

San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

2018 Hiring Improvement Program

Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Municipal Transportation Agency's hiring process



Final Draft

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1.0 Summary

The SFMTA's workforce is one of its most important assets. As part of the current SFMTA Strategic Plan it is a Strategic Plan Action to: "improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the hiring process." A key to making these improvements is to focus the hiring process on the potential applicants and selected candidates, not exclusively on the hiring manager.

Currently, upon review, the hiring process is largely focused on the needs of the hiring manager as the source of employment for potential job applicants and candidates. Tasks, schedules and timelines are built around the hiring manager's responsiveness and the transmission of information between the hiring manager, Division HR Liaison, and staff in the SFMTA Human Resources Division. Updates of processes, procedures, technology and communication are recommended to improve the speed by which positions are filled, from the perspective of applicants and candidates. More standardized processes and procedures across divisions should increase the efficiency of the overall process. Clear, consistent communications on processes and decisions are also needed to ensure that each step in the process is completed in an effective and efficient manner. Making these changes and improvements should support the SFMTA's goal of getting the most qualified applicants and a pool of potential candidates to meet the critical job needs within the Agency.

The 2018 SFMTA Hiring Improvement Program includes the development of a **Hiring Innovation Team**, including the hiring process managers from SFMTA's Human Resources Division, staff from the Finance and Information Technology Performance and IT Sections, staff from the SFMTA Equal Opportunity Office with the participation of Division HR Liaisons. This team will be responsible for the implementation of the recommendations in the Hiring Improvement Program within an 18-month schedule. The Hiring Innovation Team, will play an essential role in developing programs and tools that will support SFMTA's hiring by working collectively to drive success across a number of **Hiring**

Innovation Initiatives (recommendations), and work cross-functionally with multiple divisions and sections across the SFMTA.

2.0 Purpose

The SFMTA is an organization of opportunity. With internal expertise in city operations, public transit, transportation, design and construction and planning, the SFMTA has numerous career opportunities to provide its employees and external applicants. Once within the organization, it should be the goal of the SFMTA to support its employees and help them thrive.

One of the key initiatives of the current SFMTA Strategic Plan is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the hiring process. What does that mean? It means to: work to **find the best talent** for the Agency, **grow talent internally** and recognize employees by **providing opportunities for advancement**, and to **build a workforce** that is able to meet the tremendous challenge of providing excellent transportation choices for San Francisco.

The hiring process is a core function of the organization and should therefore:

- Be **transparent** to all those who are involved;
- Be **efficient** in processes and methods, and
- Be **effective** in identify, cultivating, and advancing and outstanding workforce.

After a 12-month review of the hiring process within divisions of the SFMTA, a Hiring Improvement Program is recommended including 15 Hiring Innovation Initiatives meant with a focus on data and communications for transparency, clarify and Agency-wide consistency in processes and procedures, clarity in the various levels of reviews and tools and support to ensure the process is both efficient and effective.

3.0 Stakeholders in the Process

The process of planning, reviewing, and on-boarding an employee is not completed by one person within the organization, but rather a team on every requisition. This is important to realize. Every position filled at the SFMTA requires a team of people to make it happen.

In reviewing the process for hiring staff at the SFMTA, the following were identified as the primary stakeholders throughout the process, and for whom the hiring process should be designed. Upon initial review, many of the current practices revolve around the hiring manager – as the stakeholders who requires the staffing resource as part of their team. However, it is recommended that this be changed with a greater focus on the applicants and candidates.

Applicant	Candidate	Internal Candidate
Final Candidate	Hiring Manager	Interview Panel
Division HR Liaison	HR Division Analyst	EEO Office
Finance/Budget Staff	CCSF DHR Staff	Division Director

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Below are the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in the hiring process.

