

Reference Checks

References should be checked after a successful interview with a candidate, but before you offer them the position. If after interviewing there are several candidates that are qualified for the position, reference checks are also a way to further distinguish who might best fit within your agency.

Can I do a reference check on a current state employee?

Yes. DHR administrative rule states that when an employee seeks a transfer, reemployment, or promotion between agencies, the hiring agency may examine the employee's service record and performance information before the hiring decision is made. (Ref. IDAPA 15.04.01.220.04 and Section 67-5309(o), Idaho Code)

The questions...

In order to be consistent and comply with Equal Employment Opportunity laws, all final candidates should be vetted equally. Therefore it may be helpful to use a checklist of questions to ask the references. The questions asked should be phrased in such a way that the former employer is asked to *describe*, not rate, the applicant in terms of your list of relevant job behaviors.

Your list may include:

- Employment verification
- Verification of dates of employment
- Verification of position title held
- Verification of past salary
- Eligibility status for rehire
- Reason for separation
- Recommendation for another position / role
- Past performance
- Skills
- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Reliability
- Work habits