

# Hiring Process FAQs

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## Posting Job Advertisements

### **Q:1 - I would like to open a search, where do I start?**

First, you will need to determine which Applicant Tracking System the search will be posted in, iCIMS or Handshake. Handshake is for hiring only USU student employees and you will contact [USU's Career Design Center](#) for more information on this process. iCIMS is for hiring either student or non-student employees; please work with your [Business Services representative](#) to open the search in iCIMS.

1. Select search committee members and prepare the job description.
  - a. Some [job description templates](#) are published on the USU HR site for reference.
2. Please work with your Business Services representative to determine what Banner position number will be used for this position.
3. You will need to fill out the Post a Job form in ServiceNow. This form serves two purposes: 1) it provides your Business Services representative with search information to enter into the system, and 2) it notifies the Office of Equity so they can enter necessary information for compliance purposes on benefited positions.
  - a. The Post a Job form can be found by visiting [servicenow.usu.edu](http://servicenow.usu.edu)>Services>Business Services>Employment Forms>Post a Job.
4. Once the search information has been transferred from ServiceNow to iCIMS by your Business Services representative, the advertisement will go through the necessary approval process and be posted to [jobs.usu.edu](http://jobs.usu.edu) by the Office of Human Resources.

For a detailed [Pre-posting checklist](#) please visit the [Hiring Toolkit](#).

### **Q:2 - I am hiring a non-benefited hourly employee, what do I need to know?**

**Handshake:** To hire student only positions, please contact [USU's Career Design Center](#) for more information on this process.

**iCIMS:** iCIMS is utilized for the hiring of benefited and non-benefited positions that are open to students and non-students. Please work with your [Business Services representative](#) to start your search in iCIMS.

Non-benefited searches in iCIMS must be advertised on the [USU Jobs website](#) for a minimum of seven calendar days, and no other external advertising is required. However, additional advertising can be requested through the Post a Job form in [ServiceNow](#).

Human Resources recommends having at least two people on the search committee (committee chair + 1 committee member) to avoid bias.

### **Q:3 - I am hiring a non-exempt benefited employee, what do I need to know?**

Per USU [Policy 3302: Benefited Employment](#), non-exempt benefited positions must be advertised on the USU jobs website at [hr.usu.edu/jobs/](http://hr.usu.edu/jobs/) for a minimum of seven calendar days, and no other external advertising is required. However, additional advertising can be requested through the Post a Job form in [ServiceNow](#).

Human Resources recommends having at least two people on the search committee (committee chair + 1 committee member) to avoid bias.

**Q:4 - I am hiring an exempt benefited employee, what do I need to know?**

Per USU [Policy 3302: Benefited Employment](#), exempt benefited positions must be advertised on the USU jobs website at [hr.usu.edu/jobs/](http://hr.usu.edu/jobs/) for a minimum of 14 calendar days with a required national advertisement on [higherjobs.com](http://higherjobs.com) (placed by Human Resources).

We recommend a minimum of three committee members (committee chair + 2 committee members); however, your department/college may require more.

Please consult with your Department Head/Director on any additional requirements they may have regarding the process for the search.

**Q:5 - I am conducting a faculty search, what do I need to know?**

Per [Policy 3302: Benefited Employment](#), faculty positions must be advertised on the [USU Jobs website](#) for a minimum of 14 calendar days with a required national advertisement on [higherjobs.com](http://higherjobs.com) (placed by HR).

Faculty Code requires at least five committee members on faculty searches (committee chair + 4 committee members), with the majority of the committee being current USU faculty members. Please refer to [Policy 4003: Faculty Appointments](#) for more information.

Please consult with your Department Head/Director on any additional requirements they may have regarding the process for the search.

**Q:6 - What is the difference between advertised salary and budgeted salary?**

The advertised salary field is how the salary is publicly listed to candidates. If a specific amount is listed in the advertised salary field, the department is held to that amount and cannot offer above or below. If there is any room for negotiation, the salary should be advertised as, "Minimum \$XX, XXX", or "Commensurate with experience, plus excellent benefits".

