Office of Inspector General

FLHSMV
FLORIDA HIGHWAY SAFETY AND MOTOR VEHICLES

Recruitment and Selection Process
Audit Report 201920-02

January 6, 2021

Executive Summary

The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (Department), Bureau of Personnel Services (BPS) oversees the administration of personnel rules, regulations, policies, and procedures as they relate to Department members and applicants. Department selection procedures must meet the requirements of Section 110.213, Florida Statute (F.S.), and Chapter 60L-33, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). To assist the Department in achieving its goal of hiring the best-suited candidates in an efficient and legally defensible manner, the BPS works with members in the Department's various divisions to advise and instruct regarding human resource development and personnel administration.

The purpose of this audit was to evaluate the Department's recruitment and selection process for efficiency and compliance with applicable laws, Department policy, and procedure. We reviewed relevant documentation including Request to Advertise/Personnel Action Request (RTA/PAR) and other tracking logs, vacancy reports, recruitment and selection section practices and procedures, and interviewed Department members involved in the recruitment and selection process.

Overall, our review determined the Recruitment and Selection process was sufficiently operating in compliance with applicable laws, Department policy and procedure. However, we did note an area in which improvements could be made to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

Our review determined improved tracking of hiring milestones and required documentation could enhance the Recruitment and Selection section's efficiency. When comparing documentation maintained in the Recruitment and Selection section's workflow files to information in the RTA/PAR log, we noted the log was not always updated with accurate and complete information. We recommend the Recruitment and Selection section enhance the RTA/PAR log procedures to ensure Recruitment and Selection section members are updating the log timely. Additionally, we recommend the Recruitment and Selection section enhance the RTA/PAR log procedures to include periodic supervisory reviews for accuracy and completion. Furthermore, we recommend the Recruitment and Selection section implement appropriate auto-population abilities in the RTA/PAR log for dates and calculations to decrease human error in data entry.

Background and Introduction

One of the most important responsibilities given to supervisors is the ability to select new employees for agency positions. Section 110.105, F.S., and Department Policy 5.04, *Member Selection*, require the Department to ensure each applicant has an equal employment opportunity without regard to age, race, color, gender, religion, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, marital status, or disability. Section 110.211, F.S., requires that recruiting activities are planned and carried out in a manner that assures open competition based on the agency's needs. Selection activities are developed based on job-related requirements and needs of individual positions. These activities are conducted by division managers who are trained on the agency's hiring policy and procedures.

The BPS oversees the administration of personnel rules, regulations, policies, and procedures as they relate to employees and applicants. To assist the Department in achieving its goal of hiring the best-suited candidates in an efficient and legally defensible manner, the BPS advises Department members regarding human resource development and personnel administration.

The BPS is divided into three offices: Office of Employee Relations, Office of Employee Performance, and Office of Workforce Efficiency. The Office of Workforce Efficiency (OWE) is home to the Recruitment and Selection section, comprised of recruiters and personnel specialists. Recruiters provide guidance to hiring managers, both sharing the responsibility of keeping the process timely, efficient, consistent, and compliant with Department, state, and federal laws. Additionally, recruiters are responsible for reviewing hiring documentation and ensuring the final hiring packets contain all required and completed forms.

Department Policy 5.11, *Pay Policy and Personnel Actions*, dictates that all personnel actions affecting a member's compensation, position, or employment status will be reviewed and properly authorized prior to implementation. Actions must be in accordance with all applicable laws, rules, and policies, and administered in an equitable and non-discriminatory manner.

Hiring Process

There are seven core steps in the Department's hiring process: Request to Advertise (RTA), position advertisement, applicant screenings, interviews, reference and background checks, hiring packet approval, and start date obtained.

Request to Advertise

To begin the process for filling a position, the hiring manager submits an RTA form to their designated recruiter. An RTA form details the type of advertisement, the position information, leadership contact information, and the route for approval.

BPS reviews the RTA and the hiring and selection modules to be used for that specific vacancy. Hiring and selection modules are developed through a collaborative effort between the BPS and hiring managers to further ensure the advertisement and selection criteria are job relevant, level appropriate, and adequately address the hiring manager's needs. If a module already exists, the hiring manager confirms that it is up to date and accurate. If changes are made, the recruitment team determines whether the changes align with the position description and Department hiring procedures.

