Steps in the Hiring Process

Note: District Directors should familiarize themselves with the information provided in the Handbook over Personnel Management found on Pages 81-124.

First Step-Identify the Need

This is the starting point where your District recognizes that a position must be filled. It could be triggered by:

- A current employee leaving (resignation, retirement, or termination)
- A new position need

At this stage, you:

- Confirm the need — ensure it's a real and urgent requirement
- Define the role's purpose — how it supports district goals and objectives
- Outline success metrics — what the role will achieve in the first 3, 6, and 12 months
- Set a target start date — working backward to plan timelines
- Develop a job description if it is a non-standard position

Why It's Important

Deciding there's a role to fill sets the foundation for the rest of the hiring process. Be sure you have a clear understanding of:

- Why the role needs to exist
- What it will achieve
- When it needs to start

With lack of alignment with the district's mission and goals the requested position could be denied, or you could make a "bad" hire. Being fully aware of the Why, What and When will make it easier to choose a good candidate for your open position.

Next Step-Written Request to the Commission

Allocations for positions are made by the Commission after consideration of district need and funding availability. It is the policy of the Commission that no district shall replace or increase the number of employees whose source of pay comes from reimbursable funds (i.e., allocated position) without prior written approval of the Commission.

The district does not have to request to fill vacant non-allocated, 100% locally funded positions; however, the Commission may be of assistance in the process. Districts may hire additional personnel using only local funds with no prior approval from the Commission. When only local funds are used, the district is responsible for 100% of the

employee's salary and benefits. The Commission must be notified within 3 days of any locally funded employee beginning work. Locally funded positions are required to follow the same employment rules and regulations as allocated positions.

Use all the information you have compiled from three W's to write the letter of request. Letters can be submitted to OCC District Services Director via email.

Once You've Received Confirmation of Approval from the Commission the Following Steps Can Begin

The board needs to:

- **Select a Hiring Committee Panel or Board**
  Resume reviews and applicant interviews should be conducted by the Board of Directors or by a committee panel designated by the Board. If a quorum of Board members participates in the interview process, all applicable requirements of the Open Meeting Act must be followed.
  The Board should discuss and determine who will be involved in the review and interview process. If the Board chooses to delegate hiring responsibilities to a committee panel, formal Board action should be taken to establish that the committee has the authority to verbally make an offer to the successful applicant.

- **Review and/or Update Job Description**
  Accurate and up-to-date job descriptions should be maintained for all district positions. Job descriptions should establish essential functions of the position with a solid set of expectations for the employee and should be the basis for evaluating job performance at least annually. The Commission provides general job descriptions on its website; these should be adapted to each district's individual need.

- **Set Application Period**
  For any job opening, make a public announcement of the position to be filled for at least two (2) weeks before closing the announcement, so applications may be accepted.

- **Determine Advertising**
  The announcement should state the qualifications, duties, and salary of the position available, and the typical work schedule required of the applicant, along with the time, place, and manner of the application. The Commission recommends that all applications, regardless of position, consist of a cover letter, resume, and at least 2 professional references.
  The district office must make a reasonable effort to locate the best qualified person for the position, therefore, the announcement should be made via the most visible avenues. These may include local newspapers and online sources. The Commission can assist with posting open positions to their website. The Commission and/or your local ADC can assist with sample advertisements.

- **Set Date to Review Applications**
  This date should be set once application period is determined and action has been taken, if needed, to decide who will be involved in narrowing down the pool of applicants. Executive session will need to be used if resumes are reviewed during a board meeting.

- **Acknowledge Resumes Received**
  Sample response available from OCC

- **Review Resumes**
  Screen applicants-Google search, Search social media , Search OSCN, Ask around

- **Set Date/Times for Interviews**
  OCC suggests that 30 minute time slots be set for interviews.

- **Schedule Interviews**
  Contact applicants with date and time for interview. Provide the full job description at this time to the interviewees for them to review before their scheduled interviews.

- **Notify Other Applicants**
  Notification to applicants not selected for interviews should be emailed. Sample email is available from OCC.

- **Prepare for Interviews**
  Interview Packets for the District Manager position are available from OCC. Packets can be adapted to fit other positions. The interview committee should thoroughly review and utilize the Interview Process Packet.

- **Interviews**
  Interviews of qualified applicants should be conducted by the board of directors* or by a panel of individuals selected by the board. **Note: If a quorum of board members will be participating in the interview, Open Meeting Act requirements must be followed*.

- **Applicant Chosen for Offer**
  If a successful applicant is interviewed and agreed upon by the board or the hiring committee*, hiring terms should be defined and a verbal offer extended. **Note: a hiring committee may only extend an offer if the district board has taken action to grant the authority to them*.

- **Offer Letter**
  This should include their contact information (phone, email, address), the position being offered, salary, start date, work location, and work schedule. The letter should also include the date/timeframe for accepting. Sample letter is available from OCC. *Note: Districts MUST inform OCC if they are hiring someone whose resume reflects either current or past employment with ANY state agency, county agency/office, etc. OCC needs to be made aware of it no later than when the district extends an offer*.

