

**Verification of Employment history and reference checks**

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One Call 24 will ensure that all workers offered to and placed within the authority are stringently vetted. This will include receipt of confirmation of the worker's previous employment history. At all times, OneCall24 will comply with latest NHS Employment Check Standards (see <https://www.nhsemployers.org/system/files/2022-03/Employment-History-March-2022.pdf>).

As part of the registration process, One Call 24 will require workers to provide referee details. As per the NHS standards, at recruitment: references which covers at least three (3) years of previous employment and history from two separate employers (where possible) will be obtained, one of which should be from the Candidate's current or most recent employment or Assignment (of two (2) weeks or more) or Engagement, as appropriate. Unless otherwise agreed to the contrary in writing with the client, where a Candidate has been with one employer for three years or more, then one reference may be sufficient.

Different contracts will contain specific requirements surrounding referencing. These will be adhered to at all time, whether it be 1 reference covering 3 years being deemed as acceptable or 1 reference covering 5 years with client sign off being deemed as acceptable.

Each worker will be required to supply full referee details, including (but not limited too): Full referee name; referee job title; referee band; address details; contact number; acceptable email address and dates of employment in mm/yyyy format. One Call 24 will also ensure that the worker provides consent for the referees to be contacted for a reference. Without this consent, the referee(s) cannot be contacted and will mean that the worker cannot progress further within the registration process.

References will be requested using the standard reference template at point of registration. Only written references will be accepted, which must be fully complete and be received with acceptable verification.

Acceptable verification will be sought in the following forms:

- Business/company email address
- Company Stamp and signed by the referee
- Compliment slip, signed and dated by the referee
- Business Card
- Fax Header

To speed up the process, One Call 24 may contact the referee via telephone, and go through the reference form with them, completing all fields as discussed with the referee. One Call 24 will then forward the completed reference form to the referee for them to respond with acceptable verification, confirming that the information presented is true/correct.

References must contain the following criteria:

- Be updated annually from the date of recruitment and from the two (2) most recent employment / Assignments held
- Contain details of the work undertaken during those engagements
- Be obtained from the Supervising Consultant (ideally a permanent staff member) In the case of either Consultants or Associate Specialists; references must be obtained from the Clinical Director or Head of Department at the most recent substantive or long-term placement of four weeks or more in duration. In the case of recently graduated Drs, the Clinical Dean is the most suitable person to be contacted for a reference
- Be relevant to the type of work either previously carried out or to be carried out by the potential Agency worker
- Comment on the work undertaken by the potential Agency worker and experience, integrity, professional competence, personal qualities and track record during the period of employment

If a reference is returned without sufficient verification, the referee will be chased to provide the required information as detailed above.

If a reference is returned incomplete, the referee will once again be contacted in order for the reference to be completed in full.

If an unsatisfactory reference is provided, or inconsistencies are identified (i.e. dates of employment), One Call 24 will contact the referee via telephone to discuss the concerns highlighted. Once discussed, further clarification will be sought. Alternatively, One Call 24 will look to obtain further employment references from the workers previous work history.

Should it be determined that the worker is unsuitable to be placed by One Call 24 due to unsatisfactory references, the worker will be notified that they have failed the registration process.

References that are addressed 'To Whom it May Concern' are not automatically accepted. If the reference has been received as a response to a reference request made directly by One Call 24 (and evidence of this held on file), then the reference can be used as part of the workers registration with One Call 24. However, if the reference has not been supplied to One Call 24 based on a reference request or is not addressed to One Call 24, further clarification will be sought from the referee that

the information provided is true and correct. Evidence of this verification will be obtained in written format, meeting the verification standards as detailed above.

There may be a number of perfectly genuine reasons as to why a candidate cannot provide us with a referee from a previous employer. For example, this may be because the candidate has never worked before, or they have not worked for some considerable time, or their previous employer has ceased trading. In such cases, we seek a reference from their last known employer and source additional character or personal references in order to validate the required three-year period. If the candidate's previous employer refuses to provide a reference, we may seek the necessary assurances by obtaining a character or personal reference. Where limited references are available, the decision to appoint is made by the Clinical Lead - with a full audit trail retained on file to support the decision and their application.

As part of the ongoing quality assurance programme offered by One Call 24, references will be updated on an annual basis. Annual references will be expected to meet the same criteria as detailed above and at all times in line with the Framework standards and NHS Guidance.

### **Character References**

Character and personal references can provide invaluable information to help build up a picture of the candidate's reliability, social skills and experiences. They may also be useful to further support an application if the candidate has a previous criminal record history or where they genuinely cannot provide a previous employer reference, for example, because their previous employer has ceased trading. They can also provide additional information to support a person's application where the employer reference outlines that the individual has left because of an irretrievable breakdown in relationships.

The distinction between employer and character/personal references is made clear to our customers upon recruitment.

Asking specific questions is helpful in ensuring the referee provides us with accurate and factual information. These questions include how long they have known the candidate, in what capacity they have known them, and what skills/experience the candidate has demonstrated that might be regarded as valuable attributes for the position they are being recruited for.

As part of the ongoing quality assurance programme offered by One Call 24, references will be updated on an annual basis. Annual references will be expected to meet the same criteria as detailed above and at all times in line with the Framework standards and NHS Guidance.

### **Employment History/CV**

In respect to employment history, a fully completed, legibly signed and dated Application form will be obtained, which will detail the candidate's employment history. Past this, a CV will be obtained which will detail the Candidate's full previous employment history and training, with no unexplained gaps. The Candidate's previous employment history/CV must be updated by the Candidate on at least an annual basis from the date of recruitment. Evidence will be held within the candidate's file at all times.

Information supplied on references will be cross referenced against the worker's CV/Employment History. Where any discrepancies are highlighted, these are raised with both the worker and the referee to establish what information supplied is indeed correct. The necessary amendments will be made, with a fully auditable trail available.

One Call 24 will ensure at all times that references obtained are done so in compliance with the Equality Act 2010 (not requesting any information in relation to the Candidate's absence or sickness record).

### **Review**

This policy statement will be reviewed annually as part of our commitment to upholding professional standards. It may be altered from time to time in the light of legislative changes, operational procedures or other prevailing circumstances