

## **CHECKING EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES**

### **Before checking an employment reference:**

1. Contact the Department of Human Resources and verify a release of liability form is on file. The application contains a waiver.
2. Check out the legitimacy of the person you are calling.
3. Make sure the reference has legitimate knowledge and authority to answer your questions.
4. Determine whether the applicant has given permission and/or a waiver to allow the former employer to talk with you.
5. Treat the information you are receiving as confidential, do not pass it on.

### **When checking an employment reference:**

1. Ask only questions which pertain to the job.
2. Do not volunteer information on what other references have provided.
3. Keep a brief record of who was called, what was asked, what was provided, and the date and duration of the conversation.
4. Do not ask questions "off the record." All questions are clearly discoverable in a lawsuit.
5. Ask questions which reveal prior job performance and performance characteristics of the applicant.
6. Do not ask vague questions such as "Was he an average performer." Ask questions such as "How well did he reconcile bank statements?"
7. Do not make subjective statements about what is being said to you by the former employer or indicate whether you will or will not hire the applicant.
8. Confirm information that was given you by the applicant. Confirm it precisely, do not put it into your own words.
9. Do not call the applicant's friends or relatives.
10. Ask the former employer for additional names you can call.
11. Do not ask any questions which are illegal for you to ask the applicant.
12. Verify the education and training claimed by applicant.
13. Thank the person for their responses.

## **SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

1. Verify dates of employment.
2. Verify salary level.
3. Ask what is history of attendance.
4. What is the official title of the position held?
5. What are the minimum requirements?
6. Did applicant supervise? How many and what levels?
7. What was primary responsibility?
8. What size budget was applicant responsible for?
9. What was their best contribution to organization?
10. Was he/she cooperative with superiors and coworkers?
11. How good are their communication skills?
12. Were you satisfied with the work output?
13. Is employee eligible for rehire?
14. Did the applicant receive regular employment evaluations?
15. Was the applicant the subject of disciplinary action while employed?
16. What is the reason applicant left employment?