Applicant	Person preparing an application for a job position at the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA).
Candidate	Person selected from a pool of applicants to participate in further testing or interviews for a position at the SFMTA.
Internal Candidate	Person who is an existing SFMTA employee who is selected from a pool of applicants for further testing or interviews for a position at the SFMTA.
Final Candidate	Person who is selected as the highest ranking candidate for a position at the SFMTA.
Hiring Manager	Person who is responsible for the knowledge of the job position offered by the SFMTA (the subject matter expert or SME), and potentially the direct supervisor of the job position offered.
Finance/Budget Staff	Person responsible for reviewing position requisition and determining if there is sufficient operating or capital budget to support filling the vacancy.
Interview Panel	Person or persons who are selected to interview and score candidates and make a recommendation to the hiring manager.
Division Director	Person responsible for determining priorities amongst the various division positions, priorities for the hiring pipeline.
Division HR Liaison	Person who is responsible within operating divisions to be a communication channel between hiring managers and the HR Division Analyst or other HR staff; reviews and finalizes if necessary all submittals to HR; and facilitator of various steps in the hiring process on behalf of the Hiring Manager (see further below).
CCSF DHR Staff	Person responsible for working with HR Division Analyst on requisition processing/approval and use of approved lists for referrals as necessary.
HR Division Analyst	Person who is responsible for ensuring the HR Liaison and Hiring Manager fill a position consistent within the proper rules, policies and procedures; working in partnership with the Division HR Liaison and Hiring Manager to coordinate all hiring processes; provides information to departmental representatives, labor organizations, managers, employees, applicants, other agencies and the general public; interprets, explains and enforces human resources rules and policies and procedures; investigates allegations/complaints of unfair employment practices; and represents employing department on human resources matters before boards and commissions and in meetings with other departments.

Equal Opportunity Office

Office responsible for collaborating with community-based organizations on hiring recruitments to ensure diversity in applicant pools and concurring on all hires and promotions to ensure compliance with equal employment opportunity principles; responsible for the pre-interview and post-interview review process.

5.0 Division HR Liaisons

Division HR Liaisons provide an important function within the organization, as typically the key point of contact between individual SFMTA divisions, the Human Resources Division and SFMTA Equal Opportunity Office (EEO). Their key function is one of **workforce planning**, or communicating individual division priorities for the processing of individual position requisitions from divisional units. A key to success in this role is the effective flow of communication regarding policies, upcoming divisional needs, and organizational changes with the Human Resources Division. They should continually work with their hiring managers to evaluate workforce needs against budget constraints and develop strategies to implement goals for their individual hiring managers and their division. Most importantly, they with their Division Director should prioritize positions for processing by the Human Resources Division.

6.0 Hiring Improvements – Hiring Innovation Initiatives

6.1 Background

Generally in the City and County of San Francisco there are three types of appointments and hiring processes:

- **Permanent Exempt (PEX) and Temporary Exempt (TEX)** are positions that are limited term and exempt from the Permanent Civil Service process and serving at the pleasure of the Appointing Officer because of: the level of the position (i.e. department head), specialized duties (such as IT) or the position is temporary based (i.e. project manager, school crossing guard).
- **Permanent Civil Service** are positions that may be part-time or full time, are hired using the Civil Service process which includes the development of a list of eligible candidates for the position. These positions once filled gain seniority within their specific job classification.
- **Provisional** positions are for temporary employees if a vacancy needs to be filled, but there is no eligible list of applicants to choose from. These employees do not get the same benefits as permanent employees, and can lose their position in favor of a permanent employee once an eligible list and permanent civil service hiring process is completed.

The period of time in which it can take to fill a position can take from 6 weeks to as long as 33 weeks (about 8 months). The reason it can take from 6 weeks to 8 months is particular to the position. If there is an existing civil service eligible list, the process can be quite quick. If a list needs to be generated to fill a vacancy that could take a longer period of time depending on the type of position, exam, and the size of the applicant pool. Exempt positions take time in the development of position/job descriptions and minimum qualifications (MTAM only). The background check can be as quick as a week or take up to 2-months. Why? All city employees must go through some type of conviction history review, however the number of checks is determined by the roles and responsibilities of the position.

There are ways to ensure that the process itself is faster than the full 8-months. For example, if it is known that a number of position vacancies will exist in a certain classification (division knowledge or as a result of an upcoming budget proposal), then the process to generate a list of civil service candidates can begin in advance. This can occur through Workforce Planning. If all of the various steps and information for position posting and review are completed at the beginning of the process, then the time that results from revision and back and forth communication can be reduced, and the overall processing time of a requisition to hire can be completed more rapidly.

Upon review of the process of hiring with the SFMTA, the following recommendations have developed to support all of the various actors in the hiring process complete **the most transparent, efficient and effective recruitment possible**. The first step is to ensure that there is consistent communication between the actors involved, meaning simplification of terminology and clear understanding between actors of the steps. Second, is process and procedure optimization by maximizing technology and reducing the time of various steps through efficiency measures. Third is to reduce the amount of time of internal reviews by doing better long range and workforce planning and position prioritization. Fourth and finally is to provide the tools of transparency for better overall process and pipeline management.

6.2 Communications

Recommendation 1: Communications and Definitions

Set clear definitions within Civil Service rules, for applicants, candidates, internal candidates and hiring managers and document for use; provide on an Agency SharePoint site.

