



Human Resources
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

Central HR Talent Acquisition

Staff Hiring Guide

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Introduction

This hiring guide details the steps in recruiting staff positions at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. It serves as a reference point for search committees to ensure each search is consistent, fair, equitable and legally compliant.

This guide provides numerous resources to assist hiring managers, HR business partners, and search committee members in navigating the recruiting and hiring processes. Best practices for efficient, respectful, and legally compliant search procedures are included. The clickable table of contents is designed to help you quickly find what guidance you need at any given point in the recruiting process.

If you have questions about any topic(s) covered or specific scenarios not covered, please contact your Central HR Talent Acquisition Consultant.

Visual Overview



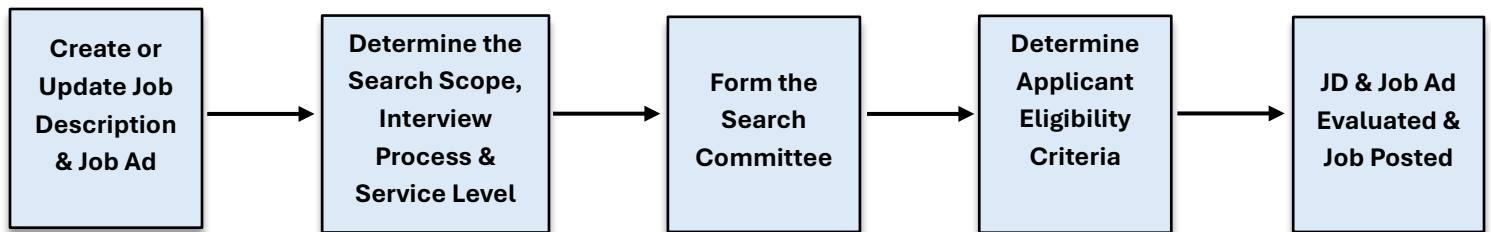
This is a high-level view of the recruiting process. The rest of this guide will expand on these main sections, and other micro visuals and checklists are provided at the end of each section.

More detailed process flowcharts can be found here:

- [Recruiting Process Flowchart – University Staff & Classified Staff](#)

Before the Search

Visual Overview



More detailed process flowcharts can be found here:

- [Recruiting Process Flowchart – University Staff & Classified Staff](#)

Identify a Vacancy or Vacancies

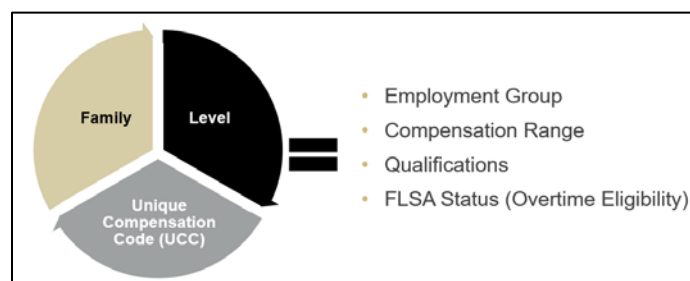
When an existing position becomes vacant or approval is received for a new position, the hiring authority should evaluate the team structure and business needs to ensure the necessity of the position and confirm funds are available to fill the position.

A single search can streamline the process if multiple vacant positions need to be filled. Each additional position requires separate budget approval and system processes. Position setup, budget approval, and other system processes can be completed for additional vacancies at the beginning of the search, saving time at the end of the search.

Create or Update Job Description and Job Advertisement

To lay the foundation for a successful search, the Department will begin by creating a detailed Job Description that provides a summary of the role (i.e., **Nature of Work**), outlines responsibilities (i.e., **Duties**), clarifies the level of education, experience and skills required and desired to be successful in the role (**Qualification, Preferred Qualifications, and Competencies**), and emphasizes any Conditions of Employment and **Functional Attributes**.

This document acts as a formal record of the Department's business needs. It is used to formally classify a position, which includes establishing a compensation range, employment group (University Staff or State Classified), job family, level, unique compensation code (if applicable), and FLSA status.



The Job Description also becomes a detailed resource that the search committee (SC) uses to create a streamlined and engaging job advertisement.

An overview of key sections of the JD and Job Ad can be found in the appendix at the end of this guide.

More detailed guidance on creating the Job Description and Job Advertisement [can be found here](#), including definitions of job families and levels, a library of JD templates for professional roles, and salary ranges for the current fiscal year.

School of Medicine specific job description templates [can be found here](#).

Recruitment Levels of Service

Central HR offers three recruitment service levels, each with varying levels of involvement from our office and the department's search committee. When the Smartsheet transaction is submitted to begin a new search, one of three service options must be selected. Note that some service levels require an intake meeting with your Talent Acquisition (TA) Consultant before posting.

To learn more about each level of service, please click [here](#) or contact your Talent Acquisition Consultant to determine which level best fits your department's hiring needs.

Central HR will conduct the initial minimum qualifications screening of applicants for classified staff. Depending on the applicant volume and number of qualified candidates, HR may also be required to conduct first-round interviews on behalf of the department and refer the top candidates to the search committee for further interviews.

Scope of Search

The appointing authority should determine the scope of the search, considering the department's needs, budget, and current job market conditions. It is essential to determine whether the department is willing and able to cover the costs for visa sponsorship. The department must incur the costs if the successful candidate selected requires sponsorship.

Open rank searches are another way for departments to broaden the applicant pool by including multiple levels in the same recruitment. Example: a hiring manager is open to different levels of experience, so they create a recruitment for a Research Services role that's open to entry through senior-level experience. If the hiring department elects to conduct an open rank search, they must clearly outline the differences in the role at each level in both the job description and the job posting. That way, it's clear to applicants to determine if they are qualified for the role and what level they are interested in pursuing. More guidance on running an open-rank search is provided below in the "[During the Search](#)" section.

Establishing the Interview Process

The appointing authority should determine how many rounds of interviews will be necessary, what topics or specific questions will be covered in each round, how each interview will be conducted (virtual/in-person), and who will serve on the search committee.

To determine the number of rounds of interviews, the hiring authority should consider the position level and who the position will regularly interact with during their work. Lower-level, more focused positions should not require as many interview rounds as higher-level positions with wider-ranging responsibilities.

The best practice for entry and lower-level positions (and smaller applicant pools) is to have two rounds of interviews. For example:

- 1st round, initial screening interviews conducted via phone or virtually (i.e., Zoom or Teams), by one or two search committee members, with the top 6-8 candidates
- 2nd round, final in-person interviews conducted on campus by the hiring manager and the search committee (maximum of four SC members) with the final 1 or 2 candidates o The hiring manager and search committee interviews can be separate

The best practice for mid-to-high level positions (and larger applicant pools) is to have three rounds of interviews. For example:

- 1st round, initial screening interviews conducted via phone or virtually (i.e., Zoom or Teams), by one or two search committee (SC) members, with the top 10-12 candidates
- 2nd round, virtual interviews conducted virtually by the search committee members, with the top 3-5 candidates
- 3rd round, final in-person interviews conducted on campus by the hiring manager and the search committee (maximum of four SC members) with the final 1 or 2 candidates o The hiring manager and search committee interviews can be separate

A streamlined interview process may be taken if there are very few (3 or fewer) qualified candidates after initial application screening. For example:

- 1st and final round, in-person interviews conducted on campus by the hiring manager and the search committee (maximum of four SC members), with all of the top candidates
 - o The hiring manager and search committee interviews can be separate

Additional Considerations:

- Senior or executive-level positions may require additional rounds of interviews, presentations from candidates, and/or public meetings. For more information, please discuss the process with your departmental leadership and Central HR TAC.

A sample search timeline template can be found here in the appendix at the end of this guide.

Forming the Search Committee

To determine the number of search committee members and which individuals will serve, the hiring authority should consider the position level, with whom the position will regularly interact in their work, and the availability of potential committee members.

Search committees should comprise individuals who understand the role and bring different perspectives and areas of expertise. This approach positively impacts our campus community by creating a broader perspective, reducing the risk of unconscious bias, attracting top talent, and reflecting our organizational values.

When selecting search committee members, the hiring authority and search chair should be attentive to power dynamics. Although power dynamics cannot always be avoided, the search committee should strive to create an environment where each member is comfortable voicing their opinion during deliberations.

The hiring authority must carefully consider the availability of potential committee members. Each individual serving on a search committee makes a serious commitment of time, energy, and expertise.

All committee members must complete the required search committee training and attend all pre-search meetings, interviews, and final debrief meetings. Committee members unable to participate in one or more key meetings or interviews should notify the hiring authority and fellow members and withdraw from participation.

The best practice is for the hiring authority and hiring manager not to serve on the search committee directly. Instead, they should select a small group of key individuals to establish a qualified applicant pool and forward the most qualified candidates for final consideration. When hiring authorities and hiring managers serve directly as search committee members, they are more vulnerable to potential claims of bias and discrimination during the initial screening and interview phases.

Additional information and guidance can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section, [in the appendix below](#).

Number of Search Committee Members

The best practice for entry and lower-level positions (and smaller applicant pools) is having no more than 3 or 4 search committee members. For example:

- 1 individual in a same/similar position on the same team, doing directly related work, who will interact daily with the new hire
- 1 individual in a different position on another team, doing indirectly related work, who will interact regularly or occasionally with the new hire
- 1 individual in a leadership (team leader, supervisor, manager) position within the department who is familiar with the work, understands team dynamics, and knows what soft skills will be beneficial

The best practice for mid-to-high level positions (and larger applicant pools) is having no more than 5 or 6 search committee members. For example:

- 2 individuals in the same/similar positions on the same team, doing directly related work, who will interact daily with the new hire
- 2 individuals in different positions on other teams, doing indirectly related work, who will interact regularly or occasionally with the new hire
- 1 individual in a leadership (team leader, supervisor, manager) position within the department who is familiar with the work, understands team dynamics, and knows what soft skills will be beneficial

Search Committee Roles & Responsibilities

The search committee's primary responsibility is to use its collective wisdom to translate the hiring authority's charge into a search strategy. The committee will generate a robust pool of applicants,

fairly assess qualified candidates, and recommend finalists that best meet the hiring department's needs.

This begins with a pre-search meeting to discuss the position, the recruitment process, timeline, and the job advertisement before the posting goes live. The hiring authority should outline expectations of the search process, including the scope, timeline, budget, outreach efforts, ranking preference, number of finalists, and other key considerations. After the pre-search meeting, the search chair should send a summary email to all committee members outlining expectations and the timeline.

Once the job advertisement is finalized, all search committee members should actively make contacts, identify prospective applicants, and aid in populating the applicant pool through their efforts throughout the posting period.

In addition, all search committee members:

- Are required to complete the search committee training.
 - Available through Percipio, which is accessible via the CU portal. The training title is “Search Committee Training”.
- Must dedicate their time and be available for all committee meetings and interviews
- Should recuse themselves if they are unable to participate and/or have any conflicts of interest

Specific Roles:

- Hiring Authority
 - Commits to a transparent, fair, equitable and legally compliant process
 - Issues the official charge to formally begin the search
 - Attends initial pre-search meeting with the entire search committee
 - Ensures budget availability for the position
 - Consults with hiring manager on final hiring decisions
- Search Chair
 - Oversees the search logistics and keeps the committee on track
 - Ensures the application review matrix is completed in full
 - Establishes an efficient timeframe, including key target dates for committee meetings and interviews
 - Attends all committee meetings and sends email summaries
 - Makes recommendations on whom to invite to interviews
 - Participates in interviews as needed
 - Keeps the hiring authority informed throughout
- Hiring Manager
 - Reviews and updates the job description and job advertisement
 - Attends initial pre-search meeting
 - Participates in final round interviews
 - Makes final hiring decisions in consultation with the hiring authority
- Communications Liaison
 - Also referred to as the “Posting Contact”
 - Responds to applicant and candidate inquiries promptly
 - Sends “Not Selected” notifications as soon as administratively possible
 - Name and email address will be listed in the job advertisement

- o Attends all committee meetings
- Search Committee Members
 - o Reviews applications for completeness
 - o Assesses applicants against minimum and preferred qualifications, and fills in the application review matrix
 - o Makes recommendations on whom to invite to interviews
 - o Participates in interviews as needed
 - o Attends all committee meetings
- Department HR
 - o Reviews final job description and job ad for completeness and submits to central HR for formal evaluation
 - o Attends initial pre-search meeting
 - o Acts as liaison between the search committee and central HR
 - o Assists with dispositioning and notifying applicants and candidates
 - o Completes final offer and hiring steps

Search Committee Guidelines for Interaction

While different colleges, schools, and departments may operate in unique environments and employ slightly different recruiting processes, all searches share standard features, and all search committees share the same commitment.

Search committee members should commit to:

- We will agree on how to make decisions at various stages of our work.
- We will agree on whether and how to prioritize job qualifications (as stipulated by the hiring authority or other stakeholders, including committee members).
- Before discussing applicants, we will reach a consensus on how qualifications will be weighted.
- We will consistently apply the same decision-making criteria for all applicants.
- We will justify our decisions about whether or not to advance an applicant based on qualifications and decision-making criteria.
- We will try to avoid unconscious biases. If we perceive that they are occurring, we will discuss them.
- We will present and consider objective and concrete information about, not hearsay or unfair assumptions – about job candidates.
- We will guarantee strict confidentiality regarding job candidates and the committee's procedures and discussions.
- All members will work together so that each member has access to more or less equal "airtime" during committee deliberations.

This commitment should be discussed with everyone involved during the pre-search meeting and reinforced by all committee members throughout the process.

Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest, or even perceptions of conflicts, may arise during recruitment. The hiring authority should be careful when selecting committee members to avoid potential conflicts of interest that could lead to a real or perceived imbalance in influence.

Search committee members should carefully consider and discuss honestly as a group any potential conflicts of interest as early as possible. This may include personal or family relationships with prospective candidates.

More information on conflicts of interest [can be found here](#), including CU policies regarding nepotism and amorous relationships.

Submit Job Description and Job Advertisement for Review

After the pre-search meeting, based on feedback from the committee, the hiring manager will make any final changes to the job description and job advertisement and forward them to the department HR.

Department HR will formally submit a search request to Central HR via the Smartsheet transaction center with the final job description/job advertisement attached and budget approval (if applicable).

[Here is a link](#) to the transaction center request form. On the [Smartsheet Resources page](#), we also have many step-by-step resources and FAQs for the transaction center.

Sourcing & Advertising

Sourcing Resources:

For traditionally hard-to-fill positions, where the applicant pool is anticipated to be small, your Talent Acquisition Consultant may be able to assist with sourcing candidates. Our office primarily utilizes LinkedIn, Indeed, and the CU Careers application system to conduct additional advertising and outreach to potential candidates. For more information, please contact your Talent Acquisition Consultant.

Advertising Resources:

Central HR Talent Acquisition, in partnership with CU System, maintains the advertising resources centrally for the Anschutz campus. For a complete list of advertising resources, please click [here](#). Any additional advertising that the appointment authority or search committee would like to do needs to be handled internally through the hiring department.

Additional Advertising Resource - JobElephant

CU has partnered with JobElephant, a recruitment advertisement agency, to provide departments with a centralized, one-stop advertising option beyond the listed advertising resources above. JobElephant will work directly with the hiring department to create an advertising campaign recommendation that includes additional advertising options based on the job or the position's target market. There is no cost to the department for JobElephant to create an advertising campaign recommendation. If the department decides to place additional advertisements, JobElephant can set up billing directly to the department.

To obtain a customized advertising campaign recommendation, send Andrea Molyneux the following information: job title, job number, and job description or job posting to andrea@jobelephant.com or call 1-800-311-0563.

Outreach Efforts

Everyone involved in the search (hiring manager, hiring authority, search committee members, department HR staff, and other colleagues) should participate in outreach activities to increase traffic to the job advertisement and help attract potential candidates.

Options include social media, alumni networks, job fairs, personal and professional networks, and industry-specific publications. Most common are LinkedIn social media posts that include attention-grabbing language, a link to the full posting, appropriate hashtags, and a branded image.

Our [Social Media Toolkit for Hiring Departments](#) contains more detailed information, including example posts, branded images, and sample hashtags.

Posting Deadlines & Full Consideration Dates

The best practice is to include a hard deadline for each posting—a specific date when the job advertisement will automatically expire. This gives applicants a clear date by which they need to submit their materials and lets them know when we will review submissions. After reviewing all submissions received, the search committee can proceed with interviews or re-post for another period to solicit additional applications if there are no viable candidates.

Another option is to include a full consideration deadline—a specific date by which all submissions received must be considered—while leaving the posting up until the search committee decides whom to interview. This gives applicants a clear date to submit their materials for the best consideration and lets them know that if they submit after the deadline, their materials may or may not be considered. Once the full consideration date passes, new submissions will typically slow or stop as the posting may appear stale to new potential applicants.

The suggested full consideration date is two weeks following the position's posting date. Depending on the hiring department's needs and timeline, this initial posting period can be longer or shorter. The minimum posting period is five calendar days.

Positions with high turnover and/or teams with numerous opportunities may need to be recruited over extended periods of time. These are referred to as open-continuous or evergreen postings. We recommend closing an evergreen posting at least every six months. Best practice is quarterly.

Even in these situations, it is still best practice to include either a hard deadline or a full consideration date. However, after reviewing all initial applicants, the job ad can be re-posted for another period. Continually reviewing and reposting with future full consideration dates will let potential candidates know you are actively reviewing.

Posted Salary Rate or Range

Colorado state law requires a salary rate or range to be included in all job advertisements. The university standard is to include a range that represents the established minimum for the job code, up

to the 50th percentile. The posting range is only an anticipated range, a reasonable estimate of where we may start someone; it is not a legal obligation.

Generally speaking, starting a new hire between the minimum and 50th percentile of the established range will likely not cause equity issues. However, every offer goes through an individualized equity review, considering the candidates' qualifications, which may result in an offer closer to the minimum or even above the 50th percentile if necessary.