If there is no selection module for the position, the recruitment team sends a short module questionnaire to the hiring manager. The purpose of the questionnaire is to gain an understanding of the hiring manager's criteria for the position. The recruitment team uses the information from the completed questionnaire to create the selection module. Overall, this process typically takes one week.

Position Advertisement

Once the RTA and modules are approved, the position is advertised in the Statewide Talent Management System which is tied to the People First system and is considered an applicant tracking system for the BPS. This is where positions are advertised, and the prospective member applicant information is stored. Typically, positions are advertised for no more than two weeks.

Applicant Screening

Advertised positions typically contain BPS-approved selection modules, inclusive of screening criteria, interview questions, and a skills assessment. Hiring managers are required to document the evaluation of each candidate's selection module scores using the Applicant Selection Guide (ASG). The ASG is a Department template that hiring managers complete, listing each applicant's score for every "assessment" within the process.

Eligible Applicant Interviews

After initial screenings have been completed for general eligibility, hiring managers must then interview eligible applicants. This step in the process varies in timeframe for each Division, due to constraints like holidays, leadership availability, and number of eligible applicants.

Reference and Background Checks

Per Section 110.1127, F.S., once the hiring manager has selected their top candidate using the ASG, the candidate must undergo employment screening. Applied screening levels must be in accordance with Chapter 435, F.S., with either level 1 or level 2 screening standards.

Reference checks involve contacting previous employers to learn if they recommend the candidate for the position based on their experiences. Background checks are conducted to learn of the candidate's criminal history. The hiring manager must ensure that the candidate receives, and acknowledges receipt of, an adequate Privacy Act Statement when the candidate submits his/her fingerprints and associated personal information.

If the applicant has no criminal history record, the hiring manager is notified of the candidate's approval and can proceed to having the Hiring Packet approved. If it is determined through a background check that a candidate has a criminal history record, additional forms must be completed, and the criminal history record, review forms, and relevant statutes, must be sent to the Recruitment and Selection Manager for further review and approval/denial. Section 110.1127, F.S., dictates that all positions deemed to be positions of special trust or responsibility may not be filled with individuals who have been convicted of, or pled out to, a crime that reasonably relates to the nature of the position to be filled. If the criminal history record includes dropped, dismissed, or abandoned charges, the candidate may be approved with the Recruitment and Selection Manager & OWE Managers signing the Applicant Criminal History Review Form indicating acceptable results and returning the Hiring Packet to the Recruiter. The hiring manager is then notified of approval and can proceed to having the complete hiring packet approved.

Every candidate who has a criminal history receives a Criminal History Issue Notification of the Department's review and of his/her right to file an Accuracy Dispute within seven days upon receiving the Criminal History Issue Notification communication.

Like the interview stage, conducting reference and background checks takes time; the length of time varies by position.

Hiring Packet Approval

Upon a candidate's successful completion of the reference and background checks, a complete Hiring Packet containing the documents required in the Department's Packet Compliance Procedure is submitted to the BPS to be routed for approval. Typically, the approval route includes the hiring Bureau Chief or Troop Commander, the Division

Director, the Chief of Personnel Services, the Chief of Staff/Deputy Executive Director, and the Executive Director. After approval, BPS notifies the hiring manager they can proceed with obtaining a start date for the approved new hire.

Start Date Obtained

It is the responsibility of the hiring manager to work with the new hire to obtain a start date to be reported back to the BPS. Typically, candidates provide a start date approximately two weeks from learning they have been selected for the position.

Talent and Tracking Systems

BPS uses two systems for the recruitment and selection process. The first is the Statewide Talent Management System and the second is an Access database that tracks the internal routing of a hiring packet from initial receipt to the start date obtained.

Additional measures to track the hiring process, specifically for timeliness, are taken via the use of a Request to Advertise/Personnel Action Request (RTA/PAR) log, which is supported by documentation maintained by the Recruitment and Selection section in a workflow file, and documentation maintained in the new member's personnel file.

