



CHECKLIST FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICES

Below are a series of checklists to facilitate the implementation of trauma-informed human resources practices throughout the lifecycle of an employee.

Stages of Employment

Human Resources (HR) activities can be divided into 4 stages:

1. **Pre-employment:** Before the employee's start date
2. **Onboarding and orientation:** Between the employee's start date and proficiency
3. **Ongoing employment:** Between proficiency and off-boarding
4. **Off-boarding:** Transitioning an employee out of an organization

Each stage offers opportunities for employees to experience a trauma-informed culture. The following checklists offer trauma-informed considerations for each stage of employment. The information is based on the principles of trauma-informed care (TIC).

Pre-employment: Before the employee's start date

Check if Applicable

✓	PRE-EMPLOYMENT
	Job descriptions include an accurate description of skills and attributes that support a trauma-informed organization.
	Job descriptions include a preferred qualification those individuals that have knowledge of or experience with trauma-informed approaches.
	Recruitment materials clearly describe the job duties and application processes in a way that promotes trauma-informed principles.
	Timeframes for interviews and selection are clearly communicated to applicants.
	Changes in the process are clearly communicated to applicants.
	During the interview process, applicants are provided a safe environment and safe process for interviewing.
	There are opportunities for applicants to address emotional and physical safety concerns regarding the job and the environment.
	During the interview, applicants are asked specifically about their knowledge of or experience with trauma-informed approaches.
	The process and purpose of pre-employment testing and background checks are clearly communicated to applicants.
	Salaries and benefits are established and negotiated with a lens of collaboration and choice.
	Applicants not selected for employment are informed in a timely and appropriate manner.



Onboarding and Orientation: Between the employee’s start date and proficiency

✓	ONBOARDING AND ORIENTATION
	Initial expectations are clearly communicated between employee and supervisor.
	The onboarding process includes personal and agency-wide safety measures and procedures.
	Supportive measures are in place to respond to a traumatic personal or workplace event that may occur during the employee’s orientation.
	Onboarding information includes resources for staff self-care and work-life balance.
	New employees receive information about their performance in a consistent and appropriate manner.
	New employees meet and are supported by current employees in a consistent and appropriate manner.
	Opportunities are available for new employees to offer observations and/or suggestions to improve current practices, policies, and procedures.
	The department promotes collaboration and inclusion of the new employee.
	A clear and specific outline of the onboarding plan is shared with the new employee.
	There are multiple ways for new employees to learn about their job, policies, benefits, and practices that are easily accessible.

Ongoing Employment: Between proficiency and off-boarding

✓	ONGOING EMPLOYMENT
	Processes are in place to build and support a diverse and inclusive work environment.
	Staff have voice and choice in performing their work.
	TIC Principles are incorporated into the performance management system for issues such as motivation and behavioral correction.
	TIC Principles are incorporated into the internal investigation process.
	Employees are able to provide feedback to the organization with anonymity and without fear of retribution for their comments.
	Employees are informed of career opportunities in a timely and appropriate manner.
	The organization prioritizes appreciation and recognition of staff. Measuring and celebrating success is consistent and common.
	There are structures in place to assess and minimize vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue in the workplace.
	The organization routinely assesses safety and health risk and makes improvements based on the findings.
	The organization encourages and supports staff work-life balance and self-care.
	The organization uses its benefits programs to meet the diverse needs of the employees and their families.



✓	ONGOING EMPLOYMENT
	Employees are offered choices among the benefits offerings.
	Organizational decision-making processes are transparent and clearly communicated. When possible, staff are involved.
	Information is clearly and consistently communicated to employees.
	Employees are engaged in establishing goals and objectives for their position, department, and organization.
	TIC Principles are incorporated into employee learning and development processes.
	TIC Principles are incorporated into the policy development and review process.
	Employee needs are assessed and addressed when a trauma personal or work-related event occurs.
	TIC Principles are incorporated into determining schedules, rewards, and training needs for each employee.
	Policies and procedures are consistently reviewed and updated for alignment with the TIC Principles.

Off-boarding: Transitioning an employee out of an organization

✓	OFF-BOARDING
	The off-boarding process is safe and empowering.
	Employee transitions are clearly and consistently communicated with the rest of the organization in a timely manner.
	Communications include a plan for transition responsibilities to other staff.
	There is a consistent process for transferring the knowledge of the transitioning employee to their successor.
	Supports are offered to remaining employees to address the change.
	When a layoff occurs, a clear and consistent procedure is in place to support remaining employees, including addressing the loss of co-workers, shifts in job responsibilities and load, communicating goals of the organization to maintain the current staff, and validating and alleviating concerns about job security.
	The procedure for sharing off-boarding information with the transitioning employee is consistent and clearly communicated.
	Transitioning employees are ensured a safe and confidential exit interview.
	Procedures are in place to commemorate and show gratitude to the transitioning employee.
	The organization’s policy and procedure for providing references for former employees is consistent and clearly communicated.
	The transition of company and personal property is smooth, timely, and appropriate.

Adapted from “Policy Guidance for Trauma Informed Human Resources Practices” developed by the Missouri Trauma Roundtable through the Department of Mental Health in 2017