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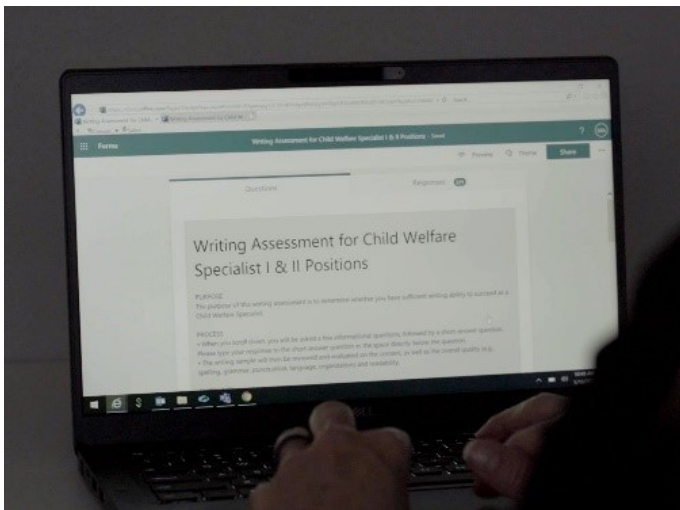
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Competency-based Personnel Selection

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

A Competency-based Personnel Selection process was the intervention designed as part of the QIC-WD project to address inconsistencies in hiring and to identify candidates with the desired competencies to be hired as Child Welfare Specialist (CWS) I/II with Oklahoma Human Services (OKDHS) (for more information see the [Site Overview](#)). The Competency-based Personnel Selection process is a standardized hiring procedure that includes a structured interview with behaviorally anchored rating scales, a typing assessment, and a writing assessment. Additionally, research was conducted on a set of academic and commercial hiring assessments to determine how well these measures of personality, cognitive skills, and attitudes predict job performance and to inform decisions about future use in the hiring process.



The QIC-WD worked closely with subject matter experts and decision makers at OKDHS to develop the hiring process (see the Intervention Background for more information). The team first identified the critical competencies that CWS I/IIs need at the time of hire. The QIC-WD conducted behavioral event interviews and surveys with OKDHS subject matter experts and

developed recommendations for the hiring tools to best assess the final set of desired competencies. A small workgroup of child welfare supervisors and human resources representatives assisted in the development of the interview questions and behaviorally anchored rating scales. The steering committee reviewed and approved the final recommendations.

To provide flexibility and meet agency needs, in-person and virtual interview processes were developed. In addition, file sharing and applicant tracking software were used to store applicants' interview materials and to make the interview process paperless. Two guides were developed to support implementation: Standardized Hiring Process Guide a step-by-step guide to assist the administrative assistants (AAs) with their administrative tasks in the process, and the *Interview and Writing Assessment Rating Guide* for hiring panels to use during the interview. The [Implementation Overview](#) provides additional details about these supports.

After a CWS I/II position is posted, hiring panels (consisting of district directors and/or supervisors) reviewed the applicants and decided who to invite to an interview. A standardized interview invitation was then e-mailed to the candidates selected for interview. The e-mail included important information about the hiring process and position, including a link to view a realistic job preview and an overview of benefits.

On the day of the interview, the AA proctored the typing and writing assessments for the candidate either virtually or in person. Before meeting with the interview panel, the candidate was given the opportunity to review the interview questions in order to gather their thoughts and formulate responses to the questions. The interview included two types of questions:

1. situational questions in which the candidate was asked to describe how they would respond in a hypothetical situation; and
2. behavioral questions in which the candidate was asked to provide very specific information about their own relevant experiences.

After the candidate reviewed the questions, they entered the room (either virtually or in person) with the hiring panel. The interview with the candidate lasted approximately 1 hour. Hiring panels consisted of one or more panel members, although it was strongly encouraged to have at least two panel members. Following the interview, the panel rated each of the interview questions and the writing assessment according to the behaviorally anchored rating scales. Hiring panels then discussed their ratings with one another to share their perspectives. Panel members could change their ratings after the panel discussion, but consensus among panel members was not required.



Once the ratings were submitted, the AA created a document summarizing the ratings for the candidate, which included all the ratings from all panel members, average ratings for each competency, the typing assessment score, and an overall score. The process did not have a cutoff score for hiring decisions, although hiring panels/managers were encouraged to use the total score as a decision guide, factoring in ratings on individual competencies, as well as the candidate's ability to meet core job requirements (e.g., availability to be on call, attend training).