

The page features three blue, 3D-rendered circles of varying sizes. The largest circle is at the bottom right, the medium one is at the top right, and the smallest one is in the middle right. Two thin blue lines originate from the top left and extend towards the circles, one passing through the top and middle circles, and the other passing through the middle and bottom circles.

National Association of State Personnel Executives

**2016 Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Awards Nomination
Innovative State HR Management Program**

New Mexico Rapid Hire Program

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New Mexico State Personnel Office – Rapid Hire Program

Summary of program:

The State Personnel Office (SPO) is required by State statute to ensure compliance with the State Personnel Act and the State Personnel Board Rules, which require the “certification of the highest standing candidates to prospective employers.” See NMSA 1978, §10-9-13(F). The State Personnel Office uses the recruitment software, NEOGOV, to manage recruitment for state government classified positions.

SPO recognized advertising for classified positions on-line wasn’t sufficient for state agencies experiencing extreme hiring difficulties. After partnering with agencies, it was determined those positions having recruitment issues were most often designated as critical to the effective operation of the agency and were attributed to location, specificity of the qualifications required (i.e. licensed positions) and/or the nature of the work itself. It is also important to note state agencies having recruitment issues were not just relying on applicants navigating their way to our electronic recruitment system, many were also participating in job fairs and advertising their positions in other related publications.

At SPO, we identified improvements that would ensure oversight responsibilities. Our goal was to create alternative recruiting options for state agencies that continued to struggle to fill critical jobs and also ensure we remain in compliance with our statutory obligations. It was determined that state government needed a hiring mechanism that would allow agencies to make a connection with applicants directly, to not only inform them of job opportunities, but to instead offer qualified applicants the opportunity to provide their credentials and interview “on the spot.” This was a bold move considering the processes and procedures that have to be maintained to hire in state government.

The Rapid Hire Program was created to supplement recruitment efforts and gives agencies the ability to perform on-site recruitment and selection at specified hiring events. To date, two of the largest state government agencies have utilized this program and have hired social workers and health care professionals at hiring events throughout the state. Through our research and talking to applicants who have attended these events, we have learned that applicants feel highly motivated and empowered that a state government agency will look at their application immediately, interview and inform them if they will be provided a contingent offer letter to begin their career in state government. Thank you for considering our program.



Narrative Responses:

1. Please provide a brief description of this program.

The State Personnel Office (SPO) created a program for agencies that are experiencing difficulties when recruiting for positions that are designated as critical to the effective operation of the agency. Those hiring difficulties are often attributed to location, specificity of the qualifications required (i.e. licensed positions), or the nature of work itself. Accordingly, SPO created a “Rapid Hire Program” to assist agencies when standard recruitment efforts have proven unsuccessful in meeting the hiring needs for these critical positions. The Rapid Hire Program will give agencies the ability to perform on-site recruitment and selection at specified hiring events that are well-suited for the unique recruiting needs of the agency.

2. How long has this program been operational (month and year)?

The program has been operational since June 2015.

3. Why was this program created? (What problem[s] or issues does it address?)

The program was created to offer state agencies an alternative to traditional recruitment. It has been our experience that hard to fill positions can, in many cases, also be critical to the effective operations of a state agency. Many times these positions are advertised continuously/consistently and remain vacant for several weeks, sometimes months. SPO wanted to create an alternative, making recruitment as efficient as possible for applicants as well as hiring managers. Having the ability to receive immediate feedback on a potential position, makes attending a Rapid Hire event more appealing to qualified applicants. Since implementation, two of the largest state agencies (Children, Youth and Families Department and Department of Health) have held Rapid Hire events which resulted in hiring social workers and positions in the medical field. For example, the Department of Health (DOH) continuously has vacancies for their Psychiatric Technician positions. These positions are responsible for providing direct nursing care services to long term care patients. Prior to the Rapid Hire Program, DOH had advertised for the positions in addition to participating in job fairs, however, they were unable to close their vacancy gap. The agency was able to fill 35 positions at their Rapid Hire event. The Rapid Hire Program has proven to be successful in supplementing current recruitment efforts and in getting qualified applicants into critical positions that support our state.



4. Why is this program a new and creative method?

It can be difficult for a government entity to remain competitive with the private sector due to established required procedures. When our customers (applicants) provide feedback, it often references the process and the time it takes to be advised if you were the selected candidate. For a critical position, such as a nurse, qualified applicants have options and many times the state government process may not seem as attractive as a competing hiring entity. SPO was able to appeal to the needs of applicants by offering an opportunity to interview on site with hiring managers and receive a prompt response on their hiring status. It has been our experience that applicants are very receptive to participating in this type of event and, as a result, hiring managers are filling critical positions with qualified applicants. At times, it may be difficult to think strategically or creatively when your main objective is to ensure compliance with rules and regulations;; however, our Office was able to be creative while ensuring all required rules were followed.

5. What was the program’s startup costs? (Provide detailed information about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.)

The primary cost of this program is staffing. Human Resource professionals and hiring managers have to ensure they are available to attend a hiring event. The Rapid Hire events have taken place at agency operated facilities. The cost of marketing the specific events can vary. For example, one agency has paid for television advertisements while another agency used primarily utilized social media.

6. What are the program’s operational costs?

Please see response above.

7. How is this program funded?

This program is funded through the agency’s annual operating budget.

8. How did this program originate in your state?

SPO staff identified the need for state agencies to have the ability to make employment offers on the spot at job fairs and various hiring events in order to compete for top talent with private sector employers.

9. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If yes, how does this program differ?

To our knowledge, we are not aware of a similar state government program.



10. How do you measure the success of this program?

We measure the success of our program by comparing retention rates before and after a Rapid Hire event. It should be noted that each event has positively supplemented current hiring efforts. Agencies participating in the events were able to continue to recruit on-line in addition to hiring candidates that participated in the Rapid Hire events.

11. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

Since implementation, SPO has changed the way it markets the program. After reviewing data regarding hard to fill positions, SPO seeks out agencies with positions that fit the criteria for our program and encourage them to think differently about their recruitment processes. For example, SPO recently met with the Department of Public Safety about the difficulty in filling dispatcher positions. We provided them with information about our program and encouraged them to attend a Rapid Hire event for medical professionals being held by a neighboring agency. In addition to our outreach services, the program has allowed us to look beyond the perception of state government bureaucracy; it gives us confidence that this type of program is only the beginning on how we approach human resources in state government.