Certain positions may need different posting ranges depending on their specific equity, budgetary, and recruitment concerns. If the department is interested in posting above the 50th percentile, it will need to submit a request to the Central HR Compensation team before submitting the Transaction Center request for a new search. The Compensation team can be contacted via email at HR.Compensation@cuanschutz.edu. When submitting the Transaction Center request, please attach the Compensation approval with the approved salary range.

Determining Applicant Eligibility Criteria

The search chair and committee members should review the qualifications in the job advertisement and meet to discuss them before the posting goes live. The entire committee should have a common and clear understanding of the qualifications and how applicants may or may not meet those qualifications. All applications should be assessed against the same standards.

Designated search committee members will review all submissions and perform the initial application screening to determine which applicants are eligible for consideration. This includes required application materials, meeting the minimum qualifications, and meeting all conditions of employment, including legal work authorization/visa sponsorship eligibility.

Department HR is responsible for sending "Not Selected" emails to all those who did not meet the minimum criteria. To provide a positive candidate experience, the best practice is to send "Not Selected" emails as soon as it is determined that the individual will not be moving forward in the selection process. More information on sending "Not Selected" emails can be found below [in this section](#).

International Considerations

If the search scope includes international candidates (department willing and able to sponsor a visa), all candidates, regardless of geographic location, should be given the same consideration. If any of the finalists being considered need visa sponsorship, the department must contact the International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) office as soon as possible to discuss the process and timeline.

More detailed information from the ISSS office [can be found here](#), including their contact information.

If the search scope does not include international candidates (department is unable to sponsor a visa), the following language should be included in the Conditions of Employment section of the job advertisement:

- Please be advised that this position is not eligible now or in the future for visa sponsorship.

Note: Paraprofessional positions (those that do not require a bachelor's degree in the minimum qualifications) are not eligible for visa sponsorship, so the above language should always be included for those positions.

Checklist

Before the Search

- ☐ Identify a vacancy
- ☐ Ensure budget is available
- ☐ Create or update job description
- ☐ Determine the scope and service level for the search
- ☐ Determine the interview process
- ☐ Appoint a search chair and form a search committee
- ☐ Establish a timeframe with key dates and prepare for interviews
- ☐ Establish interview questions
- ☐ Post on CU Careers

During the Search

Visual Overview



More detailed process flowcharts can be found here:

- [Recruiting Process Flowchart – University Staff & Classified Staff](#)

Candidate Care & Communications

The University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus is committed to providing an exceptional applicant experience created through inclusive, timely, and transparent communication. As a recruiter or HR Business Partner, you represent the University and play a key role in fostering a positive applicant experience. Applicant experience is crucial in the hiring process. As applicants can have multiple opportunities to consider, providing a positive applicant experience gives us a competitive advantage to aid in the recruitment of current and future career opportunities.

Whether interviewed or not, each individual who applies should be given full consideration and treated with the same respect as those who go further in the process. If candidates seek additional information regarding not being selected, they should be provided with info to clarify the fair and equitable, job-related reason why they were not selected. All candidates are owed an explanation to help them understand why they were eliminated from consideration. We should treat all applicants as if they are future employees at CU. If the hiring department needs assistance with what can be shared with applicants, please contact your Talent Acquisition Consultant for assistance.

Clear and timely communications at all stages of the search are critical for the efficient use of the search committee's time and a positive applicant experience. This includes:

- Sharing the anticipated search timeline with all candidates under consideration
- Sending 'not selected' emails as soon as it is determined a candidate won't be moving forward, not waiting until the end of the search
- Reaching out to candidates to begin scheduling interviews within 1 week of the posting deadline or full consideration date
- Notifying candidates of any delays throughout the selection process
- Sending post-interview updates to candidates within 1 week of their interview
- Updating each applicant's status in CU Careers to reflect how far they went in the selection process

Emails can be sent to individual candidates or groups of candidates through the applicant tracking system, CU Careers, using approved templates. Each CU campus has its own email templates in CU

Careers. Be sure to use the AMC-specific email templates, which all begin with “AMC.” Other templates may direct candidates to other CU campuses. The department HR and hiring manager can send emails from CU Careers.

Candidates not selected for the interview stages should receive a standard ‘not selected’ email sent through CU Careers. Candidates who make it to the interview stage should receive more personalized ‘not selected’ emails directly from the communications liaison on the search committee.

To update statuses and send emails through CU Careers, we have created a step-by-step guide that includes detailed instructions and screenshots. [Here is a link](#) to the CU Careers Candidate Care Guide.

Determining Interview Questions

Deciding what to ask candidates during interviews is important and must be given careful thought. Carefully crafted interview questions help the search committee determine if a candidate’s experience, skills and abilities meet the needs of the position.

All questions should be job-related and focused on the candidates’ qualifications, knowledge, skills and abilities as they compare to the job advertisement. It is good practice to include mostly behavior-based questions to elicit specific examples of past actions, which can help evaluate how a candidate may interact in the future.

Specific interview questions are typically not shared with candidates in advance, but it is an option in certain situations. It is good practice to let candidates know what general topics will be covered during interviews so they can best prepare and present themselves.

We have a detailed [Interview Questions Guide](#) with sample questions broken down by topic, and a section for illegal interview questions that should not be asked during interviews. Please review the resource and ensure the search committee knows what questions cannot be asked.

Salary Expectations

To be transparent and respectful of everyone’s time, it is important to discuss salary expectations early and often with all candidates during each round of interviews. Do not assume candidates saw and are okay with the salary range listed in the posting—always confirm directly during interviews.

The Colorado Equal Pay for Equal Work Act forbids employers from seeking wage history from candidates as a basis for setting the salary for future positions. However, we can ask candidates about their salary expectations and again provide them with the anticipated salary range from the posting. Example: The hiring range for this position is \$XX - \$XX. Will that work for you? Do you have other salary needs/expectations?

Open Rank Search Guidance

If the hiring department elects to do an open rank search, there are some additional items we recommend doing during the search to ensure the hiring department and applicants are on the same page.

- When conducting interviews, bring up the fact that it is an open rank search outline the levels being recruited

- Ask the applicant, based on their education and experience, at what level they would like to be considered during the search process.
 - o This ensures the department knows what level the applicant wants to be considered. If they do not meet that level of education/experience, the hiring department needs to be prepared to explain how education/experience is counted.
 - o Sample verbiage: Thank you for applying to the TITLE role. We opened this role up for multiple levels so the hiring manager can evaluate different experience levels. Based on your education/experience, which level would you like to be considered for during this interview process?

There are additional considerations that the hiring department should take into account when it comes to the offer stage of an open-rank recruitment. This will be addressed in the [After the Search](#) section below.

Application Review & Screening Process

All applications received undergo a sequential review process to determine eligibility and identify the most qualified and capable candidates. Applicants are funneled through a fair and equitable review process, narrowing down the list of candidates considered at each stage until a strong list of finalists is established.

Here are the specific stages of the sequential screening process:

1. Applications reviewed for completeness – all received by the posting deadline or full consideration date
 - a. Are all required application materials included?
 - b. Can be done throughout the posting period, but no final decisions should be made until after the full consideration date passes.
 - c. Any applicant missing required materials should be sent a “missing materials” email to notify and remind them to complete their application in full, within a specific timeframe. A standard template can be found in CU Careers with a default of 48 hours.
2. Conditions of employment review (if applicable)
 - a. Consider required conditions of employment such as work location, hours/shift, travel, physical hazards, licenses/certifications, etc.
 - b. Eliminate all applicants who are unwilling/unable to meet the conditions
 - c. Conditions of employment can be included as a pre-screening question that all applicants must answer – more detailed information and guidance can be found below [in this section](#).
3. Minimum qualifications (MQs) review
 - a. A “yes” or “no” assessment for each applicant based on their submitted materials
 - b. Anyone not meeting the MQs cannot be considered
4. Preferred qualifications (PQs) review
 - a. A “yes” or “no” assessment for each applicant, against all PQs, based on submitted materials
 - b. Consider if any of the PQs should be weighted higher than others
 - c. Candidates meeting all or most of the PQs are the most qualified on paper, based on their submitted materials

5. Screening interviews
 - a. Brief initial interviews conducted via phone or audio-only conference
 - b. Typically conducted by central HR, department HR
6. 2nd round interviews
 - a. More extensive and detailed interviews conducted via video conference or in-person
7. Final round interviews
 - a. Extensive and detailed interviews with the hiring manager and key leaders who will contribute to the final hiring decision
 - b. May include physical tests or exams – rare instances for specific positions

Work Location

At the University of Colorado Anschutz campus, leadership has established expectations around onsite, hybrid, and remote work. Each job advertised has a 'Work Location' section in the job posting template. That section should clearly communicate to applicants the work modality (onsite, hybrid, or remote) so they are aware of the hiring department's expectations.