Recommendation 2: Final Candidate Notification (aka Conditional Offer Letter)

It is recommended that once a final candidate is selected a new template letter (currently in prototype) is prepared to notify that candidate of the next steps, that the candidate would be offered employment pending completion with the estimated salary.

Hiring Managers may negotiate start date post background approval.

Recommendation 3: Internal Notification

Internal position recruitments should be provided through InsideSFMTA, and continue to be posted on digital screens. An internal communications plan should identify numerous channels to notify employees beyond email.

6.3 Process & Procedures

Recommendation 4: Make Requisitions Electronic

Requisitions within SFMTA should be changed into an electronic format; at a minimum a transition to DocuSign should begin for document management, controls and approvals.

Recommendation 5: Hiring Packages and Requisitions

Going forward requisitions should include the following: job description for posting (including supplemental questions and desirable qualifications), recommended interview questions, proposed interview panel, scoring rubric for candidate selection from applicant pool – the rubric should be based solely on the responses to supplemental questions and/or desirable qualifications. All these items should be attached electronically to the requisition to the HR Division Analyst.

Recommendation 6: Supplemental Questions

As Exempt positions are not subject to the civil service selection process (i.e. test) ; it is recommended that going forward PEX, Category 18 position fills include supplemental questions for review; to be reviewed and approved by EEO. Hiring Manager scoring should be based on both a review of the sufficiency of the supplemental responses and desirable qualifications developed for the position posting.

Recommendation 7: Scheduling of Interviews

Interviews dates should be identified during the position posting period.

Recommendation 8: Separate EEO + Salary Recommendations

HR should develop a rubric including MOU requirements + definitions for terms related to the MOU related (i.e. Special Skills).

6.4 Reviews

Recommendation 9: Project Management Committee

Shift responsibility from HR for review of Project Manager classification review to closed session of the Project Management Office (PMO); the PMO includes senior level project managers and project delivery supervisory staff, who can better review and make an Agency determination; this will also lead to better equity across divisions of the SFMTA.

Recommendation 10: SFMTA Hiring Program/Workforce Planning

REC 10.1 Every other month, the DOT/Executive Team should review the current list of planned and active position postings by division, with classifications posted and number of vacancies within the Agency. As needed based on critical operational needs the DOT/ET should direct Human Resources as the priorities and planned timelines of development of lists for referrals.

REC 10.2 Division HR Liaisons should meet monthly with appropriate HR staff for internal Agency coordination and review of specific classification needs for testing and HR resource prioritization.

Recommendation 11: Division Workforce Planning

During calendar year 2018, divisions should review existing vacancies, vacancy classification and classification ladders to develop a specific Workforce Planning report for hiring; conformance and performance goals related to these plans should be reviewed by the DOT/Executive Team as consolidated for the Agency. Divisions should prioritize position needs.

6.5 Tools and Support

Recommendation 12: Template Development

It is recommended that all hiring templates be standardized and posted on a hiring SharePoint site for use by divisions; different forms and different types of forms should not be used going forward by divisions. This includes posting templates, interview question templates for interview panelists, disclosures for interview panelists, scoring templates for interview panelists, as an example.

Recommendation 13: HRDB Lite (Status Reporting)

Develop a more simplified version of HRDB with controlled access to hiring managers, provide the following: division, budget index codes, position type ASO/Non-ASO, position classification, position title, position status. (Phase I)

Phase II would include additional steps to show the current status of a position, this can also be through a separate tracking system looking to requisitions.

Recommendation 14: Interview Question Sample Database

It is recommended that a database of sample, and EEO approved interview questions be provided, by classification for reference by hiring managers and Division HR Liaisons for reference and package development.

7.0 SFMTA Hiring Steps Defined

As noted, there are a number of stakeholders involved in the hiring process, and each actor has a critical role to play in the steps that it takes to fill a vacant position. It is therefore important, to begin the process of improving the hiring process by clearly documenting the hiring steps so all involved in the optimization of this process begin with a shared knowledge base. These steps will also set the baseline for performance management between steps as part of the implementation of the proposed Hiring Improvement Program Recommendations – Hiring Innovation Initiatives. There are 14 steps in the process in total as of the date of this review.

Step 1: Division Analysis and Approval

In this step the Hiring Manager works with the Division HR Liaison to review a vacant job and confirm that the classification is correct for the proposed job duties. If not correct, the division may request to change the classification of the position to match the job role, within budgetary and policy constraints. In addition, once agreed to the division should select a priority for this particular position among all of its other requisition requests.

