

PRE-EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND CHECK GUIDELINES

The processes set forth in this document apply to background checks conducted through Human Resource Service (HRS).

HRS recommends hiring departments conduct pre-employment background checks on final applicant(s) to verify employment history, educational credentials, criminal history, and other information related to employment ***prior*** to extending an offer of employment.

A conviction/criminal history record does not necessarily disqualify an individual from employment. The fact of arrest alone does not disqualify an individual from employment.

State Law Requirements

The Washington State Child and Adult Abuse Information Law (RCW 43.43.830-.845) requires employers ask applicants to disclose specific information about any convictions for crimes against persons, crimes relating to financial exploitation, and findings in related actions and proceedings. This conviction information must be disclosed before an applicant can be considered for employment in any position which may involve unsupervised access to children, developmentally disabled persons, or vulnerable adults as defined by the law.

House Bill 2208 requires a criminal history record check through the Washington state patrol criminal identification system and the federal bureau of investigation for all state employees or contractors who have access to Federal Tax Information.

PROCESS

HRS is available to identify positions that may require pre-employment background checks and to guide hiring departments through the process. The appropriate recruitment processes for the employee type must be followed.

When the hiring department uses the online background check process offered by HRS (as set forth in this document and BPPM 60.16), the following applies:

1. Prior to posting a job vacancy, consult with HRS to review the position description and assigned duties which may require a background check. Examples include:
 - Access to or receipt of university funds.
 - Access to sensitive equipment, inventory, disposable university property or other items of value
 - Access to master keys
 - Access to research data.
 - Access to confidential personnel, student data, or business information.

NOTE: *All positions with unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults or which have access to federal tax information require a background. Contact HRS for more information.*

2. HRS will provide guidance to the hiring manager to determine which components of the background check are appropriate for the position based upon assigned job duties.

3. Recruitment information, advertisements and postings for the position which will require a background check will contain the following statement: *"This position has been designated by the department to require a background check"*
4. The hiring manager will notify the applicant that he or she is one of the finalists for the position and will soon be contacted by HRS to initiate the background check.
5. The hiring manager will then request a background check through HRS:
 - a. ***For Faculty/Temporary Hourly recruitments:*** via email at background.check@wsu.edu to request a background check on the final applicant(s) including:
 - i. Finalist(s) name
 - ii. Email address
 - iii. Resume/Vita – *(for Faculty positions only)*
 - iv. Position title/Position number
 - v. Background package type.
 - b. ***For Administrative Professional, Civil Service and/or Bargaining Unit recruitments:*** the hiring manager will change the status of the finalist(s) in the Online Position Description & Recruitment System (www.wsujobs.com/hr) to "Finalist – Recommend for Hire". HRS will then updated the system to "Background Check".
6. HRS will contact the applicant via email to initiate the background check. For certain positions, failure to consent to a background check shall result in removal of the applicant from consideration for the position.
7. The applicant submits his or her personal information at a secure website and signs a Disclosure and Consent form. The applicant will be provided with a summary of his or her rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA).
8. Once the applicant has submitted his or her personal information and signed the Disclosure and Consent form, the background check will be ordered. The turn-around time for the Premium package is typically 3-5 business days. (Note: if the applicant has lived in a number of states the turn-around time may add several business days to receive results.)
9. The third party consumer reporting agency will provide the background check results to HRS.
10. Upon receipt of the background check results HRS will review the information based on the criteria for the position. If there are any criminal conviction(s) or other concerns raised by the background check, HRS will consult with the hiring manager to determine whether the information would disqualify the applicant.

Hiring Determination

1. Satisfactory Background Check
 - a. HRS will notify the hiring manager that the background check was satisfactory via email.
 - b. The hiring manger may proceed with the process to make an offer of employment to the applicant.
2. Unsatisfactory Background Check
 - a. HRS will notify the hiring manger that the background check was unsatisfactory.

- b. Before taking any adverse action based on the background check, HRS will provide to the applicant a pre-adverse action notification which includes the following:
 - i. A copy of the Consumer Report.
 - ii. The name, address, and telephone number of the consumer reporting agency providing the background check.
 - iii. A description of the applicant's rights under FCRA.
 - iv. A reasonable opportunity to respond to any information in the report that is disputed by the applicant.
- c. HRS will work with the hiring manager to determine if the information provided within the consumer report along with any information provided by the applicant in response to the pre-adverse action notification would disqualify the applicant from consideration.
 - i. If the applicant is disqualified based on the pre-adverse action process HRS will notify the applicant in writing regarding the decision to take adverse action based on the background check.
 - ii. If the applicant is not disqualified based on the pre-adverse action process the hiring manager may proceed with the process to make an offer of employment to the applicant.

Note: The job offer cannot be extended and the applicant may not begin work until the pre-employment background check is completed. Should conditions make an earlier contingent offer necessary, the hiring authority must make clear (preferably in writing) that the offer is contingent upon satisfactory results from the background check. Contact HRS for assistance.

REVIEW OF DECISION

If the applicant disagrees with the background check decision, he or she may request a review by contacting HRS and providing written documentation disputing the findings.

REGIONAL CAMPUSES

The HRS department for each regional campus will be responsible for the administration of the Pre-employment Background Check program for vacancies on their respective campuses.

RESOURCES

Questions regarding the Pre-employment Background Check program should be directed to HRS.

Human Resource Services Contact Information

- Pullman: (509)335-4521
- Spokane: (509)358-7663
- Tri-Cities: (509)372-7302
- Vancouver: (360)546-9587

Business Policies and Procedures Manual

- [Background Checks 60.16](#)
- [Pre-employment Inquiry Guidelines 60.08](#)
- [Recruitment and Selection of Faculty Personnel 60.11](#)
- [Recruitment and Selection of Administrative Professional Personnel 60.17](#)
- [Recruitment and Selection for Classified Positions 60.18](#)
- [Temporary Employment Processing 60.27](#)