



Executive Summary of Rapid Hire/ One Day Hiring Event Program

Overview - San Bernardino County's Rapid Hire/One Day Hiring Event Program was created to address critical staffing shortages by streamlining recruitment and onboarding processes. Launched during the COVID-19 pandemic to quickly fill urgent healthcare roles, the program has grown into a sustainable solution for high-vacancy and difficult-to-fill positions across various departments. By combining the entire hiring process, such as interviews, conditional job offers, fingerprinting, pre-employment physical scheduling, and onboarding paperwork, into a single-day event, the County has eliminated hiring delays, improved candidate engagement, and reduced vacancy rates from over 20 percent to 15.78 percent as of March 2025. This innovative approach has enhanced service delivery, strengthened the workforce, and provides a replicable model for other jurisdictions facing similar staffing challenges.

Challenge - Before the pandemic, San Bernardino County's vacancy rate consistently exceeded 20 percent, leading to service delays and increased workloads for staff. COVID-19 worsened these issues, especially in healthcare and emergency services where staffing was crucial to support public health efforts, patient care, and vaccination initiatives. Traditional hiring processes, which often took several months, caused the loss of qualified candidates to faster employers. High turnover, fierce competition for specialized roles like paramedics and nurses, and a shrinking talent pool highlighted the need for a faster, fairer, and scalable hiring solution.

Solution -The County respondent developed the Rapid Hire/One Day Hiring Event model, a collaborative, cross-departmental initiative developed and led by Human Resources in partnership with hiring departments, the Center for Employee Health and Wellness, and other County partners. Human Resources coordinated all event logistics, managed candidate scheduling, and assigned trained staff to conduct live-scan fingerprinting and process onboarding paperwork onsite. Departments provided interview panelists and decision-makers to enable immediate job offers. Candidates attending the event could complete all major steps in the hiring process in one day, including interviewing for one or more departments, receiving same-day conditional offers, completing background checks, scheduling pre-employment physicals, and finalizing payroll documents. The model was also customized to meet specific needs, with large-scale clerical events filling 187 vacancies in two days, targeted paramedic events including same-day online testing, and new nurse cohorts reducing hospital onboarding timelines from biannual to triannual cycles.

Innovation - This program's innovation lies in compressing a process that previously took weeks or months into a single, structured day while maintaining competitive hiring standards. San Bernardino County's Human Resources department redesigned workflows, cross-trained staff, and fostered interdepartmental cooperation to achieve this. By incorporating live-scan fingerprinting, on-the-spot physical exam scheduling, and multi-department interviews in one location, it eliminated common bottlenecks. The ability for candidates to interview for multiple positions at one event maximized placement potential and expanded the applicant pool. This approach also improved candidate retention by offering immediate feedback, clear next steps, and reducing wait times between application and start date.

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Results - In 2024 alone, San Bernardino County hosted 35 Rapid Hire events, resulting in 1,287 interviews and 691 job offers, filling 94 percent of targeted vacancies. From 2020 to 2024, applications increased by 78 percent, from 89,203 to 159,003, reflecting the appeal of a hiring process that is transparent, expedited, and candidate focused. Specialized events addressed critical staffing shortages in essential areas including healthcare, public safety, and administrative services. Departments now fill vacancies faster, reducing service delays and easing workloads for existing employees. The community benefits from a stable, well-staffed workforce capable of delivering timely, high-quality services. Success stories include permanent hires emerging from one-day events, ensuring continuity of service in high-demand roles.

Replicability - The Rapid Hire/One Day Hiring Event model is highly replicable because it uses resources and processes that most counties already have in place. Implementation begins with forming a cross-departmental planning team, including Human Resources, high-need departments, legal, and employee health services, to set priorities, identify positions for rapid hiring, and determine event logistics. The first step is mapping the full hiring process to identify tasks that can be completed in a single day. This includes application screening before the event, scheduling interviews, assembling decision-making panels, arranging live-scan fingerprinting, securing physical exam appointments, and setting up on-site onboarding stations for payroll and benefits enrollment. Most counties can adapt existing Human Resources workflows to this condensed format with minor procedural adjustments and staff cross-training. Facilities for the event can be county-owned buildings, workforce development centers, or community spaces, minimizing costs. Partnering with local health providers ensures same-day or next-day physicals, while collaboration with IT can allow for immediate system access requests for new hires. Counties can tailor the model to their needs, whether on a larger scale, multi-department events to address widespread vacancies or targeted events for hard-to-fill specialized roles. By developing clear event playbooks, using pre-event candidate communications to set expectations, and tracking metrics such as interview-to-offer ratios, any jurisdiction can launch and sustain this approach. Because the model relies primarily on restructured workflows, interdepartmental collaboration, and resource sharing, it is both cost-effective and scalable.

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