



Recruitment Policy

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Policy details our recruitment and selection approach as a business whose vision is to create communities where everyone has a safe home in a place they are proud to live. This Policy should be read in conjunction with our Recruitment Guidance document which outlines the recruitment process and other key recruitment considerations.
- 1.2 This document is relevant to all hiring managers as well as to colleagues who wish to apply for available roles. It applies to all Southern Housing vacancies except volunteers, board and committee members, and paid placement candidates.

2.0 Policy statement

- 2.1 At Southern Housing we will focus on effective, progressive, inclusive, and innovative recruitment practices. This document outlines our approach to attracting and selecting suitable candidates who reflect the communities we serve and who are aligned with our behaviours and values which are honest, efficient, accountable, respectful, and trustworthy.
- 2.2 We are committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion at every stage of the recruitment and selection process supported by an approach that attracts and selects candidates from diverse backgrounds. We value diversity as it enhances our business performance, our reputation as a trusted landlord and employer and helps to attract, motivate, and retain staff.
- 2.3 This Policy will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that it reflects the legal obligations and Southern Housing's organisational business needs and values.
- 2.4 If you have difficulty understanding the Policy or guidance because of a disability or if English is not your first language, please contact a member of the People & Culture Team as soon as possible.
- 2.5 The terms 'we', 'us', 'our', 'colleagues' and 'organisation' in this Policy mean Southern Housing.

3.0 Vacancies – to be filled by internal and/or external candidates

- 3.1 Southern Housing uses an online applicant tracking system (Networx) which supports effective monitoring and management of recruitment activity. Hiring managers are required to use this system during the recruitment process, with guidance and support provided by the Talent Acquisition Team.

- 3.2 Before starting the recruitment process, managers must assess any vacancy to confirm it is still required. If a manager wants to significantly amend a job profile, they should discuss and agree the changes with their Leadership Team (LT) Director and People Business Partner.
- 3.3 Any vacancy that is like-for-like can be actioned by the hiring manager who must start and complete the recruitment process in Networx for the vacant position. For newly created positions that are in addition to the approved establishment, this must be approved by the relevant Leadership Team Director and the Executive Team (ET) Director and in line with our Delegation Schedule .
- 3.4 To ensure the recruitment process is consistent, fair, transparent, and objective, the Talent Acquisition Partner can arrange a Vacancy Briefing with hiring managers if required. This is to ensure they fully understand the recruitment process supported by an equality, diversity, and inclusion approach. If appropriate, a member of the Talent Acquisition Team will undertake coaching with the hiring manager, may sit as a panel member or provide additional training or resources.
- 3.5 A vacancy request is required for all recruitment requests in order to start the recruitment process for any role. Vacancy requests are tasks that are initiated and completed in Networx. In all cases the job 'position' number must be included.
- 3.6 All vacancies will be recruited through relevant, diverse, and accessible direct sourcing methods by the Talent Acquisition Team. The team will also welcome candidates through the Colleague Referral Scheme (see [section 6.0](#)).
- 3.7 To ensure we provide colleagues with career development opportunities and retain their skills, we will advertise all vacancies internally. Where we have identified a pool of people internally who may have the skills for the role, we will advertise internally first for a minimum of one week before advertising externally. There may however be exceptions where we will release roles internally and externally at the same time, depending on the role.
- 3.8 For any roles that we advertise externally, this would generally be for a minimum of two weeks, to ensure we can source suitable candidates for the role.
- 3.9 We will only consider sourcing through agencies on our Preferred Supplier List for fixed-term or permanent roles as a last resort and when we have exhausted all sourcing methods or exceptionally for unique and specialist roles. This would be discussed at the vacancy briefing stage with the Talent Acquisition Team.
- 3.10 The Talent Acquisition Team reserves the right to close an advertised role early if there is a large response to enable effective shortlisting and scoring.
- 3.11 Should a hiring manager go directly to an agency and this was not actioned through the Talent Acquisition Team, this may result in escalation to the relevant Executive Team member and disciplinary action being taken.
- 3.12 We support colleagues who wish to move internally within Southern Housing. It is important to strike the right balance between personal career and skill development

as well as the impact on business objectives and service to our residents as it relates to internal mobility.

