



Guidelines for Providing References

Certain safeguards should be followed when providing references on current or former employees. It is important for the supervisor to provide job related facts, not opinions.

Understand that references to non-KU employers are provided at the discretion of the supervisor/manager.*

You must provide KU employers with a comprehensive reference, addressing all job-related information.

** If an employee or former employee asks you to be a reference, you should inform the person if you are unable to provide a positive reference, and that he/she should have the prospective employer contact Human Resource Management.*

DOs:

- If a positive reference can be provided, you may respond to requests from non-KU employers. If a positive reference cannot be provided, direct reference requests from non-KU employers to HRM at 785-864-4946 or hrdept@ku.edu (and inform HRM of that referral).
- If a reference will be provided, return the phone call requesting such a reference to ensure that you are talking to a potential employer.
- Provide references only to persons with a legitimate reason to need a reference on a current or former employee.
- Be consistent in the type of reference information provided.
- Provide only factual information related to job performance that is documented in the employee's personnel file.
- Draw upon specific examples and performance evaluations to provide informative, concrete examples.

DON'Ts:

- Do not provide a poor reference or refuse to provide a reference because an employee has engaged in a protected activity; for example, filed a workers compensation claim, submitted a grievance or taken FMLA leave.
- Do not make character judgments; only make statements related to the employee's job performance that are documented.
- Do not provide any health or medical background information about an employee.
- Do not respond to questions that relate to an employee's protected class; for example, race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, familial status, etc.