

Pre-Employment Screening and Background Checks Overview

Effective: 8/1/2005 (Revised 9/24/2013)

Applies to: Health Sciences Center
OU – Tulsa

Responsible Office: HSC: Human Resources Employment
OU – Tulsa: Human Resources

Background

The University of Oklahoma strives to provide the safest possible environment for students, visitors, faculty, and staff, and to protect its information and physical resources. Background checks serve an important role in the selection process and supports the University's effort to maintain a safe environment and protect its assets. The University conducts pre-employment screening and criminal background checks on final candidates for faculty and staff positions as well as temporary positions. All external faculty, staff, student assistant and temporary positions are included.

Standard Pre-Employment Screening

University Departments are responsible for ensuring that a standard pre-employment background check has been completed on all candidates for HSC and Tulsa positions prior to beginning employment. This includes verification of academic credentials, relevant licenses or certifications, work history and job performance.

- Current employees transferring to, or are promoted to a new position or role will be required to have a background check conducted if one was not completed when they were originally hired or transferred to their current position. The result of the previously performed background checks will be considered in any pending employment decision.
- Examples of new positions or roles that require background checks include:
 - employees transferring to a healthcare related position; a Medicare Fraud/Excluded Parties database search conducted prior to transfer/promotion;
 - individuals who will be handling cash or managing cash transactions;
 - individuals who will have unrestricted access to master keys;
 - positions with unrestricted access to minors;
 - all Financial Services and Information Technology positions;
 - employees transferring to any position which requires a credit report as designated by the Vice President of Administration and Finance and Human Resources; and
 - any position that exposes the University to significant liability as designated by the Vice President of Administration and Finance in consultation with Human Resources.
- Background checks can be required for other current employees at the discretion of the Vice President of Administration and Finance in consultation with Human Resources.
- Foreign national finalists for any position will be subject to pre-employment background checks that include criminal background checks as noted:
 - A criminal background check covering all time in the United States.
 - A criminal history check in the individuals prior countries of residence only if the individual's visa and/or authorization to work in the United States was issued before implementation of the Patriot Act on October 24, 2001. The University will not require that a criminal background check be conducted in the individual's prior countries of residence if the visa or authorization work was issued or renewed under the provisions of the Patriot Act.

Pre-Employment Background Check Requirements

Standard Background Check: A standard background check is required in non-healthcare faculty and staff position. Positions in the following colleges/departments will require the standard check:

- Provost's Office
- Administration & Finance
- Student Affairs
- Library
- Research Administration
- Information Technology
- Graduate College

Standard Background Check with Credit Report: A standard background check to include a credit report is required in all non-healthcare faculty and staff positions for those individuals who will occupy a position that may expose the University to significant liability as designated by the Vice President of Administration and Finance in consultation with the Human Resources.

Healthcare Background Check: A healthcare background check is required in healthcare faculty and staff position. Healthcare background checks will be required for positions in the following colleges/departments:

- College of Medicine
- College of Pharmacy
- College of Dentistry
- College of Allied Health
- College of Public Health
- College of Nursing

Healthcare Background Check with Credit Report: A healthcare background check to include a credit report is required in healthcare faculty and staff positions for those individuals who will occupy a position that may expose the University to significant liability as designated by the Vice President of Administration and Finance in consult with the Human Resources.

Criminal background checks will be for convictions within all states (and, if necessary, countries) in which the prospective candidate has lived and worked for the last seven years and will include a review of outstanding felony warrants.

Background Check Information

Time Constraints: The average turnaround time for receiving report information from Truescreen is three (3) to four (4) days.

Job Offers: Departments shall only extend offers of employment to the finalist contingent upon a satisfactory outcome of the required background check. All offers of employment, oral and written, shall include the following statement: "This offer is contingent on the University's verification of credentials and other information required by state law and OU policies, including the completion of a criminal history check." Human Resources will coordinate the collection and review of background check information and provide a recommendation regarding the employment status of the final candidate.

Reference Checks: Departments are strongly encouraged to conduct reference checks since relevant job performance questions are not easily standardized and hiring authorities are in the best position to evaluate the reference information collected. Departmental procedures for requesting criminal background checks are available online at: <http://hr.ou.edu/managers/Selection.asp>

Evaluating Criminal Background and Credit Report Information: Evidence of criminal convictions, negative credit reports or other adverse information will not automatically disqualify candidates from consideration. When considering whether to employ an individual with a criminal history or negative credit report, Human Resources will assess the relevance of a criminal conviction and credit report. Considerations include job duties, the date of the most recent offense, the nature of the offense and the accuracy of the information provided on the employment application.

Notification Requirements: When using an outside vendor, the University is required, under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), to obtain the applicant's consent before the background check is conducted and to notify the applicant when adverse action (such as not hiring a candidate) is being considered and to notify the candidate again when the adverse action is actually taken.

Department of Motor Vehicle Verifications: A report must be obtained from the Department of Motor Vehicles when an occupation or position requires that an employee regularly operate a motor vehicle as part of his or her job duties. The hiring authority shall submit the request to HR. HR will verify the appropriate license, review the motor vehicle record, and contact the hiring department directly.

Drug Testing: A limited number of University positions (i.e. law enforcement and shuttle/van driver) require a drug test. Unless authorized by Human Resources, hiring authorities may not conduct drug testing on new or current employees.

Contact the Human Resources Employment Office for information regarding drug testing or Department of Motor Vehicle Verifications.

Compliance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act: The Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) is a federal law that regulates the activities of credit reporting bureaus. The law governs the use of third party credit reporting agencies to investigate the background of applicants for employment and imposes notice requirements for employers as well as monetary penalties for failure to comply with its provisions.

Under the FCRA, employers are required to disclose that a report may be obtained and to obtain the applicant's consent before they obtain a consumer report on a job applicant or employee. All background screening reports are classified as consumer reports, and requirements include notification and certification before and after an adverse action.

In the event that a consumer report uncovers information that may disqualify an applicant from employment consideration, the University (Human Resources) shall notify the applicant of the information and provide a minimum of five days for the applicant to refute, explain or correct the information.

Note: The FCRA only applies to background checks performed by a third party vendor. It does not apply in situations where the employer conducts in-house Standard Pre-Employment Screenings.