Findings and Recommendations

Overall, our review determined the Recruitment and Selection process is adequate; however, we noted the following area in which improvements could be made.

Hiring Timeline Tracking

Finding No. 1: Improved tracking of hiring milestones and required documentation could enhance the Recruitment and Selection section's efficiency.

The Department of Management Services, Division of Human Resource Management's *Human Resource Self-Assessment Program Manual* suggests agencies ensure they track and evaluate recruiting efforts to gauge overall effectiveness and associated recruiting method costs.

The Division of Management Services *Supervisor's Recruitment and Selection Program Manual* provides a best practice of posting positions for a minimum of 3 business days for each of the requisition types: Internal Agency, State Personnel System, and Open Competitive. However, it is left to the hiring agency to determine their own timelines based on needs and capabilities. In speaking with BPS, they shared a self-imposed,

ideal timeline of 50 days, from RTA submission to the BPS receiving the chosen candidate's start date.

We reviewed the Recruitment and Selection section's RTA/PAR log and selected a sample of 25 recent hires (out of 52) to trace through the hiring process. We compared documentation maintained in the Recruitment and Selection section's workflow files to information in the RTA/PAR log. We further compared milestone log dates to the BPS' self-reported ideal timeframe.

Our review determined:

- 76% of items sampled did not have documentation maintained in the workflow file to support the dates or information listed in the RTA/PAR log;
- 52% of items sampled contained conflicting or inaccurate dates or information in the RTA/PAR log compared to the workflow files; and
- 64% of items sampled did not have applicable dates entered in the RTA/PAR log, which were supported by documentation in the workflow files.

We further noted 100% of items sampled contained blank data cells.

Not completing the RTA/PAR log accurately after each step causes a lapse in timeline awareness and prevents an effective analysis of recruiting and hiring methods. While the RTA/PAR log is designed to capture timeframes relating to specific hiring actions, such as the length of time between submission and approval of required hiring forms, the absence of dates noting when forms were received or reviewed does not allow for accurate timeframe assessment.

Recommendations

We recommend the Recruitment and Selection section enhance the RTA/PAR log procedures to ensure the log is updated after each step is completed and in a timely manner.

Additionally, we recommend the Recruitment and Selection section enhance the RTA/PAR log procedures to include periodic supervisor reviews for accuracy and completion.

Furthermore, we recommend the Recruitment and Selection section implement appropriate auto-population abilities to the RTA/PAR log for dates and calculations, to decrease human error in data entry.

Management Response

BPS is not required by statute, rule, or agency policy to collect the data contained in the RTA/PAR log. The log simply tracks at what step in the process personnel actions and advertisements are and serves as a reminder of what steps must be completed. The RTA/PAR log also covers all of the types of actions that the Recruitment and Selection team processes. Therefore, it is appropriate for the data fields that do not apply to an action be left blank.

However, BPS does agree that any information that is added to the log must be accurate by reflecting the actual date each action occurs and that data entry should be completed in a timely manner. Furthermore, completing all log data fields that are required for a particular action is also important for assessing the efficiency of the recruitment and hiring process. Therefore, BPS will update its RTA/PAR log procedures and train Recruitment and Selection staff members on how to input information into the log accurately and timely. The procedures will also list which fields must be completed for each of action so that it is clear that any blank data fields are also accurate.

BPS further agrees that the log should be periodically audited to ensure that it is accurate since the data collected can be used to identify issues, monitor employee performance, and assess the effectiveness of the recruitment process. Therefore, BPS will include its procedures that the Recruitment and Selection team supervisor will periodically audit the log to ensure that staff members are correctly inputting the data accurately and timely.

Finally, BPS is currently reviewing automation options, including workflow process software, which would turn manual processes into digital workflows. However, there is a cost for such a solution, and, therefore, it is not currently fiscally feasible. Until BPS can create or purchase an automated process, BPS will ensure accuracy of the log through implementing procedures, training staff, and supervisor audits.

Purpose, Scope, and Methodology

The purpose of this engagement was to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process and compliance with applicable laws, Department policy and procedure.

The scope of this engagement included recruitment and selection documents and data for non-sworn Department employees during the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year.

