

Administrative Policy & Procedures Executive Recruitment and Termination

Policy Statement:

The City of Carson recognizes the importance of attracting highly qualified candidates for unclassified management executive positions, such as department heads. To ensure a fair and transparent recruitment process, as well as maintain high standards of competency and productivity, the city emphasizes the importance of clear policies, procedures, and transparency in executive recruitment and termination. The city holds its executives to the highest standards of performance and accountability.

Procedures:

1. Identification of Vacant Executive Positions:
 - The City Manager, in consultation with relevant department heads, shall identify vacant unclassified management executive positions.
 - The positions shall be reviewed to determine the need for external recruitment and the potential benefits of conducting a national search.
2. Engagement of External Consultants:
 - If it is determined that external recruitment is necessary, the City Manager shall initiate the process of engaging external consultants.
 - The selection of external consultants shall be based on their expertise, experience, and track record in executive recruitment.
 - The City Manager shall ensure that the engagement of external consultants follows the city's procurement policies and procedures.
 - The City Manager shall ensure that contract agreement is following the City's procurement policies.
3. National Search for Executive Positions:
 - When conducting a national search, the external consultants shall utilize various recruitment methods, including advertising in national publications, utilizing professional networks, and leveraging online platforms.
 - The consultants shall actively seek diverse and qualified candidates to ensure a broad pool of applicants.
 - The City Manager shall work closely with the external consultants to review the shortlist of candidates based on established criteria.
4. Selection and Hiring Process:
 - A 360 degree approach may be utilized from The City Manager working in collaboration with a consultant, Assistant City Managers (ACM)s, Deputy City Manager (DCM), the Department staff, the Executive Team and possibly Union representatives to conduct interviews and assessments of candidates.

- A. An initial panel consisting of (the City Manager, Assistant City Manager's, Deputy City Manager, and consultant) reviewing all candidates and providing a shortlist to move forward in the recruitment process.
 - B. Second Interview consisting of the Departmental staff and the shortlist of candidates would be ranked and provided to the City Manager or designee confidentially (Union representatives may be included in this round if the Executive recruitment is applicable i.e., Director of Human Resources)
 - C. Third interview consisting of the Executive staff and the shortlist of candidates would be ranked and provided to the City Manager or designee confidentially.
 - D. Final Selection by the City Manager based on the candidate who was the majority top-ranking candidate from the initial, second and third interviews.
- The City Manager or designee shall ensure that the ranking from each group is kept confidentially until all interviews have been conducted to make the final selection based on the ranking of the respective groups' majority top candidate. The top candidate must meet the qualifications, experience, fit with the city's culture, and alignment with the position requirements.
 - The City Manager may select a candidate under his/her authority as stated in Section 403. City Manager Powers and Duties. (3) Power of Appointment and Removal.
 - The City Manager will ensure that the hiring process may follow this policy and is consistent with the City's Charter and Municipal Code.

5. Termination of Executive Positions:

- In cases where an executive's performance or conduct falls below the expected standards, the City Manager shall initiate the termination process.
- The termination process shall follow the city's policies and procedures, ensuring fairness, transparency, and adherence to applicable employment laws.
- The City Manager will work closely with the City Attorney and Human Resources Department to ensure compliance with legal requirements and maintain transparency throughout the process as consistent with City Charter Section 403. City Manager Powers and Duties. (3) Power of Appointment and Removal.

6. Reporting and Documentation:

- The City Manager or designee shall maintain records of the executive recruitment and termination processes, including the engagement of external consultants, advertising efforts, candidate evaluations, and termination documentation.
- Regular reports on the executive recruitment and termination processes shall be provided to the City Council verbally and/or in memo format.

Recruitment Processes

1. In-House Expertise Method

- The city chooses internal staff to serve as a chairperson or committee to conduct the recruitment.
- The City's Human Resources Director or their designee and the municipal attorney will be included in this process. In conducting in-house recruitment, staff can work with the governing body to develop the ideal candidate profile and design an effective and legal recruitment and selection process.
- The appointed staff will also be responsible for the administrative tasks of placing advertisements, collecting résumés, and scheduling interviews. The assigned staff will work with the designated City executive staff member to approve the selection of the final candidates and conduct the interviews, resulting in the final selection and offer. In this scenario, the staff is a resource throughout the recruitment process.

