

HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY RECRUIT DISABLED PEOPLE INTO WORK

Introduction

As a public sector employer we want competent and capable people working for Warwickshire and we also want to recruit a diverse workforce that reflects the community we serve. Disabled people make up a largely untapped and readily available pool of talent that offers us real opportunities.

We already have a duty under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 not to treat a disabled job applicant, or an employee, less favourably, simply because of their disability. From December 2006 this extends to a duty to promote equality for disabled people.

Job advertising

We routinely send our job vacancies to Jobcentre Plus and to local community groups and voluntary organisations within Warwickshire. In addition we place generic advertisements in disability magazines for example, the Disabled and Supportive Carer and Radar publications.

As a recruiting manager you should ensure that your advertisements are clearly written, jargon-free and can be understood by all sections of the community. Do not use terms that could be seen to disadvantage disabled applicants, for example, “energetic” or “dynamic”.

Providing relevant accessible information

Disabled people need to be informed of diversity-welcoming policies; for example, Warwickshire County Council is a two ticks, disability symbol organisation. This means that we operate a job interview guarantee scheme and will interview disabled applicants who demonstrate that they meet the essential criteria for the post and who apply under this scheme (there is a section on the application form for this).

We also try to achieve some face-to-face contact with potential applicants by regularly attending recruitment and careers fairs. We will also offer advice and guidance on the completion of the application form. Further assistance is available from Routeways to work – www.routewaystowork.co.uk

Recruitment material should be offered in alternative formats, for example, large print or on tape and should also be available electronically. Be prepared to accept applications through a number of different routes such as written, tape, email, and video.

If you are unsure then ask your HR staff for assistance.

Further advice is available within Managing People – Section A – Recruitment.

Interviews

The WCC application form does offer the opportunity for a disabled applicant to tell us if they require any reasonable adjustments to be made in order for them to attend for an interview, however, this should be reiterated in the letter inviting the applicant to attend for an interview.

Reasonable adjustments could include allowing someone more time to do an aptitude test, or the help of a supporter at the interview. This includes the provision of a sign language interpreter. Contact the Coventry & Warwickshire Sign Language Interpreting Service to book an interpreter. E.mail – office@cwslis.co.uk or Fax 024 7622 6326.

When interviewing a disabled person and specifically people with a learning disability, make the atmosphere informal, ask simple clear questions and keep the interview panels small. Always keep your questions relevant to the person's ability to do the job and do not ask about their ability to cope with life outside work. Use plain English and take your time to ensure the person has understood the questions. You may need to allow for a longer interview as some disabled people may need a little more time to tell you what you want to know.

Job Interview Guarantee Scheme

The County Council operates a Job Interview Guarantee Scheme whereby a disabled applicant that completes the relevant section on the job application form AND demonstrates that they meet the essential criteria for the post will be guaranteed an interview.

Where a disabled applicant completes the relevant section of the form but does not meet the essential criteria in the person specification, then a separate letter is sent to that applicant informing them of the outcome and offering feedback on their application.

This ensures that disabled applicants are given positive feedback and are not left believing they have been denied an interview because of their disability.

Further information

For further information or if you have specific queries then please contact your Directorate HR colleagues for advice.

Training

County HR run a number of training courses that you may find useful to attend, please check the information within Section C – Learning & Development.