Budgeted salary is an internal field that is not viewable to candidates and allows for negotiation.

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**Q:7 - I received an email notification that my iCIMS search has been approved, but I can't find the job online. What's going on?**

This occurs when the job is posted in the Dual Career Assistance/Reduction-in-Force (DCA/RIF) portal for the first 24 hours per [Policy 3300: Appointments of Opportunity](#), which applies to all

benefited positions. This gives USU's DCA/RIF candidates an opportunity to apply for the position before it is advertised to other candidates. If a DCA/RIF candidate applies for your position, the Office of Human Resources will be in contact to give you further instructions. If you would like to review the current DCA/RIF candidates before submitting a job for posting, please contact the Office of Human Resources.

#### **Q:8 – Can I re-use a closed Job Advertisement to make additional hires?**

Per [Policy 3302: Benefited Employment](#) an applicant pool can be re-visited within 3 months to make additional job offers. The job title, duties and qualifications for the additional hire must closely match the information that was advertised.

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### **Conducting a Search**

#### **Q:28 - As search committee chair, what is my role in the search?**

As committee chair, you are the primary contact for the search. It is your responsibility to gather pre-posting search information, request external advertisements, review [hiring process training materials](#), and submit the ServiceNow Post a Job form.

Once the search is posted online, it is your responsibility to:

- Schedule committee meetings.
- Ensure all applications are reviewed in a timely manner.
- Ensure interviews are scheduled after the review date has been met.
- Update candidate statuses within iCIMS.
- Communicate with candidates and answer any search-related questions.
- Notify deselected candidates.
- Conduct and close the search in a timely manner.

Note: You are required to keep search-related documents not gathered via iCIMS for three years from the job close date for auditing purposes. Additional information can be found in [Policy 3302: Benefited Employment](#).

#### **Q:29 - What is the difference between a “Search” committee and a “Selection” committee?**

Both search and selection committees evaluate each of the applications submitted for the position, determine acceptable interviewees, and conduct interviews.

**Search Committee:** A search committee forwards the names of top candidates to either the department head, director, dean, or vice president, who then makes the final hiring decision.

**Selection Committee:** A selection committee along with the department head, director, dean, or vice president make a joint hiring decision.

Intentions for which type of committee the search requires should be communicated upfront between the department's leadership and the committee chair.

**Q:30 - Who can be a Search Committee member?**

A potential committee member should be selected for the candid and thoughtful perspective they can bring to the search as well as the working knowledge they have of the vacant position. If it is known at the commencement of the search that a prospective committee member will not be available for the majority of search events, their membership should be reconsidered, and another member selected.

Students, non-USU employees, the exiting employee, and others approved by the current committee, qualify as committee members if they understand the position in question and are able to speak to candidates' qualifications regarding the job duties. Committee members who are not USU employees will not be granted access to iCIMS. Any committee member who does not have an iCIMS account should team up with another member to review applications. All committee members have a shared responsibility to contribute and participate in the search, so each committee member's vote will have equal value.

**Q:23 - How can networking be utilized in soliciting applications?**

A. Collegial networking is a proven method of increasing the applicant pool. However, caution must be used in informing a prospective candidate about a job opening. Please do not use phrases which might lead an candidate to believe he/she has an advantage over other candidates. An appropriate phrase would be, "A position is available at Utah State University in your area of expertise for which you may want to apply. I would be happy to provide you with the job description or website information." Also, this is a great opportunity to promote Utah State University as a great employer. If you are distributing job information via list-serve or other method, please include the [AA/EO statement provided by the Civil Rights and Title IX Office](#).

