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**Subject: Pre-Employment Screening**

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The University of Louisiana at Lafayette recognizes that hiring a new employee is an important responsibility. The UL Lafayette Department of Human Resources understands that employing the best people and providing a safe and secure workplace, both physically and financially, is a primary function of the office. By performing a thorough pre-employment background screening on all applicants, the University is more likely to bring into the institution highly skilled individuals who will prove to be tremendous assets. For these reasons and in order to create and sustain a safe environment for all members of the University community, the Department of Human Resources will conduct criminal history checks as part of the hiring process.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide procedures and guidelines for the implementation of background investigation checks, to include criminal history, for all classified and unclassified staff and faculty hired by the University.

**POLICY**

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette will conduct background investigation checks, to include criminal history, through a third party consumer reporting agency (CRA) on final applicants for all classified staff, unclassified staff, faculty, and temporary positions.

**REQUIRED SERVICES**

- **Classified Positions:** A criminal records search is required on all classified positions. HR will conduct the background check on the candidate selected but departments should continue to conduct their own reference checks. The background check must be complete before HR will make the job offer. The background check will include a Social Security Number Search, a Parish/County Criminal History Record Search (felony and misdemeanors), and a National Crime Index Search.
- **Unclassified Positions:** A criminal records search is required on all faculty, other academic, and professional positions (including gratis positions). HR will conduct the background check on the candidate selected but departments should continue to conduct their own reference checks. The background check must be complete prior to the date of employment. The background check will include a Social Security Number Search, a Parish/County Criminal History Record Search (felony and misdemeanors), and a National Crime Index Search.

- Temporary Positions: A criminal records search is required on all temporary positions including contingents. A temporary employee may not begin work prior to the completion of the background check.

NOTE: Any additional background check beyond the required services (such as a consumer credit report) is at the department's discretion. Any department having a fiduciary responsibility may request a consumer credit report of a finalist applicant who may routinely handle cash. If additional services are being requested, do so on the "Background Screening Notification and Authorization Form" in the Notes section.

## **PROCEDURES**

In order for the pre-employment screening process to achieve the desired results, departments must follow the procedures listed below:

1. For classified employees, including temporary employees, the department head will submit a letter to the Director of HR requesting to hire the final applicant.

For unclassified employees, including temporary employees, the hiring department must provide the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development with the transcript for the terminal degree or verification from the graduate school for all faculty appointments as part of the appointment paperwork. A transcript or copy of the diploma must be received for other academic and professional staff.

2. The hiring department should have the final applicant complete and sign the "Background Screening Notification and Authorization Form" and provide the applicant with the "A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act" which is attached to the form. This form is available on the HR website (<http://personnel.louisiana.edu>).

The department should forward the appropriate letter (see #1) and the "Background Screening Notification and Authorization Form" to the Department of Human Resources. A background check will then be initiated. The investigation takes three to five working days on average from receipt of the completed form. The form may be delivered to Martin Hall Room 170, faxed to (337) 482-1452 or mailed to P.O. Box 40196, Lafayette, Louisiana 70504. Any final applicant who refuses to provide a signed authorization form will be ineligible for consideration for the advertised position sought.

3. For classified employees, if the results are favorable, HR will make the job offer.

For unclassified and temporary employees, an offer of employment may be made contingent on a satisfactory background check and this contingency should be included within the offer letter. If the results are favorable, the hiring department will be notified of the results and a job offer may be made.

The background investigation should be complete before the date of employment. There may be instances in which an employee may begin work prior to the completion of the background investigation. This work status will be contingent upon the successful completion of the background investigation.

4. When considering whether to employ an individual with an unfavorable background check the following factors will be assessed during the background investigation review:
  - the relevance of a criminal conviction to the posted job duties;
  - the date of the most recent offense;
  - the nature and number of convictions;
  - the relative threat to the security of UL Lafayette or its employees and students; and
  - the accuracy of the information the individual provided on the employment application and/or in the recruitment process.

If an applicant has an unfavorable result, HR will contact the respective Vice President for consultation. An applicant who has an unfavorable result will be contacted and given a maximum of ten days to refute, explain, or correct the information. If there is no change in status within ten days, the finalist will be withdrawn from the candidate list.

Based on the results of the background check, the University may refuse to hire a finalist, may withdraw a conditional offer of employment to a finalist, or may terminate a current employee who has made false representation of material facts or omitted factual information in the employment process. If the finalist is a current employee, his or her suitability for continued employment will be evaluated. HR will work with the third party consumer reporting agency (CRA) to conduct a review of the background results for the applicant and to evaluate the value of the current information against the total past employment record and future employment potential.

5. Only University designated employees may initiate a criminal background check or receive results. Results of all background checks will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed except to the extent necessary to administer and enforce this policy.

## **SERVICES**

- Social Security Verification- Verifies the applicant's social security number. It is the first search conducted in the screening process. This search uses the social security number to determine all names and addresses that have been used by a given social security number for the past seven years. The address search is a product of a database search which is comprised of over 1200 reporting sources. The search is conducted with a name and social security number.
- Parish/County Criminal History Record Search- A criminal background check is one of the most critical facets of the background screening process. This check is for felony and misdemeanors for each parish/county checked. The CRA provides a search of the court

repository for its county court records and does not rely upon third party electronic databases. All results are the product of a search of an onsite, in person search or via direct, electronic access.

- National Crime Index Search- A check across our country and provides access nationally to over 300 reporting sources including US and internal security sources, 50 state sex offender registries, departments of correction, court records and more.
- Consumer Credit Report- A record check providing information on an applicant such as: highest credit extended, past due amount, credit limit, average monthly payment information, balance, and percentage of available credit.
- Department of Motor Vehicles Search- A record check of motor vehicle violations, including verification of license number, state of issuance, date, location, and description of violations.
- International Criminal History Search – The type and scope of information available in each country vary greatly due to many unique factors that exist abroad.