**Reference Check Procedures for Hiring Managers**

***Updated June 2021***

1. Managers will use the approved Mid Michigan College Reference Check Form found on the Mid website in the Human Resources tab under [Reference Check Form – Phone](https://www.midmich.edu/application/files/3716/2611/8654/Reference_Check_Form_-_Phone_fillable.pdf) and [Reference Check Form – Email/Fax.](https://www.midmich.edu/application/files/7816/2611/8769/Reference_Check_Form_-_Email_Fax_fillable.pdf)
2. Every attempt should be made to complete reference checks by phone. Email may be used if repeated attempts by phone are unsuccessful.  If references are unresponsive, contact the candidate and ask them to submit a different reference, or to contact their reference and ask them to respond.
3. Review the Do’s and Don’ts provided below.
4. Information you receive in the reference check should never be disclosed to the candidate.
5. Refrain from telling an applicant that the reason for not offering them the position is due to a poor reference. The reference provided information in confidence and assumes information will remain confidential.
6. The completed reference check form (even if a person is not hired) will be returned to Human Resources and will become part of the employee’s personnel file or vacancy file.

**Other Considerations:**

* Carefully question the validity of comments made by former employers**.** It is not uncommon for employers to express negative feelings toward a good employee who resigned for a better position. Likewise, employees terminated for poor performance sometimes work out a deal with their former employers, ensuring them of positive reference checks. *Probe for objective statements regarding job performance.*
* Do not assume that a reported personality conflict is the applicant’s fault.
* Having been fired does not necessarily mean a person is a bad risk. Get an explanation before jumping to conclusions.

**Do’s and Don’ts**

**Do:**

* Speak on the phone to the referral if possible
* Set a positive tone
* [Follow local, state, and federal laws](https://www.midmich.edu/application/files/5714/8855/0373/PRE-EMPLOYMENT_INQUIRY_GUIDE_2-2017.pdf)
* Ask the same reference questions for all job applicants
* Notify the job applicant that you will be contacting the references
* Document who you talked with and the information provided
* Be upfront with the references about why you are contacting them
* Understand your state or local laws about salary history questions
* Speak with 1-2 references for students and 3 or more for full time positions

**Don’t:**

* Rush the call
* Ask leading questions
* Ask for protected class information
* Contact people without the candidate’s consent
* Assign reference checking to a hiring team member who doesn’t understand the job role