- **Notify Other Interviewed Applicants**
  Notification needs to be made to others interviewed that their interview wasn't successful and thanking them for their time. Sample letters are available from OCC.

Hiring Process Checklist

☐ **Identify the Need**
☐ **Review/Update Job Description**
☐ **Written Request Sent to OCC**
☐ **Confirmation of Hire Approval**
☐ **Board or Committee**
☐ **Set Application Period/Set Date to Review Resumes**
☐ **Determine Advertising**
☐ **Review Applications**
☐ **Set Date(s) and Times for Interviews**
☐ **Schedule Interviews**
☐ **Notify Applicants not receiving an interview**
☐ **Prepare for Interviews**
☐ **Interviews Held**
☐ **Applicant(s) Chosen for Offer**
☐ **Send Offer Letter**
☐ **Forward Signed offer Letter to OCC once received**
☐ **Notify Unsuccessful Interviewees**

Sample Email Responses

Thank you for submitting your resume for the District Manager position with the (Name) Conservation District. We appreciate your interest in our district! We'll screen all applicants and prioritize those whose qualifications best align with our needs. We'll contact you if you're selected for the interview process. Best regards.

Thank you for applying for the District Manager position with the (Name) Conservation District. We've carefully reviewed resumes and selected candidates whose skills and experience most closely match our requirements. Unfortunately, your application wasn't selected for further consideration. Thank you for your time and interest in position. We wish you the best in your job search.

Sample Help Wanted Advertising

The Tillman County Conservation District (TCCD) is seeking a qualified individual for District Manager. Applicants must have a working knowledge of general office procedures, computer software applications and bookkeeping. TCCD is looking for an outgoing, self-starter with strong organizational and communication skills. Agricultural knowledge is beneficial but not required.
Salary and Benefits-$3,287.00 per month, health insurance, retirement plan, vacation, and sick leave.
To apply, email cover letter and resume to tillmanccd@conservation.ok.gov
Questions, email TCCD tillmanccd@conservation.ok.gov
Application period closes April 3, 2026 @ 4:30 p.m.

For other examples or assistance in creating your own flyer contact your local ADC. Below is an example of a flyer created on Canva.com



Offer Letter

(Needs to be placed on district letterhead – please change font size to 12-save and provided to candidate as a .pdf)

January 13, 2026

Roberta Flack
222 East 9th Avenue
Bristol, OK 74011

Dear **Mr./Ms. Flack**,

Deputy County Conservation District is pleased to offer you the (**full-time/part-time**), position of (**position being offered**) with an anticipated start date of (**Monday, March 2, 2026**).
As the (**position being offered**), your responsibilities will include, but are not limited to, (**insert job duties – example of a district manager: handling the reporting and financials of the district, managing the local cost-share program, coordinating outreach and education programs, and providing assistance to producers**).

The board of directors will serve as your immediate supervisors with regular oversight, direction, and assistance also provided by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission. Working hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with a 30-minute lunch, Monday through Friday, five days a week, on-site at the district office located at **123 South Elm Blvd, Dublin, OK 74123**.

The starting salary for this position is **$3,210.00** per month. Payment is monthly by district check, on the last working day of the month. In addition, as a full-time employee, you will be eligible to receive benefits beginning (**April 1, 2026**). (**NOTE: the last sentence will be different if a part-time employee.**)

Your employment with **Deputy** County Conservation District will be on an **at-will** basis, which means you and/or the district are free to terminate employment at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. This letter is not a contract indicating employment terms or duration. A 60 or 90-day performance review will be conducted to ensure that you are meeting the **Deputy** County Conservation District, board of directors' expectations and performing at a satisfactory level in your first months of employment.

Please confirm your acceptance of this offer by **signing and e-mailing** a soft copy of this letter to **Emma Ross**, District Manager, at **deputy**ccd@conservation.ok.gov and a soft copy to Clancy Green, OCC, District Services Director at **clancy.green@conservation.ok.gov**, by the close of business, 4:30p.m., **Wednesday, January 21, 2026**).

Non-response or response after the above-mentioned date to this letter will be deemed as declining this offer.

Sincerely,
Mary Dublin/pp
Mary Dublin, District Board Chair
Deputy County Conservation District

Jackie Russo
Jackie Russo, District Manager

Candidate Signature: _____

Candidate Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Denial Letter

(Needs to be placed on district letterhead)

November 11, 2026

Curios George
123 Desoto Drive
Merrymack, OK 74011

Dear **Mr./Ms. George**,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we would like to thank you for taking time to interview for the (**position being offered**) position with the **Deputy** County Conservation District. The board had a very difficult decision with many well-qualified applicants from which to choose.

Your qualifications and experience were judged favorably relative to the requirements of the position and your interview skills were excellent; however, the Board of Directors has recommended the hiring of another applicant who we believe will best meet the needs of this position.

All resumes and applications for employment are maintained in an active status for six months. If a suitable opening should develop, we will contact you at that time.

Your interest in employment with the **Deputy** County Conservation District is appreciated and we thank you for submitting your resume. We wish you much success with your future career endeavors.

Sincerely,

Mary Dublin, Board Chair
Deputy County Conservation District
Diamond, Oklahoma **74022**