

Volume E1: Employment/ Hiring	E1.99.3 Background Checks Effective Date: 09/24/2014 Last Revised: 2/11/2020 Date of Next Review: 2/01/2025	Responsible Office: Office of Human Resources
Chapter 99: General		Responsible Officer: Director of Human Resources, Employee and Labor Relations

POLICY STATEMENT

Northeastern Illinois University (the "University") is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for its students, employees and visitors. Therefore, the University has adopted a policy on background checks for employees, and employment candidates to promote a safe work environment and to protect the assets of the University.

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to outline the University's various mechanisms for conducting background checks to verify education credentials, work history, criminal history, and other information necessary when making employment decisions.

WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

All employment candidates and special appointments. Exceptions may include work study students, student aides, and temporary/extra help candidates depending on their responsibilities.

DEFINITIONS

Credit History Check: The review of detailed credit information and history of select candidates for financial-related and security-sensitive positions.

Criminal History Search: The review of any and all records containing information collected and stored in criminal record repositories.

Educational Verification: Process of determining whether the selected applicant possesses all the educational credentials listed on the application materials or otherwise cited by the applicant.

Employment Candidate: Any person applying for an open position, which can include either external candidates or current employees. For the sake of this policy, current employees applying for open positions and external candidates will be treated as the same.

Employment Verification: The process of verifying the past work history of employment candidates.

Motor Vehicle Record (MVR): The review of driving records of those selected candidates who will be driving University vehicles.

Need to Know: Principle that classified information will only be given to employees when necessary for the conduct of their official duties.

Sex Offender Registry: Identifies persons who have been convicted of certain sex offenses and/or crimes against children and registered as a Sex Offender.



Special Appointments: Any appointment by the University for an individual to work or serve within an academic or non-academic department who is not otherwise employed by the University or serving in a consultant capacity. This includes Administrative Affiliates and Courtesy Appointments.

Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS): The state's comprehensive, automated case management tool and official case record of child abuse and neglect information.

REGULATIONS

- [Fair Credit Reporting Act \(FCRA\) 15 USC 1681 \(1992\)](#)
- [Child Care Act of 1969 225 ILCS 10/](#)
- [Illinois Credit Privacy Act 096-1426](#)
- [Illinois School Code 105 ILCS 5/10-21.9 for Public Schools](#)
- [Illinois Employee Credit Privacy Act 820 ILCS 70/](#)
- [Title 89 Illinois Administrative Code 385, Background Checks](#)
- [11 U.S. Code 525 Protection Against Discriminatory Treatment](#)

All candidates for employment will be informed that the University conducts background checks as a condition of employment. An offer of employment is contingent upon verifying the accuracy of the information provided by the candidate and the results of the background check. No candidate may start employment at NEIU until the Office of Human Resources has notified the Department that the applicant has satisfactorily completed the background check.

Pre-employment criminal background investigations will also be required for the reappointment of faculty, administrative and professional, and civil service employees following a break in service of more than twelve (12) consecutive months.

The University reserves the right to periodically conduct Criminal History and Sex Offender Registry checks on current employees.

PROCEDURES

Standard Checks:

- During the screening process for faculty and academic administrator positions, Academic Affairs will inform the Office of Human Resources of the final candidate (three candidates will be identified for