

# Community Hiring Referral Source FAQ

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## 1. Program Overview

### 1.1 What is Community Hiring?

Community Hiring is a procurement-based initiative that authorizes City agencies to set workforce goals in their contracts for vendors to provide employment and apprenticeship opportunities for low-income individuals and those living in low-income communities. The Office of Community Hiring (OCH) manages rollout and implementation, supports City agencies and vendors, and reports on Community Hiring Goals.

### 1.2 What is a Referral Source?

A Referral Source is an entity responsible for connecting vendors with qualified Community Hires for purposes of meeting the Community Hiring Goal. Referral Sources include the City's public workforce system (e.g., SBS's Workforce1 and HRA's Business Link), union referral systems, and other entities that provide job placement or workforce development services.

### 1.3 How can Referral Sources benefit from Community Hiring?

Referral Sources gain access to a wide range of employment opportunities for job seekers.

## 2. Community Hires

### 2.1 Who is a Community Hire?

A Community Hire is an individual whose employment can be credited towards the achievement of the Community Hiring Goal.

### 2.2 Who is an Income-Based Community Hire?

An Income-Based Community Hire is an individual who has an individual or household income below 300% of the federal poverty guidelines. The Community Hiring Goal for professional services, human services, and standard services (except building services) is to employ Income-Based Community Hires.

### 2.3 Who is a Residence-Based Community Hire?

A Residence-Based Community Hire is an individual who resides in NYCHA housing or an Economically Disadvantaged Region. The Community Hiring Goal for building services and construction contracts is to employ Residence-Based Community Hires.

### 2.4 What is an Economically Disadvantaged Region?

An Economically Disadvantaged Region is an area represented by ZIP code in which at

least 15% of the population lives below the federal poverty threshold. The full list is available on OCH's website.

## 3. Referral Source Roles & Responsibilities

### 3.1 What are the responsibilities of Referral Sources?

Referral Sources must perform the minimum responsibilities outlined in the Community Hiring Rules, including:

- Identifying Community Hires who meet the applicable requirements for certification;
- Assisting prospective Community Hires with preparation of self-certification statements for purposes of certification, where applicable;
- Maintaining, for each Community Hire, the proof of certification and a record of services provided, including, but not limited to employment recruitment services;
- Providing vendors with proof of the individual's certification as a Community Hire, where applicable;
- Establishing screening procedures or systems to identify prospective Community Hires;
- Providing, without financial costs to the Community Hires, employment recruitment services or other workforce development services;
- Enrolling in an electronic system designated by the OCH Director; and
- Cooperating in any audit by the OCH Director, including any inspection of documents related to services performed as a Referral Source

### 3.2 How does an entity become authorized as a Referral Source?

The Office of Community Hiring (OCH) is establishing a network of Referral Sources that will help connect vendors to qualified Community Hires. Referral Sources may include:

- **Agencies** that directly make referrals to City vendors (Direct Agency Referrals)
- **City vendors** contracted by the City for employment recruitment or workforce development services (Indirect Agency Referrals)
- **Union referral systems**
- **Other entities selected through solicitation**

### 3.3 How are Referral Sources connected to vendors?

A Vendor with a Community Hiring Goal must notify a Referral Source of the goal and any vacancies to be filled by Community Hires.

## 4. Job Seekers & Opportunities

### 4.1 Are there employers participating in the initiative with entry-level opportunities?

Yes. The Community Hiring initiative spans multiple industries, and experience levels vary by employer. Opportunities will be available for individuals seeking entry-level roles.

#### **4.2 What types of jobs are available?**

Opportunities span multiple fields, including:

- Construction tradespeople
- Solution engineers
- Security guards
- Civil/architectural drafters
- Mental health counselors
- Administrative assistants
- Paralegals
- Maintenance technicians

#### **4.3 Are Referral Sources required to refer a specific number of candidates?**

No, Referral Sources does not have a specific number of referrals to make. Referral Sources are responsible for referring Community Hires to vendors with Community Hiring Goals. While there is no particular quota to meet, the number of referrals required would depend on the hiring needs of the vendors with a Community Hiring Goal.

#### **4.4 What is the expected timeframe to connect a job seeker?**

Timelines vary by vendor's needs and are coordinated directly between vendor and Referral Source. Early communication is encouraged once a vacancy is identified.

#### **4.5 What if no qualified match is available?**

If the Referral Source cannot find a Community Hire who matches the job description, the Referral Source should notify the vendor that a qualified match is not available.

#### **4.6 Can a Community Hire reside outside the State of New York?**

Yes, but the job seeker must meet the job qualifications and the applicable definition of Community Hires.

#### **4.7 Is there a fee for job seekers?**

No. Referral Sources may not charge Community Hires for job placement services.

### **5. Program Administration**

#### **5.1 Who is responsible for reporting hires?**

Vendors are responsible for reporting their progress with their Community Hiring Goal.

## 5.2 How will the transition from HireNYC to Community Hiring affect current contracts?

HireNYC is a suite of various programs with different requirements, but certain HireNYC requirements have begun phasing out and being replaced with Community Hiring.

## 5.3 Can Referral Sources support M/WBE vendors?

Yes. Referral Sources can support M/WBE vendors that need job placement services to meet Community Hiring goals on their contracts.

## 5.4 Will Referral Sources' performance be reviewed?

Yes, OCH is responsible for monitoring the performance of Referral Sources. A Referral Source may be suspended or terminated for:

- Inactivity or refusal to perform required responsibilities
- Failure or refusal to enroll and maintain an active account in an electronic system, if designated by the Director
- Fraudulent or bad faith acts
- Failure or refusal to cooperate with OCH

# 6. Getting Help & Staying Informed

## 6.1 Where can Referral Sources find resources or assistance?

- Email: [CommunityHiring@talent.nyc.gov](mailto:CommunityHiring@talent.nyc.gov)
- Subscribe to the OCH newsletter for news and guidance