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**Application Review, Interviews, and Reference Checks**

**Q:8 - What should I do if a Dual Career Assistance (DCA) or Reduction-in-Force (RIF) candidate applies for my position?**

The Office of Human Resources will contact you as soon as the candidate notifies us of their application to verify their eligibility and clarify any questions you may have. Offering priority interviews to DCA and RIF candidates requires USU to keep the DCA/RIF process separate from the rest of the hiring process. If a DCA/RIF candidate applies for your position while it's posted in the DCA/RIF portal, the position will be held in the DCA/RIF portal until the necessary procedures have been completed. If a newly approved DCA/RIF candidate applies for your position after it's been posted, the Office of Human Resources will be in contact.

Please review the DCA/RIF candidate's materials and if they meet the minimum qualifications of the position, a priority interview will be offered. The candidate should be interviewed before the committee reviews any other applications, if possible, and evaluated based on their own merit and qualifications. Please see [Policy 3300: Appointments of Opportunity](#) and [Policy 3309: Reduction-in-Force](#) for more information.

**Q:9 - When can I start reviewing applications and scheduling interviews?**

A. The committee can **review** applications as soon as they are received. The committee should not **schedule** interviews until after the review date listed on the job advertisement. Typically, the review date is seven calendar days from the posting date for non-benefited hourly and non-exempt benefited searches, and 14 calendar days for benefited exempt and faculty searches.

**Q:10 - Do I have to conduct interviews for all candidates in the same format?**

As an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer, we must offer the opportunity to interview in the same format to all candidates (e.g. in person, video conference, phone, etc.) and make reasonable accommodations to candidates' interview requests. With the capabilities of modern technology, having a mixture of virtual and in person interviews *does not* create inequity in your search process. As much as possible, the interview format for each step in the interview process should be the same for all candidates. If you have any questions, please contact The Office of Human Resources.

**Q:11 - Can the committee ask different questions of the interviewees?**

A structured interview protocol is highly recommended to prevent any appearance of discrimination. Each interviewee should have a similar interview procedure, meet with the same committee members (or at least the majority of the committee members), be asked the same questions, etc. If one candidate's answer necessitates a follow-up question, that question does not need to be asked of other candidates. Also, the committee is free to answer any questions that the interviewee asks during and at the conclusion of the interview. The committee may ask additional questions related to each candidate's unique education and work experience, relocation needs, work eligibility, etc. in addition to the standard questions.

**Q:12 - I want to check candidate references. Where can I find their reference information?**

You can find candidate reference information in iCIMS under the "References" tab. If references are not provided, the committee may need to collect them from the candidate. Although you don't have to ask all reference providers the same questions, ensure your questions are job related and nondiscriminatory.

More information about checking references can be found in the [Hiring Handbook](#). A reference check guideline can be found in the [Hiring Toolkit](#).

**Q:13 - How should unsolicited reference information (either phone call or personal conversation) be handled?**

The committee will want as much valid information as possible to make an informed hiring decision. The individual who receives the unsolicited information should take notes and submit them to the search committee. They should also inquire about the relationship the individual has with the candidate (i.e., colleague, friend, relative, etc.) to ensure it is firsthand information, and ask for a way to contact the reference for additional information or verification. Negative references must be corroborated by another reference, as positive references should be corroborated.

**Q:14 - A member of my committee knows one of the candidates. What do I do?**

If a member of the committee is related to a candidate, please refer to [Policy 3306: Romantic Relationships and Employment of Relatives and Household Members](#).

If a member of the committee is an acquaintance or has a prior or current professional relationship with the candidate here are the options:

1. The committee chair should have a conversation with the committee member in question to review the situation and determine the committee members ability to remain impartial in the selection process.
2. If the committee member demonstrates through words and/or actions that they are not able to remain impartial they will be asked to leave the search committee.
3. The other members of the search committee should be made aware of the relationship.

If a member of the committee is listed as a reference, they are able to provide a reference for that candidate. As with all references, it should be corroborated by reaching out to other reference providers.

**Q:15 - Can we contact references other than those provided by the candidate?**

Human Resources recommends that individuals not listed as references, who would give firsthand work-related information, contact the candidate(s) to inform them of the committee's intention to communicate with other references. The candidate then has the opportunity to contact those references to let them know of the impending call and to provide background information related to the reference.