During the interview, the hiring department should confirm this information with the applicants and ask if they have any questions about the frequency that they must be on campus if they are selected for the role. This ensures that applicants are aware of the expectations and that the hiring department can address any questions they may have regarding the work modality expectations.

If the department has concerns about applicants' understanding of the work location, they should consider placing a pre-screening question in the requisition. Below is sample verbiage that can be used for a hybrid work modality:

This role is hybrid and requires the selected individual to work # days each week on-site at the University of Colorado Anschutz campus, located in Aurora, CO. Are you willing and able to work from the Anschutz campus?

Pre-Screening Questions

Pre-screening questions are used to gather additional information about an applicant during the application process, ensuring they meet the required criteria for the role. The job posting template includes a section that asks if the department would like to add pre-screening questions. The hiring department can include those in their search submission, and Central HR will add them to the requisition for applicants to complete. When the search committee reviews applications, they can see the answers to those questions, which can help streamline the screening process.

We recommend using pre-screening questions if specific experience is necessary for the role, usually based on the preferred qualifications (PQs). The best practice is to use simple 'yes' or 'no', or multiple-choice questions. Open text questions can be included; however, we have found that this can cause applicants to abandon their applications when they are required to complete additional writing beyond a resume and cover letter. To learn more, please contact a Talent Acquisition Consultant.

Internal & Referred Candidates

As part of our commitment to candidate care, the University of Colorado is dedicated to investing in and developing our internal community (including CU Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver, and Anschutz Medical Campus). Some ways that we can foster internal talent include:

- Developing preferred qualifications that speak to a candidate's experience working within the University of Colorado system (all locations)
- Identify internal candidates through CU Careers by adding pre-screening questions, reviewing email addresses provided as part of the application and/or experience outlined in a resume or cover letter
- Use custom notifications in Taleo, email or phone when communicating with internal candidates
- Use candidate care to develop employees and continue to encourage their career progression at CU
 - When possible, we highly recommend providing personal notifications that include professional development, feedback, encouragement, and support when working with candidates who are members of your team/department/school/college.

Internal or personally referred candidates should only be invited to interview if they are qualified. Regardless of how they were referred or where they currently work, all candidates under consideration must at least meet the minimum qualifications. We strive for a fair, equitable and objective process. Undue preferential treatment towards any applicants can call into question the integrity of the search process.

If institutional knowledge or experience is desired, it should be listed as one of the preferred qualifications in the job description and job advertisement. This ensures that all internal candidates will be given equal consideration.

Example preferred qualification statements:

- Experience with University of Colorado policies, procedures and systems
- Current or former University of Colorado employee
- Current or former experience working on the CU Anschutz Medical Campus

Selecting Candidates to Interview

After completing the minimum and preferred qualifications reviews, you will see which candidates are most qualified on paper. If completed in full, the application review matrix will assign a number to each candidate corresponding to the number of preferred qualifications (PQs) they meet.

It is best practice to start with those candidates who meet all or most of the preferred qualifications. Remember to consider any agreed-upon weights of PQs as discussed in committee meetings. If the number of candidates meeting all or most of the PQs is too many to interview, other job-related factors may be considered to determine whom to invite to interviews.

Other job-related factors include:

- Relevance of the candidates' work experience and/or education
- Length of relevant work experience
- Candidates' knowledge, skills and abilities compared to those listed in the job advertisement

Taking the Posting Down

The best practice is to take advertisements down after the initial posting period, using a hard deadline. If the hiring department includes a posting deadline date the posting should remain up until that date. After the application review is completed, the search committee can proceed with interviews or re-post to gain additional applications.

If a full consideration date is used instead of a hard deadline, the search committee should coordinate with the hiring department HR to notify the Talent Acquisition Consultant to un-post the position and complete the initial application screening. The posting should be removed as soon as candidates are invited to interviews.

Unless the hiring department is hiring for multiple positions, we do not recommend leaving the posting up while conducting interviews. In most cases, the new applications are never reviewed. If interviews do not go well, the position can always be reposted for another period to solicit new applications.

Scheduling & Conducting Interviews

Standard Practices for All Interviews

- The search committee will conduct interviews to determine the final candidates, who will be referred to the hiring manager and hiring authority for final interviews. The interviews can be in person, over the phone, or a virtual interview (Zoom, Teams).
- It is important to ask each candidate the same interview questions so they can respond to the established questions, which will help the committee determine who will be moved forward in the process. It is fine to ask additional follow-up questions.
- When scheduling interviews, the committee can allow time between applicants or leave time following each interview to discuss the applicant and whether they should be moved forward in the process.
- The best practice is to conduct all interviews in the same manner. If an alternate approach is taken, it is best if the applicant requests the alternate method to avoid claims of discrimination and bias.

Phone Interviews

- This is most used in initial screening to ensure that applicants meet the requirements.
- 15-30-minute interview to determine which candidates will be moving forward from initial screening to the next round of interviews.
- The search committee conducts the phone interview, unless the department requests support from Central HR to assist with the search.

Virtual Interviews

- This is a 30-45 minute interview to determine which candidates will be moving forward in the interview process.
- Selected candidates will be sent the Zoom or Teams link to the virtual interview.
- The search committee conducts the virtual interview, unless the department requests support from Central HR to assist with the search.

In-person Interviews

- In-person interviews are usually the final interview before selection. However, if the role is onsite this type of interview may be used earlier in the interview process.
- This is a 30 minute – 1 hour interview to determine which candidates will be selected as a finalist(s).
- Selected candidates will be contacted to interview onsite with the search committee, hiring manager, or department stakeholders.
- Confirmation emails sent to candidates should include detailed instructions on the interview, including who will be in the interview (names and job titles), parking details, and building access upon arrival.
- The best practice is to select a search committee member who will greet the candidate(s) upon arrival and bring them to the interview space, to avoid confusion once inside the building.
- This is typically the final round of interviews in the hiring process.

Evaluating Candidate Interviews & Search Committee Debrief

After interviews are completed, the search committee will meet to debrief and discuss all candidates interviewed. Feedback from all committee members should be shared honestly with the group, in the same format for each candidate.

As a starting point, each committee member can share each candidate's strengths and weaknesses related to their qualifications, knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) and how they feel each candidate presented themselves during interviews. Ultimately, the committee should reach a consensus on which candidates should move forward to the next round.

For classified staff, Central HR will evaluate all applications and generate a referral list of qualified candidates who can be considered. Preferred qualifications and screening interviews are scored numerically in line with the State of Colorado's classified employee system. For more information, please contact your Talent Acquisition Consultant in Central HR.

Interview Rating Scale

To assist in assessing candidates during interviews, we have a rating scale:

Yes (Excellent)

- Demonstrates deep insight into complex problems and articulates solutions with clarity. Anticipates needs of the role and shows proactive, strategic thinking. Communicates with exceptional clarity, confidence and adaptability. Consistently provides standout, high-impact examples that show mastery. Shows strong alignment with organizational values and team culture. Demonstrates learning agility and the ability to excel in ambiguous situations. Exhibits strong leadership qualities, even when not applying for a leadership role.

Maybe/Yes (Very Good)

- Provides clear, relevant examples that exceed expectations in several areas. Shows strong communication and collaboration skills. Demonstrates solid judgment and problem-solving abilities. Has only minor skill gaps that can be addressed quickly. Shows initiative and a pattern of going beyond baseline responsibilities. Adapts well to new information and adjusts approach effectively. Displays confidence without overestimating their abilities.

Maybe (Acceptable)

- Meets the core requirements of the role. Provides examples that are adequate but may lack depth or complexity. Demonstrates basic problem-solving and communication skills. Shows potential to grow with standard onboarding and coaching. May have moderate gaps but none that pose immediate risk. Responds well to follow-up questions but may need prompting. Demonstrates a reasonable understanding of the role and expectations.

Maybe/No (Limited)

- Struggles to provide clear or relevant examples. Shows noticeable gaps in required skills or experience. Communication may be unclear, incomplete or unfocused. Requires significant guidance to stay on track during the interview. Demonstrates limited understanding of the role or expectations. May show inconsistent or superficial reasoning in responses. Gaps suggest performance risk even with extensive support.

No (Unacceptable)

- Fails to meet core requirements of the role. Cannot provide relevant examples or experiences. Raises major concerns about communication, judgement or professionalism. Demonstrates little to no understanding of the role. Shows behaviors or attitudes misaligned with team or organizational values. Responses indicate inability to perform essential job functions. Significant red flags outweigh any strengths.

Determining the List of Final Candidates

The hiring authority may prefer a specific number of finalists to consider, and whether they want the committee to rank order the finalists. The best practice is for finalists to be unranked so the hiring authority and hiring manager can make their decisions without undue influence. The number of finalists can vary, but the most common is between two and four candidates.

Sending Not Selected Notifications

To provide a positive candidate experience, the best practice is to send “Not Selected” emails as soon as it is determined that an individual will not be moving forward in the selection process. Letting candidates know in a timely manner that they are no longer under consideration is a simple way to show we respect their time and efforts.

The CU Careers application system has our standard “not selected” email templates built in, which are available for use. Candidates can be batched together if they all receive the same email. The department HR has access to send emails within CU Careers.

