



## Hiring Practices Document for PRIDE of Ticonderoga and the Essex County Land Bank

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### Introduction:

This document outlines the primary hiring guidelines and practices for PRIDE of Ticonderoga and the Essex County Land Bank, reflecting New York State's employment laws as of January 2021.

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### *Essex County Code of Ethics:*

*Both PRIDE of Ticonderoga and the Essex County Land Bank pledge to follow the Essex County Code of Ethics, emphasizing our commitment to transparency, integrity, and the highest ethical standards. The detailed code is accessible and can be reviewed [HERE](#):*

*<https://www.co.essex.ny.us/downloads/Local%20Law%20No.%206%20-%20Ethics.pdf>.*

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### **1. At-Will Employment:**

Both PRIDE of Ticonderoga and the Essex County Land Bank operate under the "at-will" employment doctrine prevalent in New York. Under this doctrine:

- Either the employer or the employee can terminate the employment relationship at any time.
  - Termination can be for any reason, provided it is not for an illegal reason such as discrimination or retaliation.
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### **2. Discrimination Laws:**

We are committed to providing an equal-opportunity workplace. In compliance with New York State laws:

- Discrimination against applicants based on age, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, sex, disability, predisposing genetic characteristics, familial status, marital status, or domestic violence victim status is strictly prohibited.
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### **3. "Ban the Box" Policy:**

Although primarily a New York City policy, we adhere to the principles of the "Fair Chance Act":

- We refrain from inquiring about an applicant's criminal history until after a conditional offer of employment has been extended.
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### **4. Salary History Ban:**

Aligned with New York State's emphasis on equal pay:

- We do not inquire about an applicant's salary history during the hiring process.
  - We do not use an applicant's wage history to determine their wages, even if such information becomes available.
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### **5. Notice Requirements:**

In the unfortunate event of a layoff or relocation:

- We will adhere to the New York State Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act.
  - If we have 50 or more full-time employees, a 90 days' notice will be provided before any such event.
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### **6. Verification of Work Authorization:**

We are dedicated to upholding federal and state employment regulations:

- We will ensure our employees have the legal right to work in the U.S.
  - This involves completing an I-9 form for every employee and, if necessary, using the E-Verify system.
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### **7. Reference Checks:**

Reference checks are an essential component of our hiring process, ensuring we onboard candidates who align with our values and standards:

- We strictly adhere to an applicant's request regarding the non-contact of their current employer.
- Unauthorized contact with an applicant's current employer, against the applicant's wishes, is prohibited due to potential legal liability. Our organizations are dedicated to acting



responsibly and preventing any unnecessary legal disputes, such as discrimination or retaliation.

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#### **8. Ethical Decision-making Based on Merit:**

All staff involved in hiring must ensure decisions are grounded in merit, fairness, and impartiality. The law must be the guiding force behind all decisions. Ethically, no applicant should be favored or disadvantaged based on wealth, position, status, or due to personal or professional relationships with county officers or employees, except where the law specifies otherwise.

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#### **9. Upholding Respect in Hiring Interactions:**

It's imperative for our hiring team and all employees to maintain a high degree of respect during all interactions. This includes treating potential hires, the public, superiors, subordinates, and coworkers with dignity and understanding. Every interaction, especially during the hiring process, should mirror our organization's values and ethical commitments.

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#### **10. Confidentiality and Avoidance of Conflicts in Hiring:**

All employees, especially those involved in hiring, are bound to protect sensitive information they come across due to their position. Such information must never be used for personal gain, nor should it be disclosed for personal reasons or to enact retaliation. Ethically, maintaining the sanctity of this information is paramount.

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#### **11. Executive Director's Role in Hiring:**

The Executive Director holds the responsibility for making hiring decisions. However, if there's a perceived conflict of interest involving the Executive Director, a member of the Board will be present during the hiring decision-making process. It is essential to note that before initiating the hiring process and finalizing salary compensation, board approval must first be secured.

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**Conclusion:**

*PRIDE of Ticonderoga and the Essex County Land Bank prioritize maintaining a fair, legal, and respectful hiring process. We work closely with the Rural Housing Coalition for HR services and consult COOK & BREITENBACH for legal guidance, ensuring our procedures are both informed and compliant.*

*This document, while foundational, will undergo regular reviews and updates to align with changes in New York State laws, regulations, and the Essex County Code of Ethics. Our commitment to ethical, transparent, and compliant hiring remains unwavering.*