



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Office of the State Inspector General

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State Inspector General

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January 26, 2024

Dear [REDACTED],

The Office of the State Inspector General (OSIG) conducted an investigation based on a complaint made to the State Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline, Case #HL-2024-181. The complaint alleged that the Department of Education violated hiring policies.

The scope of the review was limited to relevant circumstances as specified in the complaint. Therefore, this inquiry was limited to interviews and documentation review. The period covered during this review was April 2023 to December 2023.

Allegation

The complainant alleged DOE violated hiring policies by conducting improper interviews and by altering the members of interview selection panels to achieve preferred hiring outcomes for [REDACTED].

Findings of Fact

OSIG reviewed the "Department of Human Resource Management Policy 2.10 Hiring" and the hiring documentation for [REDACTED] DOE positions: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]. For the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] positions, OSIG noted that the interview selection panels were properly used, and their compositions were not altered or manipulated in any manner. However, for the [REDACTED] position, DOE was unable to provide any documentation regarding the interview selection panel, including who served on the panel and the date of the

interviews. OSIG interviewed the [REDACTED] who stated that the documentation for the [REDACTED] recruitment was not returned to Human Resources and, therefore, could not be reviewed.

Conclusion

Regarding the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] positions, the allegation is **unsubstantiated**. OSIG's investigation revealed that DOE's use of interview selection panels was in accordance with DHRM Policy 2.10 Hiring. However, with regards to the [REDACTED], the allegation is **inconclusive**. DOE was unable to provide any documentation relating to the use of an interview selection panel in the hiring process.

Recommendation

During the course of OSIG's investigation, it was revealed that DOE did not completely comply with DHRM Policy 2.10 – Hiring in that the following documentation was not retained:

- Screening and selection criteria applied.
- Interview selection panel members.
- Interview questions and notes on applicants' responses.
- Summaries of interviews.
- Documentation supporting selection or addressing non-selection.

OSIG noted that DOE selected candidates for interviews for the [REDACTED] position, and ultimately hired a candidate, who did not meet all the minimum job requirements. As a result, DOE should have reconsidered the position requirements and reposted the position for additional applicants who met the revised minimum requirements. In addition, two applicants met the minimum job requirements but were not selected for interviews. OSIG also noted that the screening matrix used in the selection process did not include the preferred job qualifications.

OSIG recommends additional training regarding DHRM hiring policies for personnel directly responsible for managing the recruitment and selection process.

During the investigation, OSIG noted that DOE's newly hired [REDACTED] has implemented a major initiative to create standard operating procedures to be used going forward by the department. In addition, all HR forms have been updated, and all supervisors and managers are scheduled to attend HR training courses. These measures are designed to improve and strengthen internal controls over the human resources area.

OSIG appreciates the assistance provided by the Department of Education in this investigation. Please provide a written response to OSIG within 30 days regarding the recommendation made

in this report. Please contact me with any questions at 804-625-3255 or michael.westfall@osig.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael C. Westfall", written over a light beige rectangular background.

Michael C. Westfall, CPA
State Inspector General

This report is to remain confidential. Any requests for distribution should be referred to OSIG.

cc:

