



# Human Resources & Risk Management

COUNTY OF IMPERIAL

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Dear County Employee:

As part of the County's succession planning, the Human Resources and Risk Management Department has created this guide to assist you through the application and interview process. Our office receives over 10,000 employment applications a year, which makes the recruitment process highly competitive. It is therefore our goal to prepare our current workforce for the challenges of a competitive process.

The first section of this guide will cover the application process. It will assist you in identifying some key resources that will be useful when completing this important document.

For both the application and interview process, taking the time to familiarize yourself with the County of Imperial and its departments will increase your understanding of the functions of the job. You can visit the County's website at [www.co.imperial.ca.us](http://www.co.imperial.ca.us) to learn more about each County department.

## **Application Process:**

The employment application is the only means available for our office to verify your knowledge, skills and abilities. It also gives you an opportunity to provide a detailed summary of your work experience and your educational background.

Your first resource is the job description. Every job within the County has a unique job description that outlines the essential duties of the job and lists both the experience and educational requirements used to screen your application. We therefore recommend that you:

- Read the job description
- Identify the work experience and educational requirements of the job
- Identify key words regarding the critical duties performed by this job

The job description is available by visiting our website at [www.co.imperial.ca.us](http://www.co.imperial.ca.us) under "Job Opportunities" or in person with the Human Resources and Risk Management Department located at 940 W. Main Street, Suite 101, El Centro, CA 92243.

For completing your application, we recommend using the following tips:

- Type or print neatly in ink
- List your complete employment history for the past 10 years beginning with your most current experience
- List all experience, paid or voluntary
  
- Identify your specific qualifications and match them to the job requirements, including but not limited to:
  - Work and volunteer experience
  - Degrees, certificates, awards, diplomas; and

- Equipment and software you have used
- Use different blocks for different positions with the same employer (i.e. Account Clerk, Accounting Technician, Accounting/Auditor)

**Important:** In order for the County to consider your educational background, you must attach a copy of your college transcript (from an accredited institution), degree, license, certificate, or diploma with your application. In addition, foreign degrees must have a U.S. Equivalent report.

## INTERVIEW PROCESS:

This second section is a resource for anyone wishing to interview more effectively. For you to prepare, you must first understand the function of an oral interview.

The County requires a face-to-face interview as part of our hiring process for the majority of our jobs. A structured interview is an oral test in which all candidates are asked the same set of questions, and responses to the questions are evaluated accordingly. The interview panel will often include a minimum of three (3) members with background in the field.

### *The structured interview is an opportunity for us to:*

- ✓ Determine whether the knowledge, skills, and abilities you possess correspond with those needed for successful performance on the job
- ✓ To gain in depth information about your work experience, specific assignments and projects you have completed

### *The interview is an opportunity for you to:*

- ✓ Demonstrate your abilities, qualifications and background as they relate to the demands of the job
- ✓ To present yourself as a qualified capable candidate with marketable skills; and
- ✓ Seek further information about the responsibilities of the job

## Preparing for the Interview

You may not know the precise questions asked during your interview; however, preparing in advance will assist you in presenting your qualifications in a clear and concise manner. Most structured interview questions will cover one of the areas listed below:

**Experience-Based** interview questions inquire about job-related knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- ✓ “In accounting we reconcile many different sources of data. What is your experience in finding and reconciling differences?”
- ✓ “Describe the extent of your computer knowledge and the computer programs you have used?”

**Knowledge-Based** interview questions ask you to demonstrate a level of familiarity with the terminology, practices, concepts, and theories related to the job:

- ✓ “Please describe the on-site steps you take at your first inspection for constructing a new building. List all construction details or elements you would check.”
- ✓ “What steps do you follow when grading the shoulder area on a paved road?”

**Behavior-Based** interview questions require you to apply your knowledge, skills, and abilities in a job-related situation. The two types of behavior-based interview questions are **past behavior** and **situational**:

- ✓ *“Tell us about a time you went the extra mile to provide exceptional customer service. What was the situation, and how did you handle?”*
- ✓ *“You are working the reception area and an angry person walks in without an appointment and demands to speak to your boss. What would you do?”*

**Personal Perspective-Based** interview questions ask you for your personal viewpoint or perspective regarding a subject matter:

- ✓ *“Why do you believe it is important to have a chain of command?”*
- ✓ *“How would you handle a conflict between you and a co-worker?”*

Additionally, learn all you can about the position you are seeking. The following are useful tips to prepare for the interview:

- Review the job description and focus on the duties and responsibilities of the job;
- Review your resume and then ask yourself:
  - What did I learn from this experience?
  - What problems did I encounter and how did I overcome them?
  - What were the most complex tasks and projects that I completed?
  - What was my contribution to the organization?
- Practice and prepare for your interview

For the day of the interview, we recommend to:

- Dress for success:
  - Adhere to acceptable standards of personal hygiene
  - Clothing should be clean and pressed
  - Business casual attire is recommended depending upon the position you are interviewing for
  - Limit jewelry and cologne to prevent distractions
- Plan for the interview
  - Verify the interview location and get directions in advance
  - Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to your scheduled interview
  - If possible, drive to the location ahead of time to avoid getting lost

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### **Disclaimer**

This guide provides useful and practical information, however, there is no guarantee that someone who reads this guide will be able to perform better on a County interview.