Step 2: Requisition Submission

Division HR Liaison with the Hiring Manager prepares a position requisition with all required paperwork. It is recommended that going forward the requisition be made electronic, and that all materials – class/job specification, supplemental questions, interview questions and interview panel be included with the requisition submission.

Are we missing a step here? The requisition will go to Finance directly without first confirm by HR (position control/inventory check – especially for budgeted positions)? Is that step 2?

Step 3: Requisition in Finance for Review

Once received, the requisition is sent to the Finance and Information Technology for review. The review is to check whether there is sufficient budget either operating or capital to support the burdened (salary + benefits) or fully burdened (salary + benefits + overhead rate) for the proposed position. If there is insufficient funding to support the position, the requisition will be denied.

Step 4: City Approvals- SFMTA Approval, City Approval, Data System Entry

With finance and budget approval, the requisition is processed for submission and advances for various internal and external approvals.

Step 5: Referral or Posting requested from HR

Once entered into the system, a referral may be requested from an existing civil service list (either one generated by the SFMTA or another City Department). From this referral, candidates can be selected for interview. If a referral is not possible, then the position is publically posted through the City and County of San Francisco's JobAps System to either generate an eligible list or to develop an applicant pool.

Step 6: In Recruitment / Position Announced

The position is posted for a pre-determined period of time for interested Applicant to respond to the position(s). A set date of closure may be determined or a "continuous" period can be selected. Final filing date may be extended if necessary.

Step 7: Applications Received

HR Division Analyst should provide MMQ applications received to the Division HR Liaison and Hiring Manager upon completion of the hiring period. If the posting is for CBT/PBT, the Exam Analyst will review the applications and no applications will be provided to the division for review and consideration until the eligible list is established and a referral is issued.

Step 8: Candidates Selected for Interview

At this point the Hiring Manager reviews applications and scores based on pre-approved scoring rubric. It is recommended that this rubric be based on the "desirable qualifications," for the position. The Hiring Manager, upon completion of the scoring selects Candidates from among the various Applicants from the position, or Candidates from an approved Civil Service List referral. This step ends with approval from the Equal Opportunity Office (EEO) of the applicant scoring and selection of the interview panel.

Step 9: Interviews

Interview Panel interview the selected candidates from Step 8. Interview Panel should be provided all the same information received by the hiring manager for applicants selected to be candidates. HR Liaison or HR Division Analyst should sit in on interviews as needed. Hiring Managers may sit on interview panels, if there is no direct report that is a candidate.

Step 10: Interviews Completed or In Progress/Final EEO Review

Final interview packets should be sent to EEO for final review and approval.

Step 11: Final Candidate Selected / in Pre-Employment Process (e.g. verification, background check)

At this point in the process, the Hiring Manager or Division HR Liaison may send the finalist candidate a finalist candidate notification/conditional offer letter. The letter will describe the next steps in the process to the Final Candidate, provide an estimated salary based on MOU or approved salary by the Human Resources Division.

Step 12: Job Offer made

Once the pre-employment process is complete, the HR Analyst will notify the HR Division Liaison and Hiring Manager that an official job offer can be made. The Hiring Manager may determine as part of the letter the proposed hiring date. The salary offer should be finalized as part of the letter.

Step 13: Final Candidate Start Work Date Confirmed

The Final Candidate has now accepted the position, signed the job offer and will now be processed for hiring. They will begin employment at the SFMTA.

8.0 Summary Recommendations

#	Topic	Title	Recommendation
1	Communications	Communications and Definitions	Set clear definitions within civil service rules, for applicants, candidates, internal candidates and hiring managers and

