

East Coast casino to put 'term limits' on employees

By Emma Jacobs, NPR

A new casino set to open in Atlantic City, N.J., has announced it will set term limits for its front-line staff. When employees' terms run out, they'll have to go through the hiring process again. The casino says the policy will keep its service fresh. Others say the company is taking advantage of a tough job market.

From bellhops to dealers, employees of the new casino – called Revel – will be hired for terms from four to six years. After that, they have to reapply for their jobs and compete against other candidates.

Revel declined to make anyone available for an interview. In a written statement, the company asserts that its employment policy will help it “attract the most highly professional people who are inspired by a highly competitive work environment.”

But it's an unusual way to go. Many who work in employment law or advocacy say they've never heard of anything like this before.

“What they've done here is set up a system that puts their good performers through a gauntlet of having to compete with people who have no record of performance,” says Alice Ballard, a prominent employment attorney who works out of Philadelphia.

Ballard says anyone can be fired from his or her job. But she thinks the casino's policy is more problematic.

“Why would you take your good performers and put them through that competitive process,” she asks, “if you aren't trying to

get rid of a good performer for some other reason?"

Ballard thinks that "other reason" is probably age. To her, this reapplication process looks like a low-profile way for the casino to regularly weed out older employees.

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