

CITY OF MADISON

Managers Virtual Interviewing Tip Sheet

Well-being is one of our City's most prized values. "We are committed to creating a community where all can thrive and feel safe." Even if you're not a member of an at-risk group, you can have an impact on the spread of COVID-19 by implementing social distancing in workplace processes. In order to conduct interviews in a safe manner for both you and the candidates we are asking that you conduct interviews through the phone or virtually.

So, how do we make great hires if we cannot interview people in person?

After reviewing this document please contact your agency's Human Resources Analyst with any further questions.

Expectations-Setting with candidates

This may be a new experience for hiring managers, interview panel as well as the candidates. Please tell the candidates we understand interviewing virtually may be a new process to them but we will try to make them feel as close to normal as possible.

Reinforce that we're taking this temporary measure because of the Mayor's, Public Health of Madison/Dane County's, and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recommendations to take the spread of the virus seriously and need for social distancing for our safety as well as their own.

Step 1: Quick Overview on How to Set up a Zoom Interview

Detailed instructions are here: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/employeenet-information-technology/documents/TeleworkToolkit.pdf>

Make sure you and your interview panel are using computers that have cameras and microphones.

Please keep in mind that if you are using the free version of Zoom the maximum meeting time you can host is 40 minutes.

1. Download Zoom: <https://zoom.us/download>
2. Follow the instructions and create an account with your City of Madison e-mail
3. Click the blue "Schedule a New Meeting" button in the top left corner
4. Enter in Topic, Date, and other related details and press Schedule
5. Once in the meeting, click the invite button on the bottom of the screen to add additional e-mail addresses

Step 2: Best Practices on Interviewing Virtually

Pre-Interview Communications

- Send a formal Interview Appointment to the candidate:
- Remind candidates that all times will be in Central Time
- Explain that you will send the Interview Questions as an email message before or at the scheduled start time.
- Ask the Interview Panel to arrive 30 minutes before the scheduled interview (the panel should use this time to confirm connection strength, review which interviewer is asking each question, and discussion any last-minute questions)
- Come up with a backup plan in case technology fails will you change to a phone call or reschedule

The Call

- Your interview should have an introduction, at that time address any concerns the candidate has about doing a virtual interview and how you will work through them together.
- The Interview Panel leader should serve as “emcee” for the call, asking panelists to introduce themselves, explaining the process, and serving as the voice of the panel
- Stay muted unless you are asking a question
- Find a location that is clear of clutter and has a pleasing background if possible
- Check your technology: camera and audio, do a test call if time permits
- Make sure your lighting is good, no shadows, if too bright they can’t see you in the camera
- Eliminate background noise
- Turn off your on screen notifications

Post-Call

- Make sure to schedule time in between candidates to meet with your interview panel for discussion before the interview begins, select a central person to send all interview notes to keep for three (3) years plus fiscal.

Step 3: How to get the most out of your Virtual Interview

- For general interview information please review A Manager’s Guide to Interviews and Background Checks: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/employeeet/documents/human-resources/ManagerGuideInterviews.pdf>
- Virtual interviews should still use the same behavioral questions and benchmarks as an in person interviews (Appendix 2 of A Manager’s Guide to Interviews and Background Checks)
- Talk to the panel about who will ask what question. Remember that there may be audio delays, so this will avoid talking over each other during the interview
- Speak as if you’re face-to-face with the interviewee while ensuring you’re at the appropriate distance from the microphone
- Embrace the pause. Take a moment after the end of your comments and allow for candidates to engage before continuing on
- Make sure at the end of the interview, you discuss next steps, including whether a second interview would be done virtually, whether you intend to fill the position right away or if a possible start date may be delayed due to the COVID-19 outbreak, and any other issues that may need to be addressed

Questions about Virtual Interviews?

Please contact your HR Analyst with questions