Do not contact the candidate's current supervisor(s) without gaining permission from the candidate.

**Q:16 - Can non-committee members view applications?**

Utah State University wants all candidates to feel comfortable applying for a position at USU. Utah State University has an obligation to protect the confidentiality of candidate materials and information outlined in [Policy 3303: Retention, Disposition, Access, and Confidentiality of Applicant Information](#). Individuals who are not official members of a search committee or assisting with the search should not have access to any pre-interview information. Often, colleagues and staff are asked for input or to evaluate candidates who have been chosen as finalists. Once finalists have been determined, interviewee information can be made available to relevant non-committee members.

**Q:17 - Can an interview be conducted without the whole committee present?**

Human Resources recommends that the majority of committee members be present and that the missing member(s) is given appropriate notes. The missing member may participate in the decision-making process if they feel they can make an informed and unbiased decision. If a member will be missing the majority of the search events, their committee membership should be reconsidered.

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**Using iCIMS**

**Q:18- How do I use iCIMS?**

Resources on using iCIMS are available on the [Hiring Toolkit](#).

**Q:19 - I'm unable to login to iCIMS as a committee member, what can I do?**

Make sure you are using the SSO login option. If you are getting an error message please contact The Office of Human Resources.

**Q:20- I am logged into iCIMS but cannot view candidate materials, what can I do?**

Ensure that the New iCIMS toggle at the top right of the screen is off (switch is on the left). If you are receiving an error message please contact The Office of Human Resources.

**Q:21 - How can I make changes to my jobs posting once it's been approved?**

Business services can make changes to postings up to the point of HR approval. Once a position has been posted online only The Office of Human Resources can make changes.

**Q:20 - What do I need to do to close out my search?**

It is the committee chair's responsibility to ensure the job is updated and closed in a timely manner. Please update your candidate status' within iCIMS as the search progresses. When the search has concluded, you will need to complete these steps for each deselected candidate:

- Indicate the point at which the candidates were deselected. Were they deselected after being reviewed or interviewed?
- Assign a disposition code (reason for non-selection) from the list provided within iCIMS.
- Communicate with candidates. Human Resources recommends sending an email to reviewed candidates and calling interviewed candidates.

Updating the job status to "Closed (Filled)" and assigning appropriate disposition codes (reasons for non-selection) is critical for compliance and auditing purposes. The job status will change to Closed (Filled) when the selected candidate is marked as hired and you click OK on the pop-up window. This action will also take the job off the web (if it hasn't already been taken down) and send the necessary background check or self-disclosure request. Instructions on how to close your job can be found in the [Hiring Toolkit](#) or you may contact the Office of Human Resources for help.

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## **Job Offers and Onboarding**

### **Q:19 - Do we need to complete a background check or a self-disclosure on the person we'd like to hire?**

It depends on the type of search. Per [Policy 3301: Criminal Background Checks](#), a job offer is contingent upon successful completion of a background check, which must be completed for individuals hired into the following positions:

2.2.1 All benefit eligible employees;

2.2.2 All persons employed by USU in a teaching capacity including, but not limited to, adjunct, temporary, and concurrent enrollment faculty, professors, instructors, and lecturers;

2.2.3 Graduate students acting as teaching, laboratory, and/or research assistants;

2.2.4 Any employees/volunteers with significant contact with minors; and

2.2.5 Any employees/volunteers in security sensitive positions. Any employee/volunteer in a security sensitive position with financial responsibility over funds of the University may also be required to submit to a financial/credit check.

A self-disclosure form is required for all other positions; please work with your business services representative to complete the self-disclosure process. Once the selected candidate has been marked as hired within iCIMS, a background check or self-disclosure request is automatically sent by Human Resources.

### **Q:20 - Can I hire an employee at a different FTE (Full-time equivalent) than what was advertised?**

No. If the committee listed a specific FTE (ie 1 FTE = 40 hours per week) the employee must be hired at the FTE that was advertised. If there is flexibility regarding FTE, please specify this in the job advertisement. However, short-term FTE changes may be negotiated as part of the offer. Please contact The Office of Human Resources for more information.

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## **International Hiring**

### **Q:21 What is an H-1B?**

H-1B visas are used for temporary employee status for individuals working in a specialty occupation (one that requires “theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge, and attainment of a bachelor's or higher degree, or its equivalent, as a minimum requirement”).

To be eligible for H-1B status, you must have:

1. A minimum of a Bachelor's degree or equivalent in a specialty field (or higher degree if job requires); and
2. Applied for and received an offer letter for a position at Utah State University

The initial H-1B visa may cover a period up to three years. Since this six-year limit is strictly enforced, it is important to plan accordingly. The six-year limit includes time spent on the H-1B at another institution. It may be possible to begin another six-year period as an H-1B after the individual has spent at least one year outside the United States. Persons who have held J-1 or J-2 status and are subject to the two-year home country residency requirement are not eligible for H-1B status until the two-year requirement is either fulfilled or waived.

#### **Q:22 - What questions can the committee ask international candidates?**

The applications for international candidates must be evaluated exactly the same as for all other candidates. All interviewees should (U.S. citizens included) be asked a question such as, "If you are offered this position, will you be able to obtain work authorization?" The only instance we might handle an international application different from a national application is when there are two equally well-qualified finalists, one being a U.S. citizen and the other an international citizen, who requires sponsorship. It is at the department's discretion as to whether or not they would choose to sponsor the international candidate. A department's decision on whether or not to sponsor an international candidate will be made based on budgetary and departmental needs prior to the search commencing.

#### **Q:23 - Where can the search committee find pre-screening questions relating to work authorization?**

As part of the hiring process, two questions are answered by every candidate who applies through the iCIMS system:

1. Are you legally authorized to work in the United States?
2. Do you now, or will you in the future, require immigration sponsorship in order to obtain, extend, or renew your work authorization in the United States (e.g., H-1B visa status)?

Responses to each of these questions can be found in the iCIMS system by following the steps found below:

1. Open the job advertisement in the iCIMS system and select the desired candidate.
2. Select the "Screen" tab followed by the "Person Screening Questions" option.

#### **Q:24 - Which additional questions can I ask about work authorization?**

A. Search committees should, and can by law, ask all candidates if they have current U.S. work authorization.

1. If the individual answers “**Yes**”, you may ask what type of work authorization the individual has.
  - Usually, individuals working on a degree in the United States have an F-1 (student) visa.
  - Often, individuals with J-1 visas are required to return to their home country for a minimum of two years prior to accepting U.S. employment (sometimes the two-year home stay is waived).
  - An [H-1B](#) Specialty Occupations visa is temporary in nature, with a stay duration for a maximum period of six (6) years at a time, and not every position may qualify.
  - Permanent Residency
  - US Citizen
2. If a candidate answers “**No**”, the search committee should work with Human Resources to determine the position and candidate’s eligibility for USU to sponsor an H-1B.

More information about H-1B’s at Utah State University can be found [here](#).

**Q:25- What are the different types of Visas that suffice for work authorization?**

F-1, OPT, STEM OPT, J-1, employee authorization card, H-1B (USU must sponsor this), and green card

**Q:26 - What is the cost to get an H-1B visa?**

The Office of Human Resources can assist departments that need to get a sponsorship (H-1B) visa for their prospective employees. For an updated list of costs and fees associated with this process, please visit USU’s [H-1B website](#).

**Q:27 - Will an H-1B visa suffice for a tenure-track position?**

An H-1B visa is only a bridge for a tenure-track position. An individual can hold H-1B status for a total of 6 years. An international candidate is encouraged to apply for permanent resident status within the initial 12-18 months of employment in that tenure-track position. The Office of Human Resources at Utah State University does not currently process permanent resident (green card) petitions. The decision to sponsor permanent residency is at the discretion of the department.