- 3.13 Colleagues who have passed their probationary period and have been confirmed in post can apply for other Southern Housing vacancies after a period of 12 months
- 3.14 All colleagues are unable to apply for another internal role (including secondments) for 12 months from the start of their new role. Although this may be waived in exceptional circumstances providing prior approval has been given by their line manager.
- 3.15 Colleagues should notify and seek the support of their line manager when applying for an internal position. If the role is a secondment opportunity, they must also first discuss and get agreement with their line manager. This would include agreeing reasonable secondment start dates (if they are successful) that are in the interest of the colleague, the team, and the business.
- 3.16 Colleagues who are made redundant are unable to reapply for a role within the organisation for a period of six months from their last day of service.
- 3.17 Colleagues who have left the organisation are unable to return in the same role or team as a Contractor or Consultant.

4.0 Vacancies – to be filled by Temporary Workers

- 4.1 Temporary Workers are all agency workers as well as contractors/consultants that may be needed to provide cover for a permanent vacant budgeting post, to fill gaps in skills sets, to ensure a quality service to our residents or as a temporary resource for a specific reason.
- 4.2 A temporary worker request is required for all temporary workers working with the business and this must also be approved by the relevant Leadership Team Director.
- 4.3 The use of Contingent Workers via recruitment agencies, or independent contractors/consultants, should be discussed with your Talent Acquisition Partner or People Business Partner. Temporary workers must be sourced and employed by our Managed Service Provider. Hiring managers should not engage with or agree terms of business with any agencies directly. If you receive an email from an agency, please forward on to the Talent Acquisition Team as they are responsible for agreeing and negotiating terms of business and managing agency relationships. This ensures consistency, value for money, compliance, and good governance.
- 4.4 A temporary worker can work with us for a maximum of 12 weeks. Hiring managers must ensure there are funds available from their authorised budgets to cover the costs of these temporary workers. Specific approval from your Leadership Team Director and ET member is needed for a temporary worker for a temporary assignment intending to last longer than 12 weeks as placements longer than this could be filled by a fixed-term contract.
- 4.5 Individuals who are engaged to work for Southern Housing via recruitment agencies or as a Consultant/Contractor will need to apply for any of our fixed term or

permanent vacancies as an external applicant. If they are interested, they can do this through our website or other job boards. They will become a direct employee of Southern Housing if successful and are not entitled to continuity of service.

5.0 Shortlisting, interview, and selection

- 5.1 We will carry out all sourcing, shortlisting, interview, and selection processes in line with the [Equality Act 2010](#) and our HEART values.
- 5.2 We are committed to the responsible and transparent use of AI and expect everyone to take personal accountability for ensuring that any AI generated content is factual and accurate. If candidates use AI tools, the content must reflect their own skills, knowledge, and experience and be personally verified. Submissions that are misleading or do not genuinely represent candidates' background may not be considered.
- 5.3 Hiring managers should have a set of shortlisting criteria to objectively determine suitable candidates to interview for the role. You can shortlist in Networx.
- 5.4 Hiring managers should ensure all interview details including panellists, preferred dates and times and any specific tests or presentations are included in the Interview Team section on Networx. This will aid the Talent Acquisition team to support you on interview scheduling for shortlisted candidates and to ensure any necessary reasonable adjustments are made.
- 5.5 As a 'Disability Confident Committed' employer, we will offer an interview to any applicant who declares they have a disability (in line with the [Equality Act 2010](#)), providing they meet the minimum criteria of the job profile.
- 5.6 All interview panels should be diverse and comprise at a minimum two but ideally three panel members, which should normally include the line manager and other appropriate managers or colleagues. All panel members must have attended recruitment and selection training.
- 5.7 For all Board, Executive, and some senior level roles, a Resident Panel may be formed and included during the recruitment process to meet and discuss agreed areas and key challenges with the candidates; this will not form part of the scoring process for the candidate. The main interviewing panel will conduct the formal scored interview, and will consider the resident's feedback, for example, as part of any further requirement to explore specific areas or probe.
- 5.8 All application forms and CVs are confidential and should only be read by members of the interview panel and the Talent Acquisition Team or People Team. Any saved documents should be permanently deleted, or paper copies confidentially disposed of at the end of the process.
- 5.9 Hiring managers should draft interview questions in the required format in preparation for the interview. These forms are available on the intranet, and the Talent Acquisition Team will be happy to assist with example interview questions.