2. Outside Expertise Method

- Selection of firm- The firm's experience shall be checked by reviewing all elements of its proposal and contacting their provided references, particularly representatives of local governments that have used its services. Further, the governing body should be fully aware of the costs and benefits when deciding whether to use outside expertise.
- When using an executive search firm, the governing body plays an active role in the recruitment process. It develops the candidate profile, approves the selection of the applicants, interviews the candidates, and makes the final selection.
- The executive search firm will coordinate the recruitment. The executive search firm begins by meeting with Council either individually or as a group (adhering to the Brown Act) to help develop the ideal candidate profile. It is the firm's responsibility to facilitate these discussions. The firm coordinates the overall process and assumes responsibility for all tasks until it is time for the elected body to select and interview candidates.
- During this process, the firm regularly updates the governing body, updating the City represented staff. As the firm will be responsible for all the administrative details, the role of allocated City staff is usually limited to providing information about the local government and coordination with the firm.

3. Hybrid- In-House/Outside Expertise Method

- The city can conduct the recruitment in-house and supplement the process, where necessary, with assistance from an executive search firm. This could be seeking aid at the beginning of the process to facilitate the discussion, develop the ideal candidate profile, and determine the structure of the recruitment process.
- The hybrid method could also present itself by the City initiating the process in-house by developing the ideal candidate profile and advertising for the

vacancy. They would use the outside firm to help review résumés, conduct reference checks, and structure the interview process.

- The exact responsibilities of each party must be clarified in a written agreement.

Starting Point

The governing body, staff, or executive recruiter must develop a framework for the recruitment process. At the outset, they must agree on several key issues critical to the success of the recruitment, including criteria for the ideal candidate profile, compensation range and components, and timing and geographic scope of the search.

Candidate Profile

The profile will encompass those qualities, characteristics, experience, and areas of expertise that would be found in an ideal candidate. Such areas will consist of work experience, management experience, and leadership style to be successful in the position. The development of the candidate profile should begin with a discussion or survey of the position's needs with the relevant staff. Items to be considered include size of the local government, the composition of the community, services provided, and overall objectives and priorities of the City. For executive-level positions, the governing body should also consider skillsets such as budgeting, human resources, and technological know-how, and soft skills, such as the ability to work with people and to lead an organization. These criteria will form the basis for reviewing résumés, selecting finalists, and making a hiring decision.

Launch of the Recruitment

The timing of the recruitment can sometimes be affected by publication deadlines, which are essential in adequately advertising the vacant position. An ideal timetable for an open period for applications to submit resumes is around thirty days.

Advertising and Outreach Strategies

The City, as appropriate, shall advertise the recruitment to ensure the visibility of the recruitment opportunity. The advertisement campaign shall be comprehensive and include the following information:

- Title of the vacant position
- Name of the local government
- Population of the local government
- Amounts of the operating and capital budgets
- Number of full-time employees
- Services provided
- Statement regarding the compensation package
- Filing deadline, including any special items of information desired such as current salary and
- work-related references
- A brief description of key areas of interest and desirable experience and qualifications (or a reference or email link to the administrator profile)
- Indication of whether residency is required

- A timetable indicating the principal steps and time frame for the overall recruitment
- Where and to whom to send résumés with a notation as to whether email submittals are acceptable or required
- Application link

Outreach Strategies

Such outreach to be considered are as follows:

- Outreach to former and retired administrators
- Specialized LinkedIn groups
- Local government officials in adjacent communities
- Executive directors of state leagues
- Directors of university public administration programs
- Leaders of regional municipalities

The governing body, staff, or executive recruiter must identify individuals advising them of the opening and inviting them to apply if interested. The correspondence should include information describing the vacant position. Outreach can be conducted via electronic correspondence and phone. To ensure diversity of applicants development of a strategy to generate a diverse applicant pool helps to provide a broad cross-section of candidates to bring a different perspective to the organization. Diversity within a local government can enhance the organization's responsiveness to an increasingly diverse spectrum of residents, improve its relations with the local community, increase its ability to manage change and expand its creativity.

