interviewees, eliminate bias relating to communication style and content, and provide a more complete and fair evaluation of responses and qualifications of all candidates.

1. The first priority in creating interview panels is to seek individuals who are knowledgeable in the field and core requirements of the position, and to ensure that all panel members can lend credible perspective in evaluating candidates.
2. Regardless of the composition of the candidate pool and whether or not the classification is underutilized for an EEO/AA group, all interview panels **must** be diversely composed with *at least* one person representing an affirmative action group,

i.e. racial/ethnic minorities, female, or persons with disabilities. However, hiring supervisors are strongly encouraged to make every effort to establish panels that reflect the composition of the candidate pool, i.e. a candidate pool that includes a racial/ethnic minority, a female, and a person with a disability ideally would be matched with an interview panel of the same diversity. Contact your State Human Resources (SHR) specialist for assistance in identifying such individuals.

3. If the hiring supervisor makes a good faith effort and is still unable to obtain a balanced panel, he/she must forward a waiver request of the balanced panel requirement to the DMA Affirmative Action Officer (AAO) before conducting any interviews. To receive this waiver, the hiring supervisor must:
 - a. Inform the AAO that a balanced panel was unable to be obtained.
 - b. Document the efforts made to acquire target members.
 - c. If the AAO is satisfied with the efforts made, a waiver will be granted. If the AAO provides additional suggestions for achieving a balanced panel, the hiring supervisor must follow through and provide documentation if those further efforts fail.

B. Interview Panel Briefing:

It is important that panel members have an understanding and awareness of equal employment opportunity principles and DMA's policy and objectives as stated in this bulletin. Hiring supervisors have significant responsibility for the composition and quality of their interview panels and the conduct of its individual members.

1. Prior to interviews, the hiring supervisor must brief all panel members of this agency's commitment to equal employment opportunity for all persons, as provided in the Paragraph I above.
2. The hiring supervisor must also brief the importance of eliminating the potential for personal bias during interviews, with respect to all physical or observable characteristics of candidates such as communication styles, dialect, age, race, gender, a visible disability, pregnancy, etc. These characteristics have no relevancy to the job and shall not be discussed or otherwise considered in the evaluation process.
3. Before, during, and after the interview, it is common for panel members to engage in informal discussion with candidates to "break the ice". DMA encourages hiring supervisors and panel members to create a warm and welcoming environment, however, hiring supervisors and all panel members must be informed that caution is required. Whether inadvertently prompted by a panel member or provided by the candidate unsolicited, non-job related content of a personal nature introduces a risk for bias and/or potential claims of discrimination, particularly if initiated by a panel

member. If a candidate provides unsolicited information of a personal nature, he/she should be politely steered to another subject (if prior to or following the interview) or back to the formal interview questions.

4. Lastly, brief the panel members that if the candidate asks questions leading down a risky path, the candidate should be informed that at this point in the selection process, evaluations will be based solely on candidates' responses to the standard interview questions.

C. Candidate Recommendation and Underutilization:

The following is required if interviewing for a position which is underutilized for females and/or minorities (herein referred to as EEO/AA group members) and the candidate pool includes an EEO/AA group member(s).

1. Underutilization is defined as: Having fewer minorities or females in a particular job group than would reasonably be expected by their availability in the relevant labor force.
2. SHR provides the hiring supervisor an Alphabetical List of Certified Names for interviews. The bottom of the last page of this document indicates whether or not the job group is underutilized and provides information on the diversity of the candidate pool.
3. Hiring supervisors must send an interview schedule, with the names of the scheduled candidates, to their SHR specialist prior to the interviews. The SHR specialist will notify the hiring supervisor if a certified EEO/AA group candidate scheduled an interview, absent their name, so the hiring supervisor will know if the following step must occur.
4. If an EEO/AA group member is interviewed, but the hiring supervisor is considering selection of an individual who is not an EEO/AA group member, the hiring supervisor must contact DMA's Affirmative Action Officer at 608-242-3163, **before submitting a written recommendation**, to discuss the selection process, candidate qualifications, ranking, and rationale for the awaiting recommendation.
5. Once hiring selection is approved, EEO/AA Officer notifies appropriate HR specialist via email of their concurrence for inclusion in the recruitment file.