

Standard Operating Guideline: Hiring of Personnel

Purpose

Skamania EMS & Rescue has adopted guidelines to outline the procedures for hiring agency personnel who fill operational and administrative roles. Skamania EMS & Rescue will ensure that the SOG is consistent with agency policy, where applicable, and as necessary amend the SOG to maintain consistency.

Scope

This Standard Operating Guideline and associated policies or programs apply to all existing personnel, whether they be volunteer, part-time, or full-time, and whether they be operational or administrative positions; and to applicants who have expressed interest in employment with Skamania EMS & Rescue.

1.2 General Hiring Process

Skamania EMS & Rescue shall ensure that any hiring process undertaken consists of the steps below, with limited modification, and then only modified upon approval by the Board of Commissioners or their designee:

- Determination of Need
- Solicitation of Position(s)
- Applicant Review
- Testing
- Oral Examinations (interviews)
- Final Review
- Conditional Offers of Employment

Minimum Employment Standards

The applicant must be able to lawfully work in the United States at all times while employed by Skamania EM & Rescue.

The applicant is able to read, write and speak the English language clearly and effectively.

The applicant has never been convicted of a felony or crime related to or involving moral turpitude.

The applicant possesses a high school diploma or general education development certificate (high school graduation level).

Local high school students who are certified in the state of Washington as first responders shall have this requirement waived while serving as volunteers with the agency. (See: Volunteer & Resident Policy)

- The applicant is a minimum age of eighteen (18).
- Part-time, Full-time: twenty-one (21) years of age.

The applicant shall possess a valid state issued motor vehicle driver's license with less than two moving violations in the last 24 months and no DUI convictions within the last 5 years.

The applicant shall possess the following certificates of completion, EMS certifications and/or licenses (operational positions):

- Volunteers: National Registry First Responder (EMR) or Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or higher certification or valid transferable state certification and/or licensure and a current HCP BLS card.
- Part-time/Full Time: Current Washington state EMT or higher certification applicable to the position applying for, or ability to obtain certification and affiliation within six (6) months.

All applicants must possess the certifications and educational components (or equivalents) as required by the job description of the position for which they are applying.

Operational applicants must submit to a physical agility test (PAT) as described in the standard operating guidelines, developed and administered by the agency or their designee. Alternatively, applicants who have a current, authenticated certificate indicating they have passed a CPAT test will be exempt from taking the agency's physical agility test.

The applicant must participate in an oral examination (oral board) process as described in the standard operating guidelines, developed and administered by the agency or their designee. The results of this oral interview will be used to determine the applicant's acceptability for a vacant position assessing their demeanor, background and ability to communicate.

Acceptable physical, emotional and mental fitness as established by a physician, following examination, to determine the applicant is free from any physical, emotional or mental condition and drug use; which might make the applicant unable, with or without accommodation, to perform the essential functions of the job of emergency medical technician. All applicants for employment who receive a conditional offer of employment must, when so directed by the agency, submit to examination including drug screening (including cannabis) and demonstrate an acceptable level of physical health as established by a district-appointed licensed physician. A declaration of the applicant's medical history shall be available to the physician and shall be subject to background investigation. ***This physical exam and drug test will be administered after a conditional offer of employment is made (operational positions).***

Submit to a criminal background check and have no noteworthy findings or items that make you ineligible to work in a position of this nature, as outlined by local, state and federal law, or agency policy. ***This background check will be administered after a conditional offer of employment is made.***

Compliance with Minimum Employment Standards

All applicants for the open positions must meet the minimum employment standard set forth in in this SOG. The Superintendent and/or their designee will have the final decision in which all applicants are to demonstrate compliance with the minimum employment standards.

Hiring Committee

To ensure hiring guidelines are followed and the hiring process is completed with an objective review, Skamania EMS shall convene a Hiring Committee once need has been established.

The Hiring Committee shall consist of, at a minimum, the following personnel: (1) Captain, (1) full-time operational staff, (1) part-time or volunteer staff *or* (1) administrative staff member. Additionally, the agency may elect to have non-employee members assigned to the Hiring Committee for the oral interview portion of the process. Should the agency desire to include a non-employee member on the Hiring Committee, such selection will be made from an agency whose duty it is to provide emergency response services (for operational positions), and/or from local or regional government entities (for administrative positions).

It shall be the duty of the Hiring Committee to work collaboratively with the Superintendent and, as necessary, other administrative staff to carry out the hiring process detailed herein.

Upon conclusion of the solicitation and hiring process, the Hiring Committee shall be relieved of their duties. Future solicitations are hiring processes will require the agency to convene a new Hiring Committee.

Reference Checks

All candidates who apply for a position with Skamania EMS & Rescue must acknowledge and authorize us to collect, review and consider reference information obtained from current or previous employers. These reference checks are considered a part of the hiring process, and therefore, are required as a part of the vetting process.

