

POLICY

Office of Management

Reference Checks

Table of Contents

BACKGROUND1
POLICY1
REFERENCES.....2
EFFECTIVE DATE.....3
CHANGE CONTROL TABLE.....3
ATTACHMENT4

BACKGROUND

Reference checks serve as a tool for selecting officials to verify job related information on a candidate’s resume. It’s also used as a determinate of the candidate’s skills and abilities to assist the selecting official in assessing whether the candidate can perform the job duties associated with the position for which he/she is being considered. The purpose of this MAPP is to establish the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research’s (CDER) policy regarding reference checks for both internal and external candidates. This policy is applicable to all positions being filled, including General Schedule (GS), Commissioned Corps, and Title 42 Appointments.

POLICY

1. Reference checks must be conducted by the hiring official or designee who possesses direct knowledge of the position duties, desired competencies, and technical requirements to perform the job.
2. The FDA Reference Check form must be utilized (see attachment). The hiring official, however, is not limited to the questions on the form and may ask additional job related questions to better understand past work assignments, the level of performance and obtain information on competencies, strengths and gaps.
3. Social media should not be used by management officials in lieu of reference checks or as a compliment to the process.

4. There should be a minimum of two reference checks conducted by the hiring official.
5. Reference waivers must be submitted by the hiring official. The request to waive reference checks should be submitted on official letterhead and signed. In unusual circumstances, an email from the hiring official will be accepted.

External Candidates

1. Reference checks should be conducted on all external candidates under consideration for a position within the Center. **A waiver will not be accepted for external candidates.**
2. The last supervisor of record should be contacted prior to making a final decision; however, the hiring official may elect not to do so based on the request from the candidate.
3. When the candidate does not provide the last supervisor of record as a reference, the hiring official should seek permission from the candidate to contact the supervisor.
4. Professional references (e.g., former colleague, professor, or manager) with direct knowledge of a candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities should be contacted. **Personal friends and relatives should not be used.**

Internal Candidates

1. Waivers are permissible for an internal candidate within hiring official's chain of command only.
2. A candidate selection within CDER requires a reference check and must include the current supervisor.

REFERENCES

1. OPM Reference Checking
 2. DHHS Interview Guidelines and Reference Checks, dated June 22, 2011
 3. FDA Guide to Conducting a Fair & EEO Compliant Selection Process
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EFFECTIVE DATE

This MAPP is effective upon date of publication.

CHANGE CONTROL TABLE

Effective Date	Revision Number	Revisions

ATTACHMENT



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Food and Drug Administration

REFERENCE CHECK FORM

APPLICANT'S NAME: _____

FOR POSITION OF: _____

PERSON CONTACTED: _____

TITLE: _____ PHONE NUMBER: _____

RELATIONSHIP TO APPLICANT: _____
(CURRENT OR FORMER SUPERVISOR)

The Privacy Act provides that upon completion of this telephone inquiry, the reference source's identity will be disclosed to the applicant upon his or her request unless the reference source requests a pledge of confidentiality. In any event, the information provided will be furnished to the applicant upon his or her request.

DO NOT DISCLOSE THE SOURCE'S IDENTITY ()

IDENTITY DISCLOSURE APPROVED BY THE SOURCE ()

1. How long and how well have you known the applicant?

2. What job(s) did the applicant hold during that time?
(Title, Series, Grade, Dates)

3. What was the applicant's reason for leaving as you understand it?

08/19/98

PAGE 2 FDA REFERENCE CHECK FORM

4. Would you re-employ this person? If not, why?

5. What do you think of the applicant's:

a) Quality of work?

b) Ability to work well and get along with others?

c) Ability to work for others: (follow directions, accept criticism, grasp information and concepts and adapt quickly to new Ideas, concepts, and change?)

d) Dependability in carrying out work assignments (timeliness, completeness, adherence to instructions)?

e) Attendance?

f) Writing ability?

g) Oral communication skills?
1. one-on-one?

08/19/98

PAGE 3 FDA REFERENCE CHECK FORM

2. in front of groups?

h) Technical skills?

i) Working under pressure?

j) Other aspects pertinent to the job for which the applicant is being considered?

k) Demonstrated initiative to get the job done?

l) Demonstrated ability to accept the Agency's position in controversial, unpopular, or unfavorable situations?

m) Demonstrated ability to accept supervisory authority and to follow office procedures and policies?

6. Would you select or recommend selection of the applicant for the job for which he/she is being considered? Why or Why not?

08/19/98

PAGE 4 FDA REFERENCE CHECK FORM

7. What are the applicant's strong points?

8. What are the applicant's weak points?

9. Is there anything you would like to add about the applicant's attributes and/or skills?

10. Did the applicant exhibit any performance deficiencies while in your employ?

11. Did the applicant exhibit any conduct or attendance deficiencies while in your employ?

12. Do you have any reason to question the applicants trustworthiness, honesty, integrity or ethical conduct?

Reference Check made by: _____ Date: _____

08/19/98