			document for use; provide on an Agency SharePoint site.
2	Communications	Final Candidate Notification (aka Conditional Offer Letter)	It is recommended that once a finalist candidate is selected a new template letter (currently in prototype) is prepared to notify that candidate of the next steps, that the candidate would be offered employment pending completion with the estimated salary.
3	Communications	Internal Notification	Internal position recruitments should be provided through InsideSFMTA, and continue to be posted on digital screens. An internal communications plan should identify numerous channels to notify employees beyond email.
4	Process and Procedures	Make Requisitions Electronic	Requisitions within SFMTA should be changed into an electronic format; at a minimum a transition to DocuSign should begin for document management, controls and approvals.
5	Process and Procedures	Hiring Packages and Requisitions	Going forward requisitions should include the following: job description for posting (including supplemental questions and desirable qualifications), recommended interview questions, proposed interview panel, scoring rubric for candidate selection from applicant pool – the rubric should be based solely on the responses to supplemental questions and/or desirable qualifications. All these items should be attached electronically to the requisition to the HR Division Analyst.
6	Process and Procedures	Supplemental Questions	As Exempt positions for civil service classification by-passing the testing phase; it is recommended that going forward PEX, Category 18 position fills include supplemental questions for review; to be reviewed and approved by EEO. Hiring Manager scoring should be based on both a review of the sufficiency of the supplemental responses and desirable qualifications developed for the position posting.
7	Process and Procedures	Scheduling of Interviews	Interviews dates should be identified during the position posting period.
8	Process and Procedures	Separate EEO + Salary Recommendations	HR should develop a rubric including MOU requirements + definitions for terms related to the MOU related (i.e. Special Skills).
9	Reviews	Project Management Committee	Shift responsibility from HR for review of Project Manager classification review to closed session of the Project Management Office (PMO); the PMO includes senior level project managers and project delivery supervisory staff, who can better review and make an Agency determination; this will also lead to better equity across divisions of the SFMTA.
10	Reviews	SFMTA Hiring Program/Workforce Planning	<p>REC 10.1 Every other month, the DOT/Executive Team should review the current list of planned and active PCS position postings by division, with classifications posted and number of vacancies within the Agency. As needed based on critical operational needs the DOT/ET should direct Human Resources as the priorities and planned timelines of development of lists for referrals.</p> <p>REC 10.2 Division HR Liaisons should meet monthly with appropriate HR staff for internal Agency coordination and review of specific classification needs for testing and HR resource prioritization.</p>
11	Reviews	Division Workforce Planning	During calendar year 2018, divisions should review existing vacancies, vacancy classification and classification ladders to develop a specific Workforce Planning report for hiring; conformance and performance goals related to these plans

			should be reviewed by the DOT/Executive Team as consolidated for the Agency. Divisions should prioritize position needs.
12	Tools and Support	Template Development	It is recommended that all hiring templates be standardized and posted on a hiring SharePoint site for use by divisions; different forms and different types of forms should not be used going forward by divisions. This includes posting templates, interview question templates for interview panelists, disclosures for interview panelists, scoring templates for interview panelists, as an example.
13	Tools and Support	HRDB Lite (Status Reporting)	Develop a more simplified version of HRDB with controlled access to hiring managers, provide the following: division, budget index codes, position type ASO/Non-ASO, position classification, position title, position status. (Phase I) Phase II would include additional steps to show the current status of a position, this can also be through a separate tracking system looking to requisitions.
14	Tools and Support	Interview Question Sample Database	It is recommended that a database of sample, and EEO approved interview questions be provided, by classification for reference by hiring managers and Division HR Liaisons for reference and package development.

9.0 Information and Background on the Current CCSF Hiring Modernization Project

Whether you are trying to build out your own team, or are searching for your next opportunity, the hiring process affects us all. We also know that hiring is an extremely lengthy and complex process that involves many individuals and systems, especially for government roles. Improving the way we hire will have the biggest impact on how the City and County of San Francisco operates and the Hiring Modernization Project has been designed to ensure collaboration across the city.

The Hiring Modernization Project is a collaborative effort to improve hiring within San Francisco. The collaboration will ensure changes to the way the City hires resulting in fair, effective and modern processes for applicants, hiring managers, human resources professionals, and others.

The project includes a steering committee of HR Leaders from 15 City departments. Over the past several months the team has worked to review rules, policies and practice, mapping the centralized hiring process (outside of departments), understanding current hiring experience, and completing a series of interactive workshops. The team then worked to focus on a few prototypes, translated the findings into user scenarios and has released a Request for Information (RFI) to figure out the structure of the RFP for the new Applicant Tracking System.

One of the key findings from this work was that the hiring process is relatively unknown to hiring managers. There are bits and pieces of the process they are very familiar with because it requires them to take an action (eg: submit a form, select a candidate to interview, submit a different form). But in terms of understanding the entire process, and how the steps flow chronologically, there is an immense amount of confusion and uncertainty experienced by hiring managers.

A key focus of the SFMTA's program is to focus the process more on the applicant and candidate, while simultaneously providing the hiring manager with the information they need to transverse the process as effectively and efficiently as possible with all the various actors.

A full summary and subsequent data of the City and County of San Francisco's Hiring Modernization Project can be found by following this link – [City and County of San Francisco Hiring Modernization Project](#).

The Request for Information (RFI) summarizing some of the key issues can be found [here](#).