Specific considerations:

- Applicants not meeting the minimum qualifications (MQs) should be sent a “not selected” email early in the review process by the department HR
- Candidates who were interviewed virtually or over the phone should be sent a “not selected” email
- Finalists who were interviewed in person should first be notified that they were not selected by direct phone call from the hiring manager.

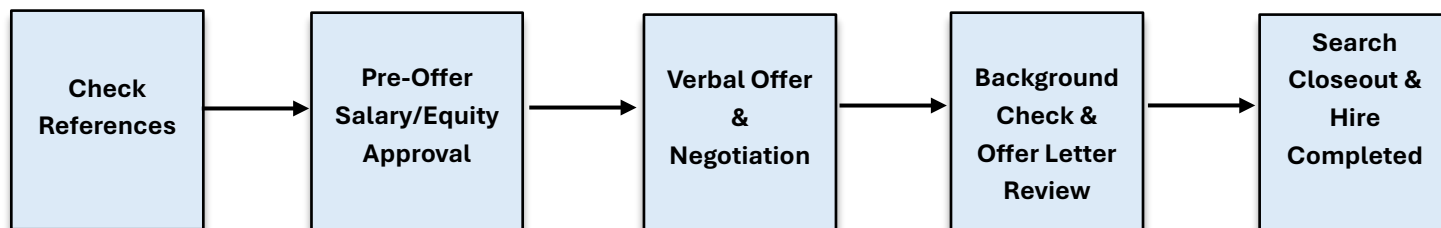
Checklist

During the Search

- ☐ Outreach to potential applicants and broadly share the role through advertising
- ☐ Candidate care and notifications
- ☐ Review applications
- ☐ Take down the job advertisement
- ☐ Select and invite candidates to interviews
- ☐ Conduct interviews (virtual and/or in-person)
- ☐ Refer the group of final candidates to the hiring manager and hiring authority

After the Search

Visual Overview



More detailed process flowcharts can be found here:

- [Recruiting Process Flowchart – University Staff & Classified Staff](#)

Checking References

Reference checks must be completed for any candidate (external or internal) before an offer is extended. Checking references gives the hiring manager valuable information to assist with the final hiring decision, including verification of past experience and performance, reasons for departure, eligibility for rehire, and any job-related skills and abilities. The hiring manager should conduct traditional reference checks (speaking directly to a candidate's references) but can also use our reference vendor, Crossschq.

The [appendix below](#) provides more detailed information, including links to the Crossschq submission page, sample questions, and considerations for internal candidates.

Pre-Offer Salary Equity Review

To ensure equitable pay across the university, and under the state of Colorado's Equal Pay for Equal Work Act, all proposed salaries must be reviewed and approved before extending an offer. While the proposed salary is being reviewed for equity, you can let the finalist know that you intend to make a verbal offer soon, pending final approval. Do not discuss specifics about salary until after approval from Central HR Compensation or SOM Compensation is received.

The proposed salary offer (exact amount or range) will be submitted to Central HR via the Pre-Offer Step 1, [located here](#). Considerations for the Pre-Offer Smartsheet process:

- The candidate-specific range approved may differ from the posted and the budgeted range
- The individual submitting the Pre-Offer Step 1 will receive updates via email from Smartsheets
- The individual submitting the Pre-Offer Step 1 should be the same individual who later submits the Pre-Offer Step 2
- The job description and finalists' resume must be attached
- Compensation will review the qualifications in the job description and analyze the finalists' resume and other compensation data to determine an equitable salary rate or range that can be offered
- Approval will come via email and include a unique Salary Approval ID (ex. COMP0000US)

- Pre-Offers are reviewed in the order in which they are received, and approval typically comes back within 1-2 business days

After approval, if there are any questions, concerns, or requests for adjustments, please contact the [Central HR Compensation](#) or SOM Compensation directly and provide the unique Salary Approval ID.

It is recommended that the hiring department submit no more than two finalists, ideally only one for the pre-offer review, unless the department is recruiting for multiple positions within the same recruitment.

Making a Verbal Offer & Negotiating Salary

Once an approved salary rate or range is received, a verbal offer can be made, and salary negotiations with the finalist can begin. It is best practice not to immediately offer at the high end of the approved range to leave room to negotiate. If negotiations lead to a finalist requesting a higher salary than was approved for equity, further discussion with Compensation will be needed. Depending on the specific situation, the original approval may or may not be amended.

Most candidates will understandably need some time to consider the offer. They may need to consult with their families and other loved ones, research cost of living differences, and review benefits plans and costs. When candidates do need some time, it is best practice to provide a reasonable timeline with a clear deadline. We recommend two or three days.

Depending on budget and leadership approval, sign-on bonuses or recruitment incentives may be utilized as negotiating or recruiting tools. Both are one-time, non-base-building payments typically available to external candidates.

Sign-on bonuses are advertised in the posting to attract applicants. Recruitment incentives are usually not advertised in the posting, but can be used as a negotiating tool when the base salary offered is insufficient to secure the candidate. For more information or advice on utilizing these one-time additional pay options, please contact your Talent Acquisition Consultant.

While waiting for a finalist to consider an offer extended to them, other finalists can remain active until a final signed offer letter is received. However, it is still best to be clear and direct about when they should expect to hear a final decision on their candidacy, and to avoid delays beyond three days. Once an offer is accepted and the signed offer letter is received, all other finalists should be notified as soon as possible that they are no longer being considered.

Determining the Start Date

When a final salary amount is agreed upon, discuss and determine the anticipated start date. Considerations for start dates:

- Be flexible within reason. Candidates may need time to notify a current employer and/or relocate to the area. Consider and be honest about your business needs.
- Time will be needed for onboarding steps such as creating email accounts, payroll setup, etc. Typically, these steps take at least two days.
- Ensure that the hiring manager/supervisor will be in the office and available during the new hires' first week, which is critical for a positive experience and training

- New hires must pass the criminal background check and sex offender registry check before their start date. If there are delays in this process, the start date may need to be moved.
- Benefits-eligible employees (0.50 FTE and greater) will have coverage starting on the first day of the following month following their start date, unless that is the first of the month. For example, a new employee beginning on July 1st would have their benefits effective the same day, July 1st – but a new employee starting on July 2nd would have their benefits effective August 1st.

Background Check

The University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus performs background checks as a condition of employment and appointment. Standard checks include a criminal history check and a national sex offender registry check. No candidate, external or internal, may begin work prior to successfully completing the background check.

The HR Operations team within Central HR manages the background check process. More detailed information [can be found here](#), including FAQs and the online Smartsheet submission page.

Open Rank Search Offer Stage

After the finalist has been selected for an open-rank search, the hiring department needs to determine the level at which they would like to hire the finalist. This must occur before the Pre-Offer Step 1 process is initiated. When the hiring department submits the request, a Talent Acquisition Consultant reviews the finalist's resume to ensure that they meet the minimum qualifications of the role.

If it is determined that the finalist does not meet the experience requirements, the Talent Acquisition Consultant will reach out to the hiring department to see if there is additional experience that needs to be considered. It is imperative that all relevant experience is included in the finalist's resume, as it is reviewed by Talent Acquisition and Compensation to determine the salary range that can be offered.

Rescinding an Offer

It should be rare, but rescinding an offer previously extended may become necessary. Reasons to rescind an offer include, but are not limited to, concerns about information obtained while checking references, not agreeing on salary, concerning behavior or interactions during the negotiation process, or failing a background check or drug screening.

Offers may be rescinded prior to the start date when there is a strong and legally compliant reason. Keep in mind that, in general, it is quicker and easier to rescind a verbal offer than a full written offer letter.

When the hiring manager indicates that they are considering rescinding an offer, please contact your Talent Acquisition Consultant for specific guidance.

Multiple Hires

Multiple candidates can be hired if there are multiple identical vacancies within the department. These are called Appointment Type 1 hires, which are permitted when a candidate has undergone a search process and been interviewed. Additional hires can be made within one year of the original interview for university staff positions

For example, if a top candidate is selected, begins working and then resigns two months later, the runner-up candidate from the original search could be hired without a new search, if they are still available. Or, if another resignation on the team is received during the interview process to fill one position, two people can be hired from the same search to fill both openings.

Each additional hire requires:

- A different position number with the same classification. An existing, vacant position of the same employment type (Classified or University Staff) can be used, or a brand-new position number can be created.
- An appointment type 1 transaction submitted via [the Smartsheet transaction center request form](#)
- A pre-offer step 1, salary/equity review submitted via the [pre-offer step 1 form](#)
- 2nd level budget approval (if required, based on position funding speedtype)
- Reference checks, criminal background check and sex offender registry check

Offer Letters & Search Closeout

Once the salary/equity review has been approved (Pre-Offer Step 1), the hiring department can draft the offer letter and prepare to close out the search. The draft offer letter and other items will be submitted via the Smartsheet Pre-Offer Step 2 and routed to your Talent Acquisition Consultant for review and approval.

Offer letter templates [can be found here](#) on the Central HR website.