- 5.10 At interview, panel members must record candidate responses on the interview form, along with question scores (these scores should be individual and therefore do not need to match) and any other relevant information to support the interview panel's selection decision. It is advisable that notes are legibly handwritten or typed.
- 5.11 Selection decisions should be made following the completion of all interviews and the final decision rests with the hiring manager. Candidates will be selected and appointed based on their suitability for the position. Recruitment and selection will be based solely on the applicant's skills and individual merit against the position purpose and requirements. Qualifications, experience, and skills will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the role. The hiring manager may discuss interview outcomes with the Talent Acquisition Team, including the selected candidate and the offer they wish to make.
- 5.12 The interview panel lead should upload interview notes into Networx within two days of the last interview. This is important as it can result in delays in progressing offers for the successful candidates, contract administration, and onboarding.
- 5.13 The panel members should provide an overall score and constructive, useful feedback for all candidates via Networx. This will enable the Talent Acquisition Team to provide helpful feedback to external unsuccessful candidates if requested. Hiring managers must provide feedback directly to internal candidates.
- 5.14 Hiring managers are required to make a verbal offer of employment to the selected candidate in the first instance (being mindful of agreed and advertised salary parameters). When making the offer, the hiring manager needs to consider a suitable start or hire date bearing in mind notice period and that it can take at least two weeks to complete the on-boarding process.
- 5.15 The Talent Acquisition Team should be informed of the intended and final accepted offer, agreed salary, and start date to initiate the formal onboarding process for the candidate.

6.0 The Colleague Referral Scheme

- 6.1 The Colleague Referral Scheme (CRS) offers colleagues the opportunity to share and promote Southern Housing's vacant and new roles to people they know or believe are suitable for the available roles, will support our values and be proud to work for Southern Housing.
- 6.2 If the person you referred was selected for a role and confirmed in post after their probationary period, you will receive a reward. Colleagues must meet all six eligibility criteria to benefit from the reward. These are:
 - 1. Referring colleagues must submit their referral *before* the referred individual submits their application for the relevant vacancy.
 - 2. Referred candidates must have participated in the full recruitment and selection process and the name should have been indicated as part of the referral process. This can be completed in Networx and should be included on the application form with the name of the person who referred.

3. Referrals will only be accepted for roles available to internal *and* external applicants.
4. The referring colleague may not be on the shortlisting or interview panel or may not have access to any shortlist involving the candidate who has been referred.
5. The referring colleague will only receive the award after successful completion of their own probationary period (if applicable).
6. The referring colleague must still be employed by Southern Housing when the referred colleague's probationary period has been completed and confirmed by the People & Culture Team.

7.0 Related policies and documents

Recruitment Guidance – for more detailed information on the recruitment process
Acting Up, Secondments and Additional Responsibility Policy
Pay Policy and Procedure
[Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
Managing Change and Redundancy Policy and Procedure
Pre-employment Checks Policy

8.0 What have we done to make sure this Policy is fair?

- 8.1 Southern Housing will routinely assess the impact of its policies, procedures, and services. We have established an Equality Impact Assessment process that is applied to strategies, services, policies, and procedures to specifically consider equality and diversity issues when policies are produced or reviewed.
- 8.2 We have carried out an Equality Impact Assessment to consider the positive and negative impacts this Policy may have on people with protected characteristics under the [Equality Act 2010](#).

Policy controls

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