

## Some Polk Employers Having a Hard Time Finding Employees

By Maya Lora | March 5, 2021

Many Polk County employers are finding it hard to fill open positions.

Lindsey McCain, the business development manager at staffing and recruiting company Spherion Staffing, said they're trying to fill 300 jobs across Polk County.

The available positions are generally in manufacturing and data entry, but McCain said there are entry-level positions open to those just starting out in the job market.

"We have a lot of clients open to somebody who graduated high school six months ago and has worked at Publix as a bagger," McCain said.

McCain said that if someone is looking for a job, all they have to do is reach out to Spherion Staffing and apply, as there are plenty of positions available. In fact, she said it used to take her 100 calls to fill 20 open positions. But now it takes her about 200. And jobs that used to be completely filled in 48 hours can remain open for an entire week.

"We're kind of in a position where as actively as we're filling [job orders], we are getting new orders every day, new clients every day," McCain said. "It's a tough market out there."

Why is the market tight? The coronavirus, mostly. McCain said it's harder to find enough qualified applicants to fill open positions. And when she thinks she lands someone, potential hires may not show up to scheduled interviews. McCain said part of the problem is some people can make more money remaining on unemployment benefits.

"Companies generally here in Polk County are definitely understanding and are coming back with more competitive pay rates," McCain said.

If you're looking for a job, McCain said Spherion regularly fills jobs that pay between \$12 and \$18 an hour, in addition to some senior-level leadership positions.

If manufacturing isn't your speed, Firehouse Subs will hold a one-day hiring event to fill 100 open positions on March 16. On that day, from 2 to 4 p.m., 26 Firehouse Subs locations will do on-site interviews to fill "crew member, shift leader and management roles."

The event will take place at participating Firehouse Subs restaurants rather than in one central location. Participating cities include Bartow, Lakeland, Plant City and Winter Haven.