



News Release

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County Removes Conviction Question from Job Applications

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. – Cumberland County’s employment application will no longer include a question asking applicants if they have ever been convicted of an offense against the law other than a minor traffic violation.

Following the recommendation of the board’s three-member Policy Committee and County management, the Board of Commissioners this morning approved removing the question from the application and moving it to a supplemental application completed by all candidates selected for interviews. Any candidates with convictions are asked at that time to provide an explanation and are informed that a conviction does not mean they cannot be hired: the nature and recentness of the offense will be evaluated in relation to the job.

The suggestion to remove the question was first taken to the Policy Committee in August after Commissioner Charles Evans approached Assistant County Manager James Lawson several months ago with concerns with the county’s employment application.

“We want it understood that everyone is getting a fair shake and having their qualifications considered first,” said Assistant County Manager James Lawson.

The County also adopted a more comprehensive pre-employment background check policy for prospective job candidates. The background checks include criminal records, motor vehicle records, credit history, sexual offender registry, and verification of educational levels/degrees, licensure, certifications or other required credentials. The checks will be conducted based on business necessity, as relevant to the assigned duties of the position.

Checks of criminal records, to include sexual offender registries, will be conducted on all perspective candidates for hire.

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The revised application, along with a listing of County job vacancies, is available online at <http://www.co.cumberland.nc.us/jobs>.

Today the County also launched its new online application process, which allows job seekers to submit their applications via its website rather than in person or through the mail.

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