



## **Employment, Hiring Process**

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Reviewed by: LFNP Contributors

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This Fact Sheet reviews best practices for a hiring process.

The hiring process is an integral part of the employment relationship. This process must be fair. Unfairness in a hiring process may open the non-profit to complaints under human rights law.

Non-profit employers must actively seek to avoid unconscious bias in the hiring process. Unconscious bias is an attitude about the characteristics or qualities implicitly applied to groups of people. This attitude results in favouring or discriminating against people based on underlying assumptions about them, rather than on their actual abilities. Unconscious bias becomes a legal issue when it affects hiring decisions.

### **Steps in the Hiring Process**

Best practice is to outline the steps in a hiring process in policy. These steps typically include: describing the position and setting selection criteria, advertising/posting, assessing applications (short listing), interviewing, checking references, and making job offers.

Unfairness in the hiring process may result from: skipping one or more of these steps, following different steps for different positions, and allowing unconscious bias to influence decisions at one or more of the steps. Non-profits should actively seek to avoid such unfairness.

### **Fairness**

A fair hiring process is based on ability to do the job and is objective, consistent, and non-discriminatory. Fairness includes addressing the possibility of unconscious bias. Fairness applies at all stages of the hiring process including the details in the posted position, the screening potential candidates, interviewing, selection, and offer. For example, in an

interview there may be an expectation that candidates be outspoken and self-promoting. This expectation may be biased against some candidates whose culture prioritizes listening (rather than speaking) skills and sees self-promotion as bragging.

### **Sample Steps in a Fair Hiring Process**

1. Create a job posting that accurately reflects the duties and qualifications for the position and salary.
2. Create a balanced hiring committee with particular attention to human rights considerations such as gender balance.
3. Select applicants to interview based on the criteria established by the hiring committee.
4. Plan the interview questions in advance along with a grading matrix for the responses.
5. Interview the candidates and evaluate responses based on the grading matrix.

### **Discrimination**

Non-profits have a legal duty to not discriminate in hiring. Discriminate means treating someone differently because of a personal characteristic such as Indigenous identity, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. The legal obligation not to discriminate includes taking all steps to avoid discrimination.