

FACTSHEET

Handling job applications

May 2023

Applications can come in many forms from potential applicants, with the most common and convenient being a CV or the completion of an application form. Email is the most efficient method to receive applications, rather than phone or post.

Application Forms

You don't have to use an application form and there is no rule about when to use it. You can ask people to fill out application forms at different times, for example:

- Your job advertisement can ask applicants to use one; this is often provided with the job information pack.
- You can send an application form to applicants who you have short-listed before you make the final selection of applicants to interview.
- You can give out an application form when you arrange the interview or when people arrive for the interview.

Preparing an application form and getting each applicant to complete it at the start of the recruitment process has many benefits:

- Consistent information is supplied by each applicant, making comparison easier.
- Can assess and confirm that the applicant has the required qualifications, skills and experience (if not stated in CV).
- Can be used to verify the applicants' residency status, work visas or New Zealand working rights.
- It allows you to ask questions that you may not feel comfortable asking people face-to-face e.g. medical and criminal history.
- You can include a declaration for the applicant to verify that all information relevant to the job has been provided and nothing has been omitted or misrepresented. This can be useful if there is a dispute about nondisclosure or misrepresentation.
- Can have an authority for the applicant to sign providing permission for you to contact referees and do security, credit or criminal conviction checks, where these are a requirement of the job.

As an example, Federated Farmers have an excellent "Application for Employment" form that can be purchased from them <https://fedfarm.org.nz>

When using an application form, it is important that the information asked for is appropriate and relevant to the vacant position. You must keep confidential all material provided by all applicants in line with the Privacy Act 2020 Legislation.

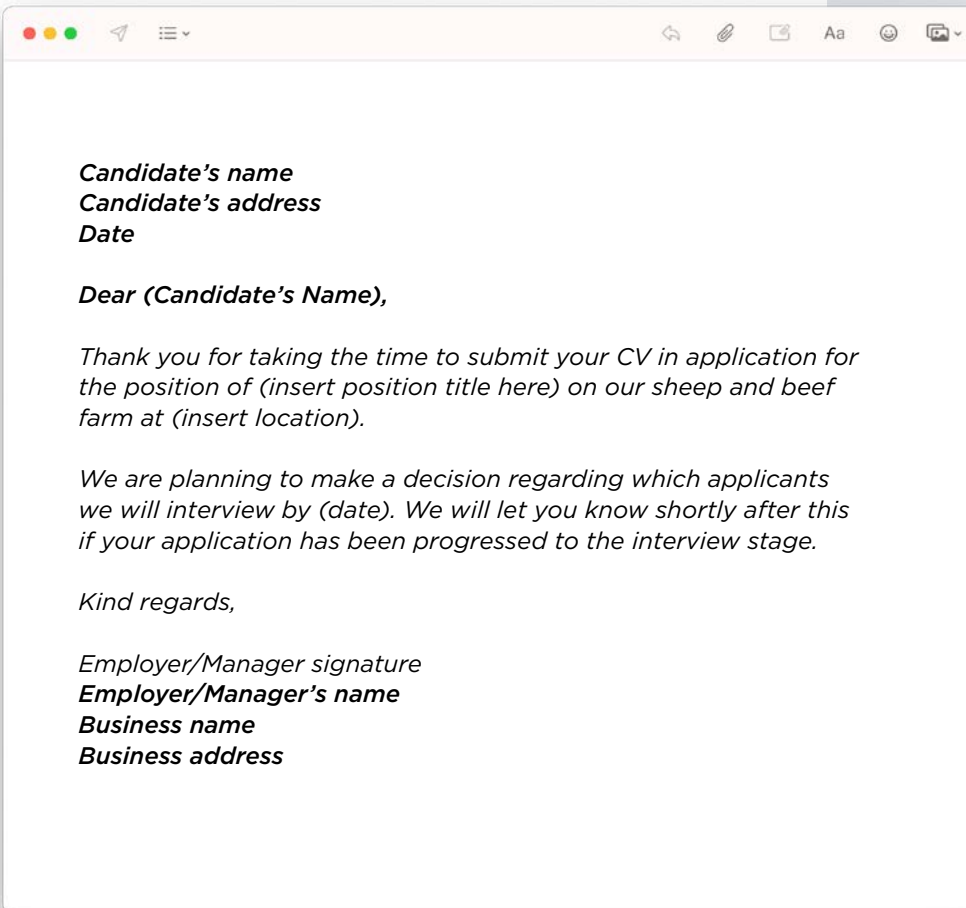
The Privacy Commissioner's website <https://www.privacy.org.nz> has more detailed information about privacy.

Applying over the phone

In some circumstances it is appropriate to open the process up to phone applications. Providing a phone number is the quickest way for a potential applicant to get in touch with you and it provides the opportunity for you to complete an initial screening call. Due to the barrier of location or access to IT / computer resources some applicants may miss out on applying if they are unable to make contact by phone. It is important to understand that phone applications will require a higher level of organisation on behalf of the employer. A template with phone screening questions (reflecting the application form) should be kept handy to the phone so all applicants can be asked the same questions. To avoid any potential issues, it may be appropriate during the first contact to explain the process and schedule a follow-up call with them when both parties are ready to run through a more structured process. An answerphone may also help to avoid this problem.

A formal record of application is most desirable and should ideally include work history and referees to ensure consistent information is supplied by each applicant for comparison.

Example - Acknowledging Receipt of CV



Confidentiality of applications

Throughout the recruitment process you need to make sure you protect the confidentiality and privacy of applicants. Disclosing an applicant's details without their consent, even by accident, will breach the Privacy Act 2020; this could risk your relationship with them or even potentially see you in a legal dispute. Be aware of leaving messages or discussing the application with other parties unless you have prior approval from the applicant. It is good practice to put "confidential" on the front of any written communications, adding disclaimers at the bottom of an email will enforce this as well. Ask for the applicants preferred contact details on the application form and only use these for any communications.

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