To ensure confidentiality and compliance with employment law, Skamania EMS & Rescue will obtain written authorization from each candidate as a part of the application process.

Background Checks

Upon receipt of a conditional offer of employment, candidates must submit to a background check, regardless of the position they are filling.

Candidates for administrative positions may be further required to submit to a credit check.

Required Non-DOT Drug Testing and Pre-Employment Physical

Upon receiving a candidate's acceptance to the offer of employment, Skamania EMS & Rescue shall schedule, within five (5) calendar days, a non-DOT drug test and pre-employment physical.

Should the candidate fail to make the scheduled appointment, the agency may rescind the offer and move forward. Candidates will be notified in writing of any such decision.

Should the candidate fail the non-DOT drug test and/or not be released by a physician to perform the work required of this position, with or without reasonable accommodations as per state or federal law, the agency shall rescind the offer and move forward. Candidates will be notified in writing of any such decision.

1.2.1 Solicitation of Positions

Whenever possible, Skamania EMS & Rescue shall endeavor to solicit for positions, whether they be full-time, part-time or volunteer, by casting the broadest net. Such solicitations may be posted via local, regional or national news media, social media outlets, and agency websites, and through a cooperative advertisement process with local and regional response partners or educational facilities.

1.2.2 Minimum Solicitation Periods

For part-time and full-time operational positions, solicitations shall run not less than twenty-one (21) calendar days.

For part-time and full-time administrative positions, solicitations shall run not less than fourteen (14) calendar days.

For temporary, part-time or full-time operational or administrative position hiring due to an emergent need, and with an expected work period of ten (10) months or less, solicitations shall run not less than fourteen (14) calendar days.

In all cases, the aforementioned solicitation periods may be modified or stricken when, as determined by the Board of Commissioners or their designee, filling the position via a promotional or alternative process is desirable.

1.2.3 Solicitation Requirements

When drafting the solicitation advice for vacant or new positions, the following information shall be included:

- The rank, title and status of the position (e.g. Lead Paramedic, full-time; Administrative Assistant, part-time)
- The applicable salary range and benefits
- The method of application allowed, and location of or link to application materials
- The closing date, or last date, including time, to submit application materials
- Contact information for Skamania EMS & Rescue, to include a phone number and email to which applicants may submit questions

1.3 Applicant Review

The Hiring Committee shall meet within three days following the closure of the solicitation period to review applications received. The application review shall be an objective process and consider only the following information:

- the application is printed neatly, legibly and/or typed
- all applicable sections are completed, and that information provided is complete
- all required attachments, certificates or references are included
- all required supplemental documents (e.g. reference authorizations, background check forms) are completed and attached
- the applicant has the minimum qualifications or credentials required to meet the duties of the position being filled

Applications that do not meet the initial review requirements, as outlined above, will be excluded from moving forward in the hiring process. Skamania EMS & Rescue shall address to each applicant that was excluded, a letter advising of such, and welcome them to apply again should future opportunities be made available.

1.3.1 Applicant Testing

Following application review and exclusion (as described above), the Hiring Committee shall establish a day, date and time to administer both the optional written and required physical agility test. The agency should endeavor to schedule this testing process on a day and during a time that is most likely to be attended by those who have current professional commitments; or, with enough advance notice to allow for schedule adjustments.

In all cases, notice of the day, date, time and location of the testing facility shall be provided to candidates ten (10) calendar days in advance.

1.3.2 Testing for Operational Positions

Skamania EMS & Rescue shall allow for enough time to permit a minimum of five (5) and maximum of ten (10) applicants to complete a written and physical agility test on the same day. Dependent upon applicant volume, the agency may further complete Oral Examinations (interviews) on the same day, or on successive days, as needed.

Test Criteria

For optional written testing, applicants are graded on a scale of one hundred percent (100%). A score equal to or greater than 80% or, achieving a median score or higher of all applicants taking the test shall be considered passing.

Applicants are provided all materials needed for the testing process. Testing is administered in a classroom setting and applicants are allowed one (1) hour to complete the test. Failure to complete the test within the time frames allotted will result in disqualification.

Applicant Testing, Physical Agility Test

Unless subject to the exclusion noted below, applicants for operational positions are required to complete a Physical Agility test that has been developed by the agency. Tests and scoring criteria are designed to obtain a basic assessment of the applicants' physical ability, knowledge and use of mechanical safety procedures related to the work and equipment generally used in emergency medical and rescue response. Physical Agility tests are pass/fail.

Candidate Physical Agility Test (CPAT), In Lieu of Agency Physical Agility Test

Applicants who have current and verified CPAT certificates are exempt from taking our agencies Physical Agility Test. This exemption is allowed with the acknowledgment that the CPAT test developed and licensed by IAFF/IAFC is equivalent or greater than the test developed by our agency. Applicants must provide proof of CPAT certification from an accredited entity.

