



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2022.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico
Program Title: Meeting the Community's Needs: The Evolution of County Hiring Events
Program Category: Organizational Development

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Victoria Davis
Title: Public Relations Specialist
Department: Public Relations
Telephone: 804-501-4933 Website: www.henrico.us
Email: dav127@henrico.us

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Brandon Hinton
Title: Deputy County Manager for Administration
Signature: 

Program Overview

Traditionally, local governments participate in hiring events that are hosted by external entities. Henrico County flipped the script and implemented hiring events with the community's needs in mind. Both large-scale and small-scale events have evolved throughout the last four years to highlight career opportunities available in public service and showcase the resources the County has in place to serve the community. Our first hiring event was created to serve the Henrico community directly. Thirty-eight departments attended, sharing information about their open positions and services. Information sessions were provided on how to be successful in our hiring process. Future events grew to include career enrichment information sessions with our Virginia Career Works community partners and position-specific hiring events to respond to critical hiring needs for departments. The Covid crisis challenged us to come up with creative solutions to keep our workforce and community safe while pursuing our outreach efforts in order to continue providing service to our community. These events produced positive outcomes with qualitative and quantitative results. The quantitative results are shown through the number of people hired from these events. The quantitative results are shared from survey results, positive interactions, and feedback from both internal and external stakeholders.

The Problem Faced by Locality

Henrico County has certain positions in various departments which are historically difficult to fill. Every department's needs are different but one thing they all have in common is that they all desire to be at full staffing to best serve their customers. Not only are there positions that are difficult to fill, but there are also resources or community programs the County offers through Recreation and Parks, Social Services, and MH/DS of which people are not aware. The idea to begin a job fair program stemmed from a desire to open our doors to our community to showcase our services and provide opportunities for job growth- all while working to establish a sense of transparency, authenticity, and credibility within the community. Not only do we want to fill our

open positions, but we also want to have a workforce that reflects the community we serve. We want our community to feel as though they belong.

The County's needs evolved as we continued to work with our departments to keep their critical positions filled and navigate a pandemic. Two County job fairs were successfully held and as we continued forward, it became evident that a more targeted approach could also be beneficial to meet specific critical Departmental needs.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

What drives people to public service is a desire to have a positive impact on their community. We are granted the opportunity to effect tangible change for those who reside in our community through the programs we implement. In order to serve with sincerity and integrity, we first met the community where they were to seek out not only their needs but the needs of our departments. We implemented creative solutions in a crisis, utilized technology effectively, and collaborated with our own departments for necessary resources. Although our process evolved and our events took on different formats, we have consistently provided valuable resources and opportunities for our residents while meeting the business needs of our departments in a cost-effective way for our county. Locality-sponsored job fairs that showcase the services the local government offers while also attracting candidates to open positions can be easily replicated by any locality at low to no cost.

How Program Was Carried Out

The first Henrico County Job Fair was planned in October 2018 in an effort to promote the large number of County jobs available to our residents, share what our departments are and the services they offer, and share tips for job seekers on how to be successful in our hiring processes. To determine which departments were interested in participating, Human Resources sent out a

survey that was created in Microsoft Forms. Once the number of Departments was determined we reserved the venue- the Henrico County Training Facility. Marketing for the event was done primarily on social media accounts utilizing flyers, and social media images created in house. We shared the information with our community partners at Virginia Career Works, who have a great network of job seekers. Flyers were also posted throughout the community via County libraries and local businesses with community boards. Our Public Relations Department assisted with a press release for the event to get it shared on local news media. Our target audience for attendees was our community, so our outreach efforts were effective to meet that goal. The event was held on a Saturday from 9:00 am-12:00 pm. During the event, Human Resources shared a presentation in a breakout room on "iRecruitment Tips and Tricks: How to be more successful in our hiring process." iRecruitment is Henrico County's online job application system. The classroom was packed with standing room only, and the job seekers asked great follow up questions. The goal was education and transparency. We want everyone to be successful and put their best foot forward in their job search. The event was a great success, evidenced by a large number of attendees and excellent feedback was collected utilizing a paper post-event survey.

The second Henrico County Job Fair was held in Spring 2019. This event was planned in the same manner utilizing the County's own resources to keep costs low. To provide an even more enriching experience for the community, we partnered with Virginia Career Works to provide additional information sessions. Human Resources shared their iRecruitment Tips and Tricks session, and Virginia Career Works hosted sessions on resume writing and interview skills. This event was also well attended, with positive feedback from the departments.

The County's Department of Public Utilities (DPU) was struggling to fill their Utility Heavy Equipment Specialist positions in both Pumping and Refuse. To meet critical staffing needs, we

were challenged to develop a more targeted approach in planning our hiring events. An event was planned at the DPU Pumping Operations Center. The event was in November 2019 on a Saturday from 9:00 am -12:00 pm. We followed the same marketing plan as our previous events utilizing social media, press releases, and flyer distribution. Our Department of Public Works allowed us to utilize their large electronic road signs to help with advertising the job fair the week leading up to the event. Due to the urgent hiring needs, Public Utilities provided four computers on-site for candidates to apply. Once candidates had applied, they were given the opportunity to interview with members from both our Operations and Refuse sections to determine which area best fit their experience and interests. We were able to make on the spot job offers and filled all openings from the attendees of the event. This event was also special because we were able to partner with two of our Sheriff's Office O.R.B.I.T. program participants who had been approved for work release and were in turn offered jobs.

