

PHA Hiring Procedures – Table of Contents

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PHA Hiring Procedures

Section 1.0 Applications

In order to fill a vacancy, the Princeton Housing Authority (“PHA”) must first advertise the position in a newspaper and/or on a recruitment website (e.g. Indeed). The advertisement shall specify the job title, full or part-time status, typical work hours (including any on-call responsibilities and the required response time for emergencies), salary range, essential functions, qualifications, process for obtaining an application form, and deadline to submit the completed application. Residency cannot be used as a qualification for employment. A copy of the advertisement shall be posted on the PHA’s website.

An applicant must complete the PHA’s [Application for Employment](#) to be considered for a position. The application form shall not ask about disability status ([29 C.F.R. 1630.13](#)), salary history ([N.J.S.A. 10:5-12.12\(a\)](#)), or criminal background ([N.J.S.A. 34:6B-14](#)).

Section 2.0 Initial Screening

The PHA shall only consider applications submitted by the advertised deadline. Applicants who do not meet the advertised qualifications shall be removed from consideration. From the remaining applicants, the PHA shall select (based on education, experience, and any other relevant credentials) applicants for an initial interview.

Section 3.0 Initial Interviews

The PHA shall promptly schedule applicant interviews and make reasonable efforts to accommodate the scheduling restrictions of applicants. The interviewer shall keep detailed notes of every interview. The notes shall specify: (1) the date and time of the interview; (2) the name of the applicant; (3) the name of the interviewer; (4) the questions asked during the interview; (5) the answers provided by the applicant; and (6) any information volunteered by the applicant that was not requested by the interviewer.

The PHA’s interviewer **may ask** questions about the following:

1. Any prior commitments that might prevent the applicant from meeting work schedule or overall attendance requirements;
2. Availability for evening and/or weekend work;
3. Education, training, or experience relevant to the position;
4. Ability to perform the duties of the position with or without a reasonable accommodation; and
5. Ability to arrive on site within the required period of time in the event of an emergency (if the position has an on-call component).

The interviewer **shall not ask** questions about the following:

1. Salary history
2. Criminal history

3. Religion or creed
4. Race or color
5. Disabilities
6. Pregnancy
7. Personal or family medical history
8. Residency
9. Citizenship
10. Marital, civil union, or domestic partnership status
11. Financial status
12. Type or condition of military discharge

Following the interview, the interviewer may verify any information provided on the employment application and conduct reference checks. If the verification is conducted via non-written means, the interviewer shall keep detailed notes. The notes shall specify: (1) the date and time of the verification; (2) the name of the applicant; (3) the name and title of the individual responding; (4) the relationship of the individual to the applicant; (5) the questions asked; (6) the answers provided by the individual responding; and (7) any information volunteered by the individual responding that was not requested.

During a reference check, the PHA **may ask** the following questions:

1. How long have you known the applicant?
2. Is/Was the applicant employed with your organization?
If yes: For how long? What was their most recent job title?
3. Has the applicant demonstrated an ability to meet deadlines?
4. Has the applicant demonstrated initiative?
5. Has the applicant worked well on an independent basis?
6. Has the applicant demonstrated a willingness to take on new responsibilities?
7. Would you rehire the applicant?

Section 4.0 Background Checks

Applicant background checks cannot be conducted until after the initial interview.

Background checks are regulated by the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act ([15 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.](#)) and the New Jersey Fair Credit Reporting Act ([N.J.S.A. 56:11-28 et seq.](#)). Consequently, background checks cannot be conducted unless and until the applicant has completed the [Background Check Disclosure and Authorization](#) form. For driving records checks, the PHA must also complete the relevant New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (“MVC”) forms. The applicant must cooperate with the background check process (including timely execution of any and all required forms) in order to remain eligible for the position.

For criminal background checks, the PHA utilizes an on-site fingerprint scanner and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) database. For driving record checks, the PHA will utilize MVC driver history abstracts.

In accordance with [N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-22.2](#), the PHA shall disqualify any applicant whose background check reveals a conviction in New Jersey for any crime or disorderly persons offense: (a) involving danger to the person pursuant to [N.J.S.A. 2C:11-1 et seq.](#), [N.J.S.A. 2C:12-1 et seq.](#), [N.J.S.A. 2C:13-1 et seq.](#), [N.J.S.A. 2C:14-1 et seq.](#) or [N.J.S.A. 2C:15-1 et seq.](#); or (b) against the family, children or incompetents, pursuant to [N.J.S.A. 2C:24-1 et seq.](#) In addition, the PHA shall disqualify any applicant whose background check reveals a conviction in any other state or jurisdiction, for conduct which, if committed in New Jersey, would constitute any of the above crimes or offenses. The PHA reserves the right to disqualify any applicant who has been convicted of any crime or offense, regardless of whether said conviction meets the above criteria. In accordance with [N.J.S.A. 34:6B-14](#), the PHA shall only consider criminal convictions that have not been expunged or erased through executive pardon.

However, an applicant shall not be disqualified on the basis of any conviction if they affirmatively demonstrate to the PHA clear and convincing evidence of rehabilitation. In determining whether this standard has been met, the PHA shall consider the following:

1. The nature and responsibility of the applicant's prospective position;
2. The nature and seriousness of the offense;
3. The circumstances under which the offense occurred;
4. The date of the offense;
5. The age of the applicant when the offense was committed;
6. Whether the offense was repeated;
7. Social conditions which may have contributed to the offense; and
8. Any evidence of rehabilitation, including good conduct in prison or in the community, counseling or psychiatric treatment received, acquisition of additional academic or vocational education, successful participation in correctional work-release programs, or the recommendation of persons who have supervised the applicant.

If the PHA intends to disqualify an applicant based on the results of a background check, it must provide the applicant with (1) the Summary of Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act; (2) a copy of the record(s) the PHA will rely upon; (3) adequate notice and opportunity to confirm or deny the accuracy of the information contained in the record(s); and (4) a reasonable period of time to correct or complete the record(s) prior to a final determination or decision being made. The PHA will first issue a [pre-adverse action](#) notice with a copy of the Summary of Rights to advise that it is seeking to disqualify the individual from employment. After the timeframes for objecting to the record(s) have passed, the PHA will then issue a [post-adverse action](#) notice with another copy of the Summary of Rights to confirm that the individual has been disqualified from employment. These notices shall be issued to the applicant by certified, regular, and electronic mail.

[Section 5.0 Board Approval](#)

Following the completion of all background checks, the Executive Director shall provide a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners regarding the hiring of the applicant. The recommendation shall be accompanied by a written report

identifying the following information:

1. An explanation regarding the need to fill the position.
2. Confirmation that the vacancy was properly advertised and posted.
3. A summary of the initial screening process.
4. A summary of the initial interview process.
5. Confirmation that the applicant successfully completed the background check.
6. A summary of the applicant's qualifications.
7. An explanation of the basis for the proposed salary.
8. A certification that the PHA has sufficient funds available to fill the position.

If the Board of Commissioners approves the hiring of the applicant by way of Resolution, the PHA shall make a formal offer of employment to the applicant.

Section 6.0 Disability-Related Inquiries

The PHA reserves the right to make pre-employment disability-related inquiries. The inquiries shall be made after the offer of employment but before the successful applicant commences work for the PHA. In accordance with [29 C.F.R. 1630.14](#), the PHA may inquire into the successful applicant's ability to perform job-related functions and/or ask the successful applicant to describe or demonstrate how they will be able to perform job-related functions (with or without reasonable accommodation).

Section 7.0 Medical Examinations

The PHA reserves the right to require the successful applicant to complete a physical or undergo other medical evaluations. These evaluations shall be made after the offer of employment but before the successful applicant commences work for the PHA. In accordance with [29 C.F.R. 1630.14](#), these evaluations shall only be required if all entering employees in the same job category are subjected to such evaluations.

Section 8.0 Drug Testing

The PHA reserves the right to conduct pre-employment drug testing. The drug testing must be conducted after the offer of employment is made but before the successful applicant commences work for the PHA. Any adverse action resulting from a pre-employment drug test must be taken before the successful applicant commences work. The PHA shall not take adverse action based on a positive test for marijuana except as permitted by [N.J.S.A. 24:6I-52](#).

Section 9.0 Post-Hiring Matters

The PHA shall document the basis for the successful applicant's level of pay. In accordance with the Equal Pay Act ([N.J.S.A. 10:5-12\(t\)](#)), the PHA shall ensure that the successful applicant and existing employees do not receive different rates of pay for substantially similar work unless:

1. There is a seniority system;
2. There is a merit system; or

3. The differential is based on legitimate, bona fide factors such as training, education, experience, or the quantity or quality of production; the factors are not based on and do not perpetuate a differential based on protected characteristics; each of the factors is applied reasonably; one or more of the factors account for the entire differential; and the factors are job-related and based on a legitimate business necessity.

