

Introduction

This Handbook presents a general overview of the recruitment and hiring processes used at Montana State University (MSU) to hire contract professionals and faculty employees. The Handbook references policies of the Montana Board of Regents and Montana State University. If there are any omissions, misstatements or inconsistencies between this handbook and these policies, the policies take precedence.

Exceptions by the President

The President may approve exceptions to the hiring procedures outlined herein, on a case by case basis, when necessary for the efficient administration of the institution.

EEO Opportunity in the Hiring Process

The University guarantees **equal opportunity** in the hiring process by:

- placing vacancy announcements and advertisements in electronic and appropriate recruitment sources as appropriate to the position;
- stating MSU's equal opportunity commitment in the vacancy announcements and advertisements;
- appointing committees to review, interview, and evaluate applicants;
- conducting fair and impartial evaluations of candidates; and
- studying applicant flow statistics to ensure there is no adverse impact on protected class applicants.

The University takes positive, effective **affirmative action** to increase opportunities for protected class applicants for positions by:

- ensuring that approximately 25% of the members of search committees are women and/or representatives of diverse populations as appropriate;
- advertising positions in enhanced recruitment sources as appropriate to the position;
- ensuring qualified protected class finalists are interviewed; and
- requiring justification if protected class finalists are interviewed but not hired.

Brief Overview of the Recruitment and Hiring Process

Pre-Search

- The hiring authority prepares the position description. If the position description has not been updated for several years, the position description should be reviewed and revised to reflect an accurate description of the duties and responsibilities.
- The position description is submitted to Human Resources | Affirmative Action for review and approval.
- The hiring authority submits the [Recruitment Authorization Form](#) (RAF) to the appropriate Vice President or Provost for approval.
- The search committee and/or the hiring authority develops a vacancy announcement based on the position description. A vacancy announcement template can be accessed at the [HR|AA Search Committee Tools website](#).

- The hiring authority or committee sends the Office of Human Resources | Affirmative Action the vacancy announcement electronically for posting purposes.
- The Office of Human Resources | Affirmative Action posts the position on the MSU Job Webpage and appropriate on-campus bulletin boards after receiving the signed RAF.
- The Office of Human Resources | Affirmative Action sends an email to the hiring authority and/or search chair advising them of the search number and other administrative search procedures, requirements and responsibilities.
- The hiring authority appoints the search committee and the search committee chair and the hiring authority invites a representative from Human Resources | Affirmative Action to orient the search committee prior to screening the applications. The Hiring Authority should write or verbalize a charge to the committee.
- A search support position may be assigned to the committee. This position will perform administrative duties such as arranging committee meetings; collecting applications; processing applicant correspondence as directed by the committee chair; committee file recordkeeping, etc.

Recruitment

- The search committee advertises the position in required and enhanced recruitment sources appropriate to the type of position and level of the search. [Click here for enhanced recruitment resources](#).
- The search committee develops application screening instruments, telephone reference questions, and telephone interview questions to be used in the evaluation of applicants and submits these to Human Resources | Affirmative Action for approval.
- The search support and/or search chair sends [Human Resources | Affirmative Action](#) the email addresses (names and street mailing address if no email is provided) of all applicants as they are received.
- The Office of Human Resources | Affirmative Action sends EEO letters requesting demographic data to applicants in electronic format.

Screening

- The search committee independently screens applications after the screening date, using the [approved screening instruments](#) and determines who meets required qualifications and preferred qualifications.
- The search committee continues the screening process by 1) conducting telephone interviews and 2) completing reference checks.
- The Search Chairperson should work with the Office of Human Resources | Affirmative Action in establishing if there are protected class members in the applicant pool and if these members are being considered through the search process.
- The search committee establishes its finalist pool and discusses the finalists with the hiring authority. *The [University's Affirmative Action Plan](#) requires qualified protected class members in the finalist pool to be interviewed; other finalists are approved for interview as appropriate.*
- The hiring authority or committee chair informs the Office of Human Resources | Affirmative Action of the names of finalists, learns of any protected class members in the applicant pool and obtains Human Resources | Affirmative Action concurrence to invite candidates for interviews

Finalist Interviewing

- The committee chair invites finalists for interviews and may publicly announce the names and qualifications of finalists if appropriate. The chair should personally call any "internal" applicants who are not included in the interview pool.
- The committee develops interview questions and [feedback sheets](#) based on the qualifications identified in the vacancy announcement.

- The committee, the chair, and the hiring authority develop the schedule for on-campus interviews ensuring that all applicants experience “the same or similar” experiences.
- The hiring authority, committee chair and committee members, as well as appropriate administrators and constituency groups, interview candidates. It is required to provide [feedback tools](#) to these groups to ascertain comments.
- The committee summarizes the feedback, evaluates candidates, and summarizes the search process and presents this to the hiring authority as to the acceptability, strengths, and weaknesses of the candidates. Ranking of candidates is discouraged. [Use of the Search Summary Narrative template is recommended. Contact Human Resources | Affirmative Action for template.](#)
- The summary document should be submitted to Human Resources | Affirmative Action for approval.

Hiring

- The hiring authority and/or committee chair may collect additional information and may contact additional references on the finalists.
- The hiring authority obtains concurrence to make a conditional offer to a candidate from Human Resources | Affirmative Action and appropriate Dean, Vice President or the Provost’s Office.
- If a protected class member was interviewed but was not selected, the hiring authority writes a letter of rationale as to why the person was not selected.
- The hiring authority or designated staff member will contact the person selected and will notify Human Resources | Affirmative Action of the verbal acceptance of the position. Human Resources | Affirmative Action will initiate the pre-employment background check. **All job offers are conditional upon successful completion of a pre-employment background check.**
- The hiring authority may negotiate terms and conditions of employment with the candidate, including rank, tenure credit date, hire date, salary, condition of hire, start-up packages, and moving expense reimbursement consistent with university policies and any applicable provisions of the applicable collective bargaining agreements.
- Once the background check results are received, the hiring authority finalizes the formal letter of hire or letter of appointment, obtains all appropriate signature approvals, and sends it to the candidate for signature.
- The hiring authority or committee chair notifies unsuccessful interviewees and informs the committee and appropriate administrators of the hiring.

Record Keeping

- The search support or Committee Chair assembles a complete file on the search including all applications, minutes of committee meetings, screening instruments and interview questions, interview evaluation sheets from committee members, [Search Summary Narrative](#) and [feedback sheets](#) from University faculty, staff, and students. This complete file is retained for three (3) years from the date of hire in the appropriate Department or College of hire. A summary file containing the position description, the new hire’s curriculum vitae or resume, the vacancy announcement, the final report of the committee, the letter of appointment or letter of hire, and the Search Summary Narrative of the search process should be retained for three (3) additional years.
- The department places a copy of the position description (if available), vacancy announcement, letter of hire or letter of appointment, and curriculum vitae or resume in the new employee's departmental personnel file.
- The department head gives the new tenure track faculty member a copy of, or the link to, the department's and/or college's P&T document.