

REFERENCES

#450

1.0 POLICY. It shall be the policy of Davis County that information sought concerning employees or former employees (reference checks) shall not be released unless the employee or former employee has given written permission to do so and has released Davis County and its employees from any liability for any damage whatsoever arising from issuing such information. Information released is considered confidential and is provided for professional purposes only.

2.0 RELEASE OF LIABILITY FORM. Employees authorizing Davis County to release information shall sign a "Release of Liability to Provide Information" form. Such form shall be kept in the employee's personnel file located in the Office of Personnel Management.

3.0 PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO RELEASE INFORMATION. Information shall only be released by Elected Officials, Department Directors, and staff of the Personnel Office. Before providing information, the Personnel Office shall be consulted to determine if a "Release of Liability to Provide Information" form is on file and whether or not there are other circumstances impacting release of such information.

3.1 DOCUMENTATION. Persons authorized in 3.0 to release information shall complete a "Reference Documentation" form every time an inquiry is made and forward it to the Personnel Office for filing in the employee's personnel file.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

I hereby authorize release of all information Davis County, its Personnel Office, or the departments I have worked for may have concerning me, whether on record or not. I also release Davis County and its employees from any liability for any damage whatsoever of issuing same. This release expires two years from date indicated below.

Signature:	
Date:	

GIVING EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES

Before giving an employment reference:

1. Contact the Personnel Department and verify a release of liability form is on file.
2. Check out the legitimacy of the person calling.
3. Make sure the inquiry is legitimate by asking what position the former employee applied for.
4. Determine whether the former employee has given permission and/or a waiver to allow the prospective employer to talk with you.
5. State the information you are giving is confidential, cannot be passed on, and should be treated confidentially. Say "I am providing information only because you requested it and only for professional purposes".

When giving an employment reference:

1. What you say must be true.
2. Make sure all released information is documented.
3. What you say must be relevant to job performance.
4. What you say must have a bearing on the new job.
5. Only provide information which relates to the job and job performance in question. If the new job has no bearing on the old job, indicate you have no feel for how former performance has a bearing on the new position.
6. What you say must not be said for purposes of harming former employee but only to answer questions.
7. Don't volunteer information, respond directly to the question.
8. Keep a brief record of who called, what was asked, what was provided, and the date and duration of the conversation.
9. Do not answer questions such as "Would you rehire this person? Would you recommend applicant for position sought?"
10. Do not answer questions "off the record." All questions are clearly discoverable in a lawsuit
11. Do not provide vague statements such as "He was average." Provide answers which match the documentation exactly.
12. Do not make subjective statements which cannot be backed up by documentation.
13. Be sure to state why you made the opinion. "He received a rating of unsatisfactory on job attendance because he was absent from work five times during the month of May".
14. Affirm or deny information that was given the inquirer by the former employee and indicate if you have documentation to back up your statement.
15. If the former employee has been involved in some very serious offense relating to health and safety of others instead of such things as poor performance then the prospective employer should not be misled. Be sure documentation backs up what you say and tell the truth.
16. When responding to a written inquiry, do not fill in the blanks or check choices which do not match exactly the documentation you possess.

CHECKING EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES

Before checking an employment reference:

1. Contact the Personnel Department and verify a release of liability form is on file. The application contains a waiver.
3. Check out the legitimacy of the person you are calling.
4. Make sure the reference has legitimate knowledge and authority to answer your questions.
5. Determine whether the applicant has given permission and/or a waiver to allow the former employer to talk with you.
6. Treat the information you are receiving as confidential, do not pass it on.

When checking an employment reference:

1. Ask only questions which pertain to the job.
2. Don't volunteer information on what other references have provided.
3. Keep a brief record of who called, what was asked, what was provided, and the date and duration of the conversation.
4. Do not ask questions "off the record." All questions are clearly discoverable in a lawsuit.
5. Ask questions which reveal prior job performance and performance characteristics of the applicant.
6. Do not ask vague questions such as "Was he an average performer." Ask questions such as "How well did he reconcile bank statements?"
7. Do not make subjective statements about what is being said to you by the former employer or indicate whether you will or won't hire the applicant.
8. Confirm information that was given you by the applicant. Confirm it precisely, don't put it into your own words.
9. Do not call the applicant's friends or relatives.
10. Ask the former employer for additional names you can call.
11. Do not ask any questions which are illegal for you to ask the applicant.
12. Verify the education and training claimed by applicant.
13. Thank the person for their responses.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Verify dates of employment.
2. Verify salary level.
3. Ask what is history of attendance.
4. What is the official title of the position held?
5. What are the minimum requirements?
6. Did applicant supervise? How many and what levels?
7. What was primary responsibility?
8. What size budget was applicant responsible for?
9. What was their best contribution to organization?
10. Was he cooperative with superiors and coworkers?
11. How good are their communication skills?

12. Were you satisfied with the work output?
13. Is employee eligible for rehire?
14. Did the applicant receive regular employment evaluations?
15. Was the applicant the subject of disciplinary action while employed?
16. What is the reason applicant left employment?

REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION

Name of person seeking references

Title of person seeking references

Company seeking references

Date and time of conversation

Does Davis County have a waiver of liability on file?

Brief record of questions and responses

Signature

Date