On the first day of employment, or as soon as possible thereafter, the successful applicant shall be provided with a copy of the PHA's Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual ("Manual") and their job description. The applicant must sign a receipt for the Manual, the job description, and any personal protective equipment issued by the PHA.

All documents created during the hiring process must be returned to the Executive Director. Documents related to the successful applicant must be placed in the employee's personnel file or confidential medical file. Documents related to the unsuccessful applicants must be retained for at least one year.

Appendix A - Application for Employment



179 Spruce Circle, Princeton, NJ 08540

Phone: (609) 924-3448

Fax: (609) 924-1663

Application for Employment

| Applicant Information | |
|---|---|
| Name (Last, First MI) | |
| Street Address City, ST Zip | |
| Mailing Address (if different) City, ST Zip | |
| Email Address | |
| Cell Phone Number | |
| Position Information | |
| Position of Interest | |
| Availability | |
| Would you be interested in temporary employment? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Do you possess any relevant licenses, certifications, or registrations? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Identify: _____ |
| General Information | |
| Are you either a U.S. Citizen or an alien authorized to work in the United States? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Are you 18 years of age or older? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Do you possess a valid driver's license? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No State: _____ |
| Are you fluent in any other languages and willing to communicate in those languages on the job? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Language: _____ |
| Are you a veteran? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Branch: _____ |
| Have you ever previously been employed by the PHA? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date(s): _____ |
| Have you ever previously applied for employment with the PHA? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date(s): _____ |
| Are you related to anyone currently working for the PHA? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Name/Relation: _____ |
| Have you ever used any other name(s) different from the name listed above? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Name: _____ |

| Education Information | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|-----------------------|
| School Name and Address | Years Attended | Graduated? | Degree Received | Major Course of Study |
| High School | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | |
| College or University | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | |
| Graduate School | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | |
| Other Formal Training | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | |
| Previous Employment Information | | | | |
| Employer Name and Address | From (MM/YYYY) | To (MM/YYYY) | Full or Part Time <input type="checkbox"/> FT <input type="checkbox"/> PT | Reason for Leaving |
| Supervisor Name and Phone | Job Title | | Duties | |
| Employer Name and Address | From (MM/YYYY) | To (MM/YYYY) | Full or Part Time <input type="checkbox"/> FT <input type="checkbox"/> PT | Reason for Leaving |
| Supervisor Name and Phone | Job Title | | Duties | |
| Employer Name and Address | From (MM/YYYY) | To (MM/YYYY) | Full or Part Time <input type="checkbox"/> FT <input type="checkbox"/> PT | Reason for Leaving |
| Supervisor Name and Phone | Job Title | | Duties | |
| Employer Name and Address | From (MM/YYYY) | To (MM/YYYY) | Full or Part Time <input type="checkbox"/> FT <input type="checkbox"/> PT | Reason for Leaving |
| Supervisor Name and Phone | Job Title | | Duties | |
| May the PHA contact all previous employers/supervisors? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | Exception: _____ | |

| References (please list three professional references) | |
|---|---------------------|
| Name | Relationship |
| Company Name & Address | Phone for Reference |

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Name | Relationship |
| Company Name & Address | Phone for Reference |

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Name | Relationship |
| Company Name & Address | Phone for Reference |

Disclaimer and Signature

I understand that, in connection with my application for employment, the PHA may conduct background check(s) regarding my criminal history, driver history, and all other relevant matters. I further understand that the PHA may reject my application for employment based upon the results of any such background check(s).

I authorize my former employers to release any information they may have concerning my employment record and I release the PHA and all previous employers listed above from all liability whatsoever that may issue from securing this information. I further authorize representatives of the PHA to verify any and all information contained in this application.

I CERTIFY that the information on this application is complete and accurate, to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any misleading or incorrect information may render this application void and be just cause for immediate termination if employed.

| | |
|-----------|------|
| Signature | Date |
|-----------|------|

Appendix B - Background Check Disclosure and Authorization



179 Spruce Circle, Princeton, NJ 08540

Phone: (609) 924-3448

Fax: (609) 924-1663

Background Check

Disclosure, Acknowledgement, and Authorization

Disclosure Regarding Background Check

The Princeton Housing Authority ("PHA") may obtain information about you from a consumer reporting agency for employment purposes. Thus, you may be the subject of a "consumer report" which may include information about your criminal history and/or motor vehicle driver history. The PHA reserves the right to take adverse action against you based in whole or in part upon any information contained within such a consumer report.

Acknowledgement and Authorization

I have read the above disclosure and hereby authorize the PHA to obtain "consumer reports" regarding my criminal history and/or motor vehicle driver history at any time after receipt of this authorization and throughout my employment. I understand that, in order to ensure proper identification, I am required to provide the below personal identifiers. I further understand that this information will be used for the purpose of performing a lawful criminal history background check and/or lawful motor vehicle driver history check in connection with the employment process and will not be used for any other purpose.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|------------|-----------------------------|
| Signature _____ | | Date _____ | |
| Name | _____ | | |
| | First | MI | Last Maiden (if applicable) |
| Street Address City, ST Zip | _____ | | |
| Email Address | _____ | | |
| Date of Birth | _____ | | |
| Gender | <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | |
| Race | <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |
| Social Security Number | ____-____-____ | | |
| Cell Phone Number | _____ | | |

Appendix C1 - Pre-Adverse Action Notification Template



179 Spruce Circle, Princeton, NJ 08540

Phone: (609) 924-3448
Fax: (609) 924-1663

[Month 00, 2024]

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL, REGULAR MAIL, AND ELECTRONIC MAIL

[Applicant Name]
[Applicant Mailing Address]
[Applicant Email Address]

Re: Background Check Results

Dear [Applicant Name]:

As you authorized in connection with your employment application, the Princeton Housing Authority ("PHA") has conducted a pre-employment background check on you. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that there is information in the background check report received by the PHA which, if accurate, would cause the PHA to reject your employment application. A copy of the report is enclosed.

The report was furnished to the PHA by [the Federal Bureau of Investigation (if criminal history) / New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (if driving record)] [insert address and phone number of agency]. Please understand that while [agency name] provided the report, they did not make this decision and are unable to provide you with the specific reasons why we made this decision.

Enclosed along with this report is a summary of your rights under the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act. Under the law, you have the right to dispute, directly with [agency name], the accuracy or completeness of any information in this report. You also have the right to obtain an additional free copy of the enclosed report if you request it from [agency] within 60 days of when you receive this notice.

If you believe any information in the report is inaccurate, you must notify the PHA in writing within seven (7) business days. **If you fail to respond within this timeframe, the record will be deemed accurate and the PHA will reject your employment application.**

If you properly notify the PHA within the above timeframe, you will have an additional twenty (20) business days to correct or complete the record through [agency name] prior to a final decision being made by the PHA. **If you fail to secure a sufficient correction or completion of the record through [agency name] within this timeframe, the PHA will reject your employment application.**

Sincerely,

[name], [title]

Enc.

www.princetonhousing.org

Appendix C2 - Post-Adverse Action Notification Template



179 Spruce Circle, Princeton, NJ 08540

Phone: (609) 924-3448
Fax: (609) 924-1663

[Month 00, 2024]

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL, REGULAR MAIL, AND ELECTRONIC MAIL

[Applicant Name]
[Applicant Mailing Address]
[Applicant Email Address]

Re: Rejection of Employment Application

Dear [Applicant Name]:

On [date], you were notified in writing that the PHA had received a pre-employment background check report which contained information which, if accurate, would result in the rejection of your employment application. You were provided with a copy of the report and advised that, if you failed to notify the PHA of any inaccuracies within seven (7) business days, the record would be deemed accurate and the PHA would reject your employment application. You were also advised that, if you notified the PHA within the required timeframe but failed to secure a sufficient correction or completion of the record through [agency name] within an additional twenty (20) business days, the PHA would reject your employment application.

You have failed to [notify the PHA of any inaccuracies / secure a sufficient correction or completion of the record] within the required timeframe. **Accordingly, the PHA has made a final decision to reject your employment application based on the results of your pre-employment background check.**

The report was furnished to the PHA by [the Federal Bureau of Investigation (if criminal history) / New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (if driving record)] [insert address and phone number of agency]. Please understand that while [agency name] provided the report, they did not make this decision and are unable to provide you with the specific reasons why we made this decision.

Enclosed along with this report is a summary of your rights under the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act. Under the law, you have the right to dispute, directly with [agency name], the accuracy or completeness of any information in this report. You also have the right to obtain an additional free copy of the enclosed report if you request it from [agency] within 60 days of when you receive this notice.

Sincerely,

[name], [title]

Enc.

www.princetonhousing.org