Physical Agility Test, Introduction and Safety Procedures

To ensure the highest level of safety and to prevent exhaustion, Skamania EMS & Rescue shall review the test process and requirements with all applicants prior to the start of the test. Further, an evaluator will be onsite in the event an injury or other issue should arise.

Applicants will be required to read and sign a liability waiver prior to engaging in the Physical Agility test. All applicants are required to read, understand and adhere to the following safety guidelines immediately before, during and after the testing process:

Applicants are required to wear comfortable clothing, and must have closed toe and closed heel footwear (e.g. work boots, hiking boots or tennis shoes).

Loose or restrictive jewelry and other personal items that could cause a safety issue (e.g. tripping, snagging, and pulling) are prohibited.

Physical Agility Test, Grading

The Physical Agility Test developed and administered by Skamania EMS & Rescue is graded on a pass/fail basis. Applicants who complete the test, without being disqualified as indicated below, will be considered to have “passed” the test.

Any of the following circumstances or situations that occur during the testing phase will result in disqualification and end the test:

- Running at any point in testing
- Not returning items to the correct starting/staging location
- Exceeding the maximum allowed test time of ninety (90) minutes

1.3.3 Testing for Administrative Positions

Skamania EMS & Rescue shall allow for enough time to permit a minimum of three (3) and maximum of six (6) applicants to complete a written test on the same day. Dependent upon applicant volume, the agency may further complete Oral Examinations (interviews) on the same day, or on successive days, as needed.

Test Criteria

Applicants are graded on a scale of one hundred percent (100%). A score equal to or greater than 80% or, achieving a median score or higher of all applicants taking the test shall be considered passing.

Applicants are provided all materials needed for the testing process. Testing is administered individually, and applicants are allowed thirty (30) minutes to complete the test.

1.4 Selection Process

Following application review and completion of all required testing, collective scores and candidate material will be submitted to the Superintendent and Hiring Committee. Within seven (7) calendar days, the Superintendent and the Committee shall gather and establish an eligible list of ten (10) candidates minimum and twenty (20) candidates’ maximum. In the event less than ten (10) applications are received, the list of eligible candidates will be adjusted accordingly. Placement on the list will be based solely on scoring, from

high (first on list) to low (last on list). Thereafter, this list shall remain active until such time that it expires or is extended per agency policy.

At the discretion of the Superintendent, additional interviews with candidates on the Eligibility List or, provided for employment consideration in lieu of creating an Eligibility List, may be scheduled. Any such additional interview shall occur within seven (7) calendar days.

As determined by the timelines in the initial solicitation, or within fourteen (14) calendar days following the collective summation described above, the Superintendent shall select a candidate to which he/she may submit a Conditional Offer of Employment. Nothing in agency policy, nor this standard operating guideline, shall require the Superintendent to select the candidate based upon ranking or position on an Eligibility List. Any candidate who has successfully passed the initial application review and required testing procedures may be considered for employment and provided a Conditional Offer of Employment.

1.5 Conditional Offers of Employment

Once a candidate has been selected, the agency shall submit to them a Conditional Offer of Employment. This offer, submitted in writing, shall include:

- Position Offered
- Status (e.g. full-time, part-time)
- Wage Scale and Step
- Benefits (if applicable)
- Notice of Required Background Check
- Notice of Required non-DOT Drug Testing and Physical Tests

Further, the offer shall include the date by which the candidate is to respond with an acceptance or denial of the position, response options (e.g. email, postal mail, in person), and agency contact person(s) who are eligible to collect their response.

1.6 Use of Third-Party Agents, Hiring Entities

Skamania EMS & Rescue may elect to use a third party agent (or professional hiring entity) to carry out some or all of the hiring processes outlined herein. Upon such decision being elected, the agency shall ensure that solicitation periods, testing procedures and application review are done in accordance with policy.

1.7 Hiring for the Position of Superintendent

The Board of Commissioners is responsible for establishing the process under which a Superintendent will be hired. Generally, the following guidelines will be followed:

Solicitation

The Board of Commissioner are encouraged to cast a broad net, and utilize standard mechanisms to solicit interest for the position of Superintendent. These mechanisms include, but are not limited to the use of hiring agents and regional and national advertising services.

Barring an unexpected or immediate vacancy in the position, solicitations will be posted for not less than thirty days, and may remain posted for applicant interest until such time a formal, conditional offer has been accepted by a chosen candidate.

Oral Examinations (Interviews)

The Board of Commissioners shall convene an Oral Examination Panel consisting of a minimum of (1) Commissioners, a full or partial selection of members assigned to the Hiring Committee, and may further include (1) non-employee member from a similar entity. The panel make up shall be determined prior to the solicitation period described herein.

In the event the Board of Commissioners desire to interview, as a whole, it must be done in an open public meeting, with appropriate notice being given. The Board shall ensure candidates selected for interview are aware of such requirement. Following or during the interview process, the Board of Commissioners may recess into Executive Session to further discuss the qualifications of the candidates.