Additional items the department HR must complete as part of the closeout process:

- Ensure reference checks have been completed
- Ensure background check has been submitted (must be completed before the start date)
- Ensure all candidates in CU Careers have been dispositioned and sent “not selected” notifications.
 - o The final selected candidate is left in the “**Recommended for Hire**” status

Your Talent Acquisition Consultant will review the above for accuracy and completeness. When they approve the Pre-Offer Step 2, you will receive a confirmation email and can route the offer letter for signatures.

Once the finalist returns a fully signed/accepted offer letter, the department HR can submit the hire/re-hire/transfer template based transaction (TBT) in HCM with an attached copy of the signed letter attached.

Most colleges/schools/departments have someone within their unit who will review and approve the final TBT—often the DFA. Some departments without their own approver will have their TBT transactions reviewed and approved by Central HR. If you are unsure who your approver is, please contact HR.recruiting@cuanschutz.edu.

A detailed step-by-step guide for hire/rehire TBT transactions [can be found here](#).

Onboarding Preparation

A clear, consistent, and well-communicated onboarding process is critical for a positive experience for any new employee.

Strong onboarding processes include:

- Clear communication before the start date
- Warm welcome and introduction to the office and other team members
- Detailed review of the full job description
- Overview of team and departmental structure
- Establishing performance metrics
- Setting communication expectations
- Mapping out a progressive training schedule
- Providing access, setup and an introduction to key systems
- Regular check-in and follow-up meetings
- Mentor opportunities by pairing new hires with experienced team members

More information and resources for new and returning employees [can be found here](#). And a detailed New Hire Checklist [can be found here](#).

Post Search Evaluation

After a search concludes, it is good practice for the hiring authority and search chair to review and evaluate the effectiveness of the recruitment process, including gathering feedback from the search committee.

Key areas to consider:

- Time to fill: Measure the time from posting until offer accepted and compare to the average for similar positions in your department.
- Offer acceptance rate: Monitor the percentage of job offers accepted and rejected
- Resources used: Consider the time spent by committee members, advertising expenses and others costs to see if the efforts were effective and efficient.
- Interview process: Consider how many rounds of interviews were conducted and if it was sufficient to assess candidates.
- Candidate experience: During onboarding, seek feedback from the new employee regarding their experience applying and interviewing.
- Quality of hire: Assess performance of new hires throughout the onboarding process and first year of employment.
- Job description and job advertisement: Consider if the job description and advertisement were accurate and presented in the best way
- Continuous improvement: Learn from each search and adjust for the next time.

Checklist

After the Search

- ☐ Check references
- ☐ Submit the proposed salary for equity review to Compensation
- ☐ Make verbal offer and negotiate salary, start date, etc.
- ☐ Determine the anticipated start date
- ☐ Submit for a background check and sex offender registry
- ☐ Draft and submit offer letter and search closeout items
- ☐ Complete hire
- ☐ Prepare for onboarding

Appendix

Overview of Key Sections of the Job Description & Advertisement

Job Description and Job Posting Template

- The internal job description should be copied into this template to prepare for posting. Changes will need to be made in the following categories on the template:
 - o Header – Department, Work Title and Position Number
 - o Job Summary – Provide a summary of the benefits of this role along with 5-7 key responsibilities of the position.
 - o Work location – Is this position onsite, hybrid or remote?
 - o Why Join Us – A selling point on the job's college/unit that should be listed before the University's benefits statement.
 - o Qualifications – List of minimum qualifications, preferred qualifications and knowledge, skills and abilities as listed in the internal job description. Internal to CU and/or familiarity/experience with CU systems, policies, procedures
 - o How to Apply – Name and contact information of the individual candidates can contact for questions about the role.
 - o Screening of Applications Begins – Length of time the position should be posted.
 - o Anticipated Pay Range – The pay range as listed in the Salary Range document. *(Departments may list a range that is different from that on the spreadsheet, but it must fall within the approved range. If the requested salary is outside that range, the hiring authority will reach out to the compensation team for approval.)*

Full Reference Check Guidelines

The University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus encourages both on and off-list reference checks. You may utilize our reference check tool - Crosschq, as a starting point, and we encourage you to also do off-list references once you have notified the candidate. This is particularly important when you have a candidate who currently works at the university or who previously worked for the university. We encourage you to do your due diligence, contact the most recent supervisor, and work with your Talent Acquisition Consultant to check personnel file information and HCM entries related to the separation from employment.

General Best Practices for Utilizing Crosschq

- The hiring department is responsible for following up with the candidate on completing the reference check form. Central HR will email the HR contact who submitted the request if we notice that the form has not been completed within at least three business days.
- The hiring department should notify the candidate prior to starting the reference check process. They should also mention that the reference check will be delivered via email from Crosschq. Notifying the candidate will help speed up the process.

- Crosschq allows for 3 (three) or 5 (five) references, this should be indicated on the Smartsheet Reference Check Form. We recommend that the candidate list at least 2 (two) managers/supervisors to be included when they submit references.
 - Crosschq will send the initial email request for the candidate to complete. They will then get two additional follow-up emails if they haven't completed the survey.
 - Let the candidate know that the email title is: CU Anschutz Medical is Requesting Work References
 - If the candidate states that they haven't received the reference check email let them know to check their spam or junk mail, especially if they have Gmail or Yahoo email address.
 - It is recommended that all reference responses be received, but accommodation can be made.
- These are monitored daily. We typically see this process through within 3-5 business days.
- If a candidate reference request has been submitted and the person is no longer being considered, please notify hr.recruiting@cuanschutz.edu so the reference can be canceled. The department should ensure that the candidate is aware that they are no longer being considered.
- Reference checks submitted but not completed in over a month will be canceled, and the department will need to submit a new request if necessary.

If you have general Crosschq reference check questions regarding University Staff or Classifieds, please contact hr.recruiting@cuanschutz.edu. The Talent Acquisition and Classification team Specialists facilitate this process.

For Faculty or PRA, please contact hr.faculty-request@cuanschutz.edu.

Guidelines for Conducting Reference Checks

Reference checks must be completed for all final applicants under consideration for regular full-time, part-time, temporary, or student positions whereby all relevant listed references are contacted (both on and off-list references).

Reference checks diminish ambiguity, obtain specific job-related information, and verify the accuracy of a candidate's background. They may be conducted before or after the interview. The following are guidelines for checking references.

- Prior to checking an applicant's current employer, ask the applicant's permission as this may place the applicant's current employment at risk. If the applicant objects, inform the applicant that you will respect their decision; however it may affect your ability to fully evaluate the applicant for employment.
- Do not let letters of reference or CROSSCHQ substitute for phone calls or email inquiries.
- Begin your reference process by thoroughly reviewing information obtained in the application material submitted by the job applicant and identify the people you wish to reference. As a general rule, try to speak directly to the applicant's immediate supervisor when seeking employment references. Avoid references from friends and relatives.
- Contact at least two former employers for references before making a job offer.
- If the applicant is an internal employee or former employee, talk to their current supervisor or last known university supervisor to get current knowledge about the applicant. Personnel records relevant to hiring managers are typically held at the department-level. An employee must provide written authorization for a hiring manager to view the personnel record before the record is requested. Central HR may also have some personnel records available. You can email hr.records@cuanschutz.edu to inquire if HR has a record available to view.

- If a former employee, work with your Talent Acquisition Consultant to look at HCM to see why the person left the University. If the person has been terminated for cause, please reach out to the Employee Relations group and former supervisor to discuss the reasons the person was terminated before making a verbal offer.
- Ask the applicant to provide reference information if it is missing from the application including name, title, phone number and email address of the most recent employers.
- When introducing yourself to the employer, do not say that the applicant has “been selected”, only that they are a finalist for a position.
- If you believe the employer is hesitant to provide information over the telephone, offer to have them call you back so that the person providing the reference can verify who you say you are. This will also allow the employer time to refresh their memory on the individual you are inquiring about.
- Consider whether performance problems reported by previous employers are in areas that might affect performance in the position you are filling.
- Be sure there is a business-related reason for asking specific questions and use of the information obtained.
- Do not raise any questions that fall under the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) discriminatory practice areas, such as questions regarding gender, race, color, origin, age, disability, or religion.
- Inquire as to re-employment eligibility and reasons for leaving previous jobs.
- Maintain the highest level of confidentiality throughout the process. Do not delegate the reference gathering process to anyone outside the hiring process and share information gathered on a need to know basis only.

Example Reference Check Conversation

Thank you for taking my call. My name is (name) from the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. (Applicant's name) is a finalist for the position of (job title) and has indicated that they were employed by your organization from (beginning/end dates).