The methodology included:

- Reviewing applicable statutes, rules, manuals, and procedures;

- Interviewing appropriate Department staff;

- Tracing a sample of new hires through the hiring process;

- Reviewing the process for tracking hiring milestones;

- Reviewing the process for monitoring/tracking positions that have been open for an extended period;

- Reviewing documentation for a sample of new hires;

- Determining how the Department ensures that new hires meet employment qualification requirements and are properly screened and/or tested;

- Determining how standard hiring policies, procedures, and practices are consistently communicated;

- Reviewing the process for creating and updating hiring modules;

- Determining the methods for collecting and storing required documentation; and

- Reviewing record retention requirements.

Distribution, Statement of Accordance, and Project Team

Distribution

Terry L. Rhodes, Executive Director
Jennifer Langston, Chief of Staff
Kim Ward, Chief, Bureau of Personnel Services
Jamie Wilson, Office of Workforce Efficiency

Melinda M. Miguel, Chief Inspector General
Sherrill F. Norman, Auditor General

Statement of Accordance

Section 20.055, Florida Statutes, requires the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' Inspector General to review, evaluate, and report on policies, plans, procedures, accounting, financial, and other operations of the Department and to recommend improvements. This audit engagement was conducted in accordance with applicable *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing* published by the Institute of Internal Auditors and *Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General* published by the Association of Inspectors General.

Project Team

Engagement conducted by:
Destiny Thomas, Auditor

Under the supervision of:
Erin Mook, Audit Director

Approved by:

Mike Stacy, Inspector General

ATTACHMENT - Management Response

FLHSMV
FLORIDA HIGHWAY SAFETY AND MOTOR VEHICLES

Terry L. Rhodes
Executive Director

2900 Apalachee Parkway
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0500
www.flhsmv.gov

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 15, 2020
TO: Erin Mook, Audit Director
FROM: Kimberly Sisko Ward, Chief of Personnel Serivces
SUBJECT: Recruitment and Selection Process Audit (201920-02)

The following is our response to the findings and recommendations presented in the report.

Finding 1: *Hiring Timeline Tracking*

Improved tracking of hiring milestones and required documentation could enhance the Recruitment and Selection section's efficiency.

Recommendation

We recommend the Recruitment and Selection section enhance the RTA/PAR log procedures to ensure the log is updated after each step is completed and in a timely manner.

Additionally, we recommend the Recruitment and Selection section enhance the RTA/PAR log procedures to include periodic supervisor reviews for accuracy and completion.

Furthermore, we recommend the Recruitment and Selection section implement appropriate auto-population abilities to the RTA/PAR log for dates and calculations, to decrease human error in data entry.

Management Response

BPS is not required by statute, rule, or agency policy to collect the data contained in the RTA/PAR log. The log simply tracks at what step in the process personnel actions and advertisements are and serves as a reminder of what steps must be completed. The RTA/PAR log also covers all of the types of actions that the Recruitment and Selection team processes. Therefore, it is appropriate for the data fields that do not apply to an action be left blank.

However, BPS does agree that any information that is added to the log must be accurate by reflecting the actual date each action occurs and that data entry should be completed in a timely manner. Furthermore, completing all log data fields that are

Service • Integrity • Courtesy • Professionalism • Innovation • Excellence
An Equal Opportunity Employer

required for a particular action is also important for assessing the efficiency of the recruitment and hiring process. Therefore, BPS will update its RTA/PAR log procedures and train Recruitment and Selection staff members on how to input information into the log accurately and timely. The procedures will also list which fields must be completed for each of action so that it is clear that any blank data fields are also accurate.

BPS further agrees that the log should be periodically audited to ensure that it is accurate since the data collected can be used to identify issues, monitor employee performance, and assess the effectiveness of the recruitment process. Therefore, BPS will include its procedures that the Recruitment and Selection team supervisor will periodically audit the log to ensure that staff members are correcty inputing the data accurately and timely.

Finally, BPS is currently reviewing automation options, including workflow process software, which would turn manual processes into digital workflows. However, there is a cost for such a solution, and, therefore, it is not currently fiscally feasible. Until BPS can create or purchase an automated process, BPS will ensure accuracy of the log through implementing procedures, training staff, and supervisor audits.