



City of Port St. Lucie

How COVID-19 Led to a Better Onboarding Experience

BACKGROUND

Port St. Lucie is a city in Southern Florida with a population of around 200,000. With 1,200 employees working for the city – 15 of whom are in human resources – the city sees an average of 250 open requisitions and over 6,000 applicants per year. Like most public sector agencies, expediting the hiring and onboarding process is a high priority.

But once the pandemic hit, bringing on new hires posed challenges they hadn't experienced before. Faced with having to work remotely but still needing to hire critical positions to serve the community, the city found a helping hand in NEOGOV's complimentary trial of Onboard.

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

"It was a very manual, hands-on process. We used to meet with people in person while they filled out paperwork for 30 - 45 minutes right there in front of us. It wasn't very efficient," said Figur. In the past, getting new hires acclimated could be time consuming and tedious, even without the challenges of the pandemic.

Using NEOGOV's cloud solution, they now begin the onboarding process as soon as a hire is made. "We can assign all necessary pre-employment paperwork ahead of time so it's done before the official start date," said Figur. "We can even handle requirements like a background check, fingerprinting, a medical screening, and now a COVID-19 test all within the system."

Besides providing tracking and reminders that help HR monitor the completion of every new hire task, employees appreciate the convenience. As Tracey Skinner, HR Recruiter at Port St. Lucie explained, "it gives new employees the opportunity to review things like benefits and tax documents while they're at home where they can review them with another family member."

"When we determine a start date for an employee, we immediately begin building their unique onboarding checklists, which itemizes every task they need to complete along with deadlines," said Figur. "Whether they're exempt or non-exempt

employees, full-time, part-time, the system is so customizable that we can adapt it based on whatever the needs of the position or department are, which is great for us."

In addition to facilitating the completion of housekeeping tasks before day one, employees gain access to a Port St. Lucie self-service portal branded with the organization's logo, history, and background on the city. Within the portal, there are places to host orientation materials, a welcome message or video, department-specific information, team photos, and more.

KEEPING UP THE PACE

The pandemic has not slowed down the need for recruiting or the ability to onboard new hires at Port St. Lucie, and thanks to the ease of executing remote processes using Onboard, they've been able to keep up with the pace. "We're busier now than we've been in a long time," said Figur. "We've got over 30 jobs posted right now and we're working with close to 20 new hires as we speak."

Though COVID-19 came with innumerable challenges for Port St. Lucie and countless other government agencies, being able to streamline the onboarding process using NEOGOV was one positive to come out of it. Both Skinner and Figur agree that it helps them do their jobs not only more quickly, but frees up time to focus on more important tasks – progress they intend to maintain long after the pandemic ends. "We fell in love with Onboard and now we can't live without it," added Figur. "There's no turning back now!"

"The automated workflows make our lives easier," said Skinner. "When you're working so many different hires and being pulled in multiple different directions, it's great to have a centralized platform to manage everything. Plus, the vast majority of employees really like using Onboard," Skinner said.

"The time savings we've calculated by automating the onboarding process has made it possible for us to focus on our primary goal – getting jobs posted and filled," concluded Skinner.

NEOGOVS takes the complexity out of onboarding new hires whether they're working remotely or in the office because of its ease of use and the ability to create a customized experience."

ALYSSA FIGUR, HR Generalist

Port St. Lucie, FL