With the pandemic halting large hiring events, we had to get creative in how to successfully and safely meet the needs of our departments. A large degree of our population was working from and staying home more, which had a direct impact on one specific function of the County- refuse collection. Any shortage in the refuse collection was felt particularly hard as there was now an increase in the volume of trash needing to be collected. In Fall 2020, another event was planned at the Public Utilities Operations Center. This event was different from all previous events due to following CDC recommendations. We took a hybrid approach to the event and offered both in-person and virtual interview appointments along with a virtual information session. At the time, the County did not have an appropriate platform that we could utilize for candidates to schedule an appointment with our staff. After some research, we decided to utilize an online appointment scheduling software called Appointlet. We were able to integrate the appointment scheduling software with Henrico's WebEx platform, so when a candidate made a virtual appointment through Appointlet, the reminder email they received from that platform would contain the WebEx link for

their interview. In order to keep things streamlined for our in-person attendees, we also allowed candidates to reserve their interview slot through Appointlet to avoid having to stand in line. The online appointment software, coupled with floor markers on the sidewalk outside to assist with social distancing, allowed us to have a steady flow of people while remaining in compliance with CDC guidelines for our event. Partnering with our Information Technology (IT) Department was instrumental through the planning of this event as they guided us in how to best utilize WebEx for this hybrid event. Our IT Department also assisted with creating our promotional logo for our flyers and online marketing efforts. The Department of Public Works (DPW) worked with us to get the large electronic road signs posted along Woodman Road to assist with the promotion of the event. Public Relations assisted with the press release, and we also utilized in-house social media accounts to get the word out. To expand advertisement efforts, Public Utilities utilized magnetic signage on their own refuse trucks to make them moving billboards to advertise that they were hiring. The collaboration of all of these County agencies resulted in seamlessly pulling off a safe and successful hiring event, while providing DPU the staff they needed to continue providing exceptional customer service to their customers.

In August 2021, we coordinated a hiring event for the Mental Health and Developmental Services Department (MH/DS), following the hybrid model utilized in the previous event. Recognizing that some candidates may not be available to attend an in-person event, we broke our event into two portions. A virtual information session was held from 12:00-1:00 pm via WebEx with members from MH/DS and Human Resources (HR) to answer questions and provide information about open positions within MH/DS. The in-person event was held on-site at the MH/DS main facility from 3:00-7:00 pm with multiple team members ready to greet candidates and share information. DPW partnered with us again to get the large electronic road signs to assist with the promotion of the event. Public Relations assisted with the press release, and we again utilized social media to

help get the word out. The event was a success with great feedback from both attendees and MH/DS.

In December 2021, we organized another targeted event- this time for DPW. The event was held from 3:00-7:00 pm at the Public Works Operations Center. We had four DPW divisions on-site and representatives from DPU to attempt to fill their immediate hiring needs. The location was unique in that we held the event inside the garage bays, so we were able to have one large door open to increase ventilation as we are still mindful of the ongoing epidemic. Outside of the bay doors, we had the different heavy equipment utilized by the department on display for attendees. DPW provided two computers on-site for interested candidates to apply and also provided on-site interviews. We followed our established formula for marketing for our event to keep costs low and held another successful event.

Financing and Staffing

All our events were able to be organized for less than \$100. We printed a small number of flyers for each event (less than \$20) and purchased balloons (less than \$30) to assist with visibility and mark parking and entrances for the events. For our first event, we printed parking signs at a cost of \$30 to assist with marking the parking area. Utilizing our in-house resources allowed us to make these events something that can be continued without financial impact to the organization. Collaboration and good working relationships among departments allow us to have more flexibility and creativity when needed to keep our process in line with the current climate.

Program Results

The October 2018 Henrico County Job Fair had 20 departments participate and 320 attendees. We received positive feedback on surveys returned by the participating departments and 100% of departments that attended expressed interest in participating in future events. Some quotes from the departments who participated in the event:

- “The event was great! Set-up was great, day and time seemed good, and it was very well organized! Thank you!”
- “I thought the allotted time (3 hours) was perfect. We didn’t have immediate openings, but it was good to talk to people who were planning career changes and what they would need to focus on.”
- “The time of event and traffic flow was great. Better turnout than expected.”
- “The event went very well as the public was able to stroll around freely with plenty of departments represented. Saturday fits most schedules as free time as opposed to a busy work week. Great event!”

Spring 2019 Henrico County Job Fair had 17 departments participate and 117 attendees. We received very positive feedback on site verbally from attendees and after the event, one department sent, “Thanks for inviting us to the job fair yesterday!! This was one of the most high energy career fairs that I have been to during our recruitment campaign. We ended up speaking to a ton of people. When and if you organize another function, please let us know.”

Fall 2019 Department of Public Utilities job fair had 33 attendees and six on the spot job offers made. We were able to fill all open positions from the candidate pool from the event.

Fall 2020 Department of Public Utilities hybrid job fair event had 13 attendees, with five being hired from the event.

The August 2021 MH/DS hybrid job fair event had 69 in-person attendees and ten virtual attendees. As of this writing, 11 candidates have been hired from the event.

The December 2021 DPW in-person event had 53 attendees and as of this writing, seven people have been hired.

Brief Summary

Henrico County's implementation of both large scale and small-scale events over the last several years while keeping the needs of the community in the forefront have allowed us to keep a handle on the ever-changing needs of our workforce. These events afforded us the opportunity to showcase not only the many career opportunities found within our organization, but also the resources available to the community through the departments themselves. We began our community outreach efforts with large scale events and eventually evolved to department or position specific hiring events in order to meet the needs of our residents. Creativity and collaboration were necessary while balancing the safety of our workforce and community during a global pandemic. Technology was utilized in new ways in order to streamline and coordinate events to allow our organization to follow safety guidelines. Providing valuable resources to our community while meeting the business needs of our departments was the driving force of our initiatives. Tapping our own departmental resources allows cost effective outreach efforts that can easily be replicated by other localities.