Application Process

The governing body, staff, or executive recruiter will guide the candidate to apply before the final date by fulfilling all elements requested for the specific recruitment. Such factors include candidate resumes, cover letters, references, etc.

Reviewing the Applications

The governing body, staff, or executive recruiter will screen candidates. The objective of the initial review is to ensure the minimum qualifications are satisfied and identify candidates who best reflect the qualities, characteristics, experience, and areas of expertise defined in the ideal candidate profile.

Selection of Candidates

After review of applications, the governing body, staff, or executive recruiter shall conduct a cursory web-based search for any related incidences that may cause concern. The designated staff shall recommend which applicants to be invited to an interview. The appropriate executive staff will approve the chosen group of candidates. The governing body shall then create a primary candidate list, and a secondary list may be helpful if candidates from the first group decline or cannot continue with the process.

Informing the Candidates

Once the candidates are selected, the governing body representative, the staff, or the executive recruiter should contact each candidate by phone and do the following:

- Inform the candidate that they have been selected to interview (the candidate should be made to feel that the City is pleased to have reviewed their application). At the same time, confirm the candidate's continuing interest in the position.
- Advise the candidate of the nature of the interview process, including date and time. Indicate that all the details and information will be confirmed in a written correspondence via email.

Interviewing Candidates

1. First-Round Interviews/Panel Interview

- The governing body, staff, or executive recruiter will serve as an evaluation panel and will meet with each selected candidate either in person or virtually. The length of the panel interview should be no more than one hour.
- Interview questions shall be asked in the same manner for all candidates and will consist of elements covering overall work experience, specific accomplishments, career objectives, alternative approaches to practical problems faced by the local government, and similar matters. Questions that result in discussion should stay within acceptable legal parameters and shall not include references to politics, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, racial origin, and sexual preferences.

2. Second Round Interviews

- The governing body, staff, or executive recruiter may invite the finalists back for a second interview.
- The second interview may consist of a formal or informal meeting with the applicable team. It may or may not consist of structured questions.

3. Third Round Interviews

- The third interview may consist of departmental staff that may or may not consist of structured questions. **Union representatives may be included if applicable**

4. Fourth Round Interviews

- The fourth interview may consist of City Manager that may or may not consist of structured questions with a final selection. The final selection may be based on the majority ranking of all rounds.

Final Selection

Once the selection is made, the governing body, staff, or executive recruiter will contact the finalist, confirm the final candidate's willingness to accept the position, and obtain permission to conduct a comprehensive reference and background check.

Background Check

The background check will consist of a criminal history review, employment and education verification, and a credit check, which requires the candidate's consent. Once the City is satisfied with the results, the governing body, staff, or executive recruiter may inform the finalist and start negotiations for a total compensation package.

Negotiations

The governing body, staff, or executive recruiter will engage with the finalist to come up with an agreed base salary within the classification's range. Before initiating negotiations, the governing body can compare its salary range applicable to governing bodies in the same region. Such elements in the employee contract will consist of the following:

- Base salary
- Deferred compensation
- Severance pay
- Use of government car or car allowance
- Use of technology or technology allowance
- Retirement plan
- Medical and other insurance (dental, optical, life, disability)
- Vacation accrual
- Holidays
- Sick leave accrual
- Professional development attendance fees

Once the selected candidate and the City finalize the agreement, a representative from the governing body, staff, or executive recruitment firm shall personally contact the runners-up before or during a news release about the appointment.

The Announcement

The selection announcement shall be coordinated between the City and new employee. Two factors should precede any formal announcement of the appointment:

- The successful candidate has formally accepted the position, and the negotiations have been concluded.
- The successful candidate has been allowed to notify their current governing body about the appointment. This public announcement should be coordinated carefully to recognize the instantaneous nature of electronic communication.

By implementing this policy, the City of Carson aims to attract top talent for executive positions, maintain high standards of competency and productivity, and ensure a fair and transparent recruitment and termination process. The use of external consultants, consideration of a national search, and adherence to clear policies and procedures will help the city select the most suitable individuals for these critical roles and hold executives accountable to the highest standards of performance.