- Were they employed by your organization during this period of time? How do you know this person?
- What was the nature of the job? What were the primary functions performed by this person?
- What did you think of their work? How would you characterize the quality of work performed by this person?
- What are their strongest job skills?
- What job skills are their areas for improvement?
- How did they interact with other people on the job? Describe how they interacted with co-workers. How did they interact with the public or your clients? Did they present a professional image?
- How would you characterize this person's attitude toward change and learning new things? Would you characterize this person as being flexible in a constantly changing work environment?
- Why did they leave your organization?
- Please comment on candidate's:
 - o Dependability i. How was this person's attendance on the job? Was s/he frequently tardy?
 - o Ability to assume responsibility

- o Ability to follow instruction
 - o Degree of supervision needed
 - o Quantity and quality of work
 - o Ability to work independently i. How closely was it necessary to supervise this person?
Could s/he work productively on his/her own without close supervision after s/he has been trained?
 - o Ability to work as a team member
 - o Ability to meet deadlines
- Would you re-employ this person? Yes/No. If not, why?
- Are they eligible for rehire?
- Do you have any final comment on their work performance? Do you have any additional comments or other information you think I should know about this person that might help me make a decision about this applicant?
- Can you refer anyone else to me for reference checking purposes that is also familiar with this candidate's work?

Thank you very much for talking with me about this candidate. I appreciate your time.

Rating Scale – Applications & Interviews

Yes (Excellent)

• **Application:** Submitted materials indicate extensive experience performing the identified tasks. Experience is very detailed and clear to the reviewer. There are no questions or concerns on whether the applicant has the desired education, experience and/or training. Experience was performed in a similar position, at a similar organization, and/or in a similar capacity. Experience encompasses all or the majority of the items listed in the preferred qualifications.

• **Interviews:** Demonstrates deep insight into complex problems and articulates solutions with clarity. Anticipates needs of the role and shows proactive, strategic thinking. Communicates with exceptional clarity, confidence and adaptability. Consistently provides standout, high-impact examples that show mastery. Shows strong alignment with organizational values and team culture. Demonstrates learning agility and the ability to excel in ambiguous situations. Exhibits strong leadership qualities, even when not applying for a leadership role.

Maybe/Yes (Very Good)

• **Application:** Application & documents illustrate strong, but not exceptional, experience performing the identified tasks. Experience is clear but has less specific examples of the related work they have performed. Experience encompasses almost all of the items listed in the preferred qualifications, but is not as thoroughly detailed. Although less detailed, there are still no concerns on whether the applicant has the desired education, experience or training.

• **Interviews:** Provides clear, relevant examples that exceed expectations in several areas. Shows strong communication and collaboration skills. Demonstrates solid judgment and

problem-solving abilities. Has only minor skill gaps that can be addressed quickly. Shows initiative and a pattern of going beyond baseline responsibilities. Adapts well to new information and adjusts approach effectively. Displays confidence without overestimating their abilities.

Maybe (Acceptable)

- **Application:** Application & documents indicate some experience performing the identified tasks. Experience is addressed with little detail/examples. Experience only encompasses a portion of the items listed in the preferred qualifications. There may be some slight concerns at the extent and/or relevance of the candidate's experience.
- **Interviews:** Meets the core requirements of the role. Provides examples that are adequate but may lack depth or complexity. Demonstrates basic problem-solving and communication skills. Shows potential to grow with standard onboarding and coaching. May have moderate gaps but none that pose immediate risk. Responds well to follow-up questions but may need prompting. Demonstrates a reasonable understanding of the role and expectations.

Maybe/No (Limited)

- **Application:** Application & documents do not specifically address the identified tasks. Experience is addressed with little to no detail/examples. Experience may be inferred based on the applicant's position title, employer, etc. but there are numerous questions regarding relevance and/or involvement. Experience encompasses very few of the items listed in the preferred qualifications.
- **Interviews:** Struggles to provide clear or relevant examples. Shows noticeable gaps in required skills or experience. Communication may be unclear, incomplete or unfocused. Requires significant guidance to stay on track during the interview. Demonstrates limited understanding of the role or expectations. May show inconsistent or superficial reasoning in responses. Gaps suggest performance risk even with extensive support.

No (Unacceptable)

- **Application:** Application & documents indicate little to no experience performing the identified tasks. Applicant does not have the desired education, experience or training. Based upon application materials, candidate does not have the education, training and/or experience to be successful in the position.
- **Interviews:** Fails to meet core requirements of the role. Cannot provide relevant examples or experiences. Raises major concerns about communication, judgement or professionalism. Demonstrates little to no understanding of the role. Shows behaviors or attitudes misaligned with team or organizational values. Responses indicate inability to perform essential job functions. Significant red flags outweigh any strengths.

Search Timeline Template

Search Timeline

JOB TITLE

DATE at LOCATION

- DATE** Search committee kickoff meeting – target week of **DATE**
- Search committee is provided copies of the job description and job posting for review prior to posting
- DATES** Start advertising position
- DATE** Advertise the position – # of weeks
- The position will be advertised in the following locations:
 - o Advertising Resources
- DATE** Meet as a committee to discuss who will be invited for initial interviews
- All applicants need to be screened before meeting
- DATE** Invite applicants for the initial interview
- DATES** Zoom interviews – **TIME FRAME** (30 minutes, 45 minutes, etc.)
- Tentative dates for interview
 - o **DATES**
- DATE** Search committee debrief, and select finalists for the on-campus interviews
- DATES** On-campus or virtual campus interviews
- Tentative dates for interview
 - o **DATES**
 - Interview Structure
 - o Example: Meet with Hiring Manager, Meet and Greet with Campus Stakeholders

DATE

Search committee debrief and recommendation to the hiring manager

Search Committee Members:

Search Committee Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

SEARCH COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITY

The search committee's primary responsibility is to use its collective wisdom to translate the charge of the hiring authority into a search strategy. This begins with carefully reviewing the job advertisement, coming to a shared understanding of the listed qualifications and needs of the department, then actively making contacts, tracking down prospective applicants and populating the applicant pool through their individual efforts during the duration of the search.

SEARCH COMMITTEE TRAINING

Q: Are all members of the search committee required to complete search committee training?

A: Yes. The training is available through Percipio, which is accessible via the CU Employee portal. The title of the training is "Search Committee Training". Also, experienced search committee members should share what they've learned, best practices, department-specific processes, and tips/tricks with less-experienced members.

Q: If we have a search committee member who does not have an employee ID, how does that person access the training?

A: The department can set the person up as a Person of Interest (POI) in PeopleSoft HRMS. Once a POI employee ID is obtained, the person can access the training and self-enroll in the course in Percipio. Step-by-step instructions for adding a POI are included on the Payroll & Benefits website at the following link: <https://www.cu.edu/doc/hcmsbs-poi-adding-person-interestpdf-9>.

MAKEUP OF SEARCH COMMITTEE

Q: Can the hiring authority or hiring manager serve as a member of the search committee?

A: It is not best practice but is allowed. The best practice is for the hiring authority and supervisor to select a committee responsible for establishing a diverse and qualified applicant pool and for forwarding the most qualified candidates as finalists. When hiring authorities and hiring managers serve directly as search committee members, they are more vulnerable to potential claims of bias and discrimination.

Q: Is there a required number of search committee members?

A: No, there is not a required number of committee members, but generally a committee is made up of 3-6 members. The best practice for smaller applicant pools (and entry-to-low level positions) is having no more than 3 or 4 committee members. The best practice for larger applicant pools (and mid-to-high level positions) is having no more than 5 or 6 committee members. The larger the committee, the harder it will be to coordinate schedules, which may lengthen the overall process.

Q: Is there a required makeup of search committee members?

A: No, there is not a required makeup, but generally committees should have various individuals with different perspectives who have knowledge of the position and department's needs. The best practice is to include individuals in the same/similar positions, on the same team, doing directly related work, as well as individuals in different positions, on other teams, doing indirectly related work.

Q: Is it appropriate to share the names of the search committee members with applicants if they request the information?

A: Yes, if the applicant asks for the information, it is fine to share the information, and it demonstrates that the applicant is engaged in the process.

CHARGE OR KICKOFF MEETING

Q: When should a charge meeting occur?

A: This meeting should take place before the position is advertised so the committee can provide feedback on the job advertisement and screening criteria.

Q: Does the hiring authority or hiring manager have to charge the search committee prior to the job advertisement being posted?

A: Yes, the hiring authority should outline the expectations of the search process, including timeline, ranking preference, budget, outreach expectations, etc., to the committee prior to the advertisement being finalized and posted. The best practice is to do this during the search committee's initial meeting. The charge can be shared via e-mail if a meeting is not possible.

DETERMINING TIMEFRAME FOR REVIEWING APPLICATIONS

Q: Is there a required or recommended timeframe for each search?

A: Yes, there is a required minimum posting period of 5 days, but other options as well. Usually, external postings are up for 2 or 3 weeks initially and can be extended if the applicant pool is not strong enough to move forward with interviews. It is best practice to review applications

throughout the posting period and to move into interviews within 1 week of the posting deadline or full consideration date.

Q: When can the search committee stop reviewing applicants in the pool?

A: The committee can stop reviewing applicants once the full consideration date or posting deadline has passed, and the pool is strong enough to move into interviews.

Q: Can the posting be taken down before the full consideration date or deadline if we are receiving a lot of applications?

A: No, postings should not be taken down early. Once a deadline or full consideration date has been posted, that date should be honored. Applicants may have seen the original date and are working to gather their materials before then.

Q: Can the posting come down once a set number of applications has been received, for example 50 applications?

A: No, postings should not come down when a set number of applications are received. Doing so rewards only quick applicants, not necessarily the most qualified.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS - BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS & SUBSTITUTIONS

Q: Should behavioral characteristics critical to the position be included in the minimum qualification section of the job ad?

A: No, behavioral characteristics should not be included in the minimum qualifications since they can be difficult to screen for using only application materials. These types of characteristics are easier to assess during interviews with targeted questions. Instead, behavioral characteristics should be included in the Competencies section with other knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Q: Can we or should we include a substitution for required education or experience in the minimum qualifications (i.e., experience sub for a bachelor's degree)?

A: Yes, substitution statements should be used in the minimum qualifications section, and there are options listed in the job description/job advertisement template. Whenever substitution language is used, all committee members should share a clear understanding of how to apply it and which types of education or experience should count.

SCREENING TOOLS

Q: Is the search committee required to use a scoring matrix to determine if applicants meet minimum qualifications/preferred qualifications?

A: A matrix can be used, but it is not mandatory, although it can be very helpful to department HR staff who will need to update applicants' statuses in CU Careers. Search committee members should review applicant materials prior to the meeting at which a decision will be made on who will be invited to interview. The goal is for the committee to discuss candidates and whether they fit the 'yes,' 'maybe,' and 'no' categories for being invited to interview, based on how they compare to the minimum and preferred qualifications. If a matrix is used individually by each committee member, they do not need to be turned in. Any assessment notes should be deleted/shredded after the search is complete.

Q: Can we use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to screen applications?

A: No, at this time it is not recommended that AI tools be used to screen applications or make hiring decisions. Currently, many AI tools available for screening are not vetted for accuracy or bias. Also, the state of Colorado recently passed legislation that will take effect on January 1, 2027, and will strictly regulate these practices, possibly requiring advance notice to applicants. If your college/school/department is interested in exploring the use of specific AI tools in recruiting, please contact your Talent Acquisition Consultant in Central HR for further discussion.

SCREENING FOR MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Q: Can the committee consider an applicant who has not demonstrated that they meet all of the minimum qualifications listed in the job advertisement?

A: No, the committee cannot consider or interview anyone who does not meet all the minimum qualifications. It is important to consider this when creating the job advertisement and to determine whether any minimum qualifications could be moved to preferred qualifications so that good candidates do not self-select out.

Q: Can you exclude an applicant that appears to be over-qualified?

A: If the candidate meets minimum qualifications, you should screen them against preferred qualifications and determine from there if they should be invited for an interview. Generally, "over-qualified" is not in and of itself a disqualifying reason, and it is important not to make assumptions about candidates' wants and needs.

Q: What do we do if we cannot confirm if an applicant meets the minimum qualifications or not?

A: When an applicant's qualifications cannot be confirmed on submitted materials, it is best practice to reach out to the applicant via e-mail to ask for additional information or an updated resume/cover letter. This practice should be done for all applicants in similar situations.

Q: Do we have to interview everyone that meets the minimum qualifications?

A: No. It is best practice to use the preferred qualifications to further narrow the field and help determine a reasonable number of applicants to invite to interviews.

Q: Do we have to interview all internal applicants?

A: No. Internal applicants are not guaranteed an interview and must be at least minimally qualified to be considered.

NOTIFYING NOT SELECTED APPLICANTS/CANDIDATES

Q: When should 'not selected' notifications be sent?

A: As soon as administratively possible during each phase, after it is confirmed the individual(s) are no longer in consideration. Do not wait until the end of the search to notify candidates/applicants who were not selected. Your department HR staff will assist with sending notifications and updating applicants' statuses in CU Careers.

SALARY RANGE

Q: Does the salary range have to be included in the job advertisement?

A: Yes, the Colorado Equal Pay for Equal Work Act requires listing a salary range. In addition to state compliance, including a range gives potential applicants realistic expectations regarding the starting salary. The standard posted salary range is the minimum up to the 50th percentile of the established range for the position classification. However, the department's budget should be taken into consideration, and the posting maximum should be adjusted if the budget max is below the 50th percentile.

Q: Should the salary range and candidate expectations be discussed during interviews?

A: Yes, salary expectations should be discussed early and often to ensure candidates' needs meet our expectations and there are no unwelcome surprises later. The posting range should be shared, along with an explanation that final offers will be based on candidates' qualifications, as well as our internal budget and equity concerns.

Q: Can we ask what a candidate's current salary is, or their salary history?

A: No, current salary and salary history should not be asked of any candidate. As of January 1, 2021, it is illegal in Colorado to base offers on a candidate's current or past salary. Instead, we can share our range and ask candidates if a starting salary in that range is acceptable, or if they have other salary needs/expectations.

INTERVIEWS WITH SEARCH COMMITTEE

Q: Does the search committee have to conduct interviews to determine who will be invited to interview with the hiring authority?

A: Yes. The interviews can be in person, over the phone, or via teleconference (Zoom, Teams, etc.).

Q: Is it necessary to ask applicants the same questions?

A: It is important to ask the same initial questions so that each candidate has the same opportunity to respond to the questions established that will help the committee determine who will be moved forward in the process. It is fine to ask additional, follow-up questions.

Q: Can the search committee ask a follow-up question that is outside of the initial interview questions?

A: Yes, if in the interview the candidate does not address or fully answer a question, a search committee member may ask a follow-up question to clarify the initial question. This provides an opportunity for the committee to accurately assess the candidate's experience if they didn't fully answer the initial interview question. The follow-up question should be related to the initial interview question and job-related.

Q: When should the search committee discuss if the applicant will be moved forward in the process?

A: When scheduling interviews, the committee can allow time between applicants for discussion and schedule time to discuss following all of the interviews. Committee members should be prepared to discuss strengths/weaknesses of each candidate and recommend top candidates for the next round of interviews.

METHOD OF INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES

Q: If the committee has three candidates from out of state, one in state, and one internal applicant can the interviews for the out of state candidates be conducted over the phone and in person for the other two applicants?

A: The best practice is to conduct all interviews in the same manner (even if the internal candidate's office is right down the hall from where the interviews will be conducted). If an alternative approach is taken, it is best for the applicant to request it to avoid claims of discrimination and bias.

SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS WHO CAN'T MAKE ALL MEETINGS/INTERVIEWS

Q: If members of the search committee can't make all of the meetings or interviews, can they evaluate the candidates they missed?

A: No, they should provide input only for those who they have personally interviewed.

Q: If members of the search committee can't make all of the interviews, can the interviews be recorded (audio and/or video) for them to view later?

A: No, interviews should not be recorded in any format. This raises a number of legal concerns regarding how the recordings will be used, the format and retention period, notification and sign-off from applicants/candidates, etc.

FEEDBACK FROM SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Search Committee Notes

Q: Are the notes that search committee members take during the search process available to the hiring authority?

A: Search committee members may share their verbal or written information and assessments. Some hiring authorities request a candidate summary with strengths and weaknesses that may include some form of the search committee notes, if not the actual notes. The search committee cannot, however, be required to take personal notes or make them legible or comprehensible to someone else. Ultimately, all versions of the notes should be destroyed as soon as possible after the search is completed.

Q: Can a member of the search committee who has first-hand knowledge regarding the performance of an applicant share the information with the committee?

A: Yes, the search committee member should share the information with the committee. If unsolicited feedback is received from sources outside the committee, consider who is providing it and their possible motives. It should be firsthand knowledge rather than hearsay.

SPOUSAL HIRE

Q: Can the search committee commit to hiring the spouse of a finalist?

A: No, the search committee can't commit, but the search committee can connect the spouse with the School, College or Department with the opening where they might be best suited.

FAMILY AND FRIEND HIRES

Q: Can the search committee commit to hiring other family members or friends of a finalist?

A: No, the search committee can't commit, but the search committee can connect the family member or friend with the School, College or Department that has an opening where they might be best suited.

REFERENCE CHECKS

Q: Is it necessary to check references for internal candidates?

A: Yes, references should always be checked prior to making an offer, even for current CU employees who may be promoted or transferred into a new position. The only time reference

checking would not be necessary is when the hiring manager for the vacant position is also the candidate's current supervisor.

Q: Should you notify a candidate prior to checking references?

A: Yes, this is good candidate care practice in the reference checking process. It lets the candidate know that you are interested in moving forward with them. Also, it gives the candidate an opportunity to notify their references, so the references can finalize quicker.

Q: Is it appropriate for search committee members to contact colleagues at the employer of the applicant to check them out?

A: No, you must ask the applicant if it is okay to check listed references as well as off-list references (including colleagues). References are checked at the finalist stage, after final round interviews.

Q: Should the search committee or the hiring authority conduct the reference checks?

A: It can be completed by either party, but references are generally completed by the hiring manager or hiring authority. Additionally, Central HR provides an online reference-checking service called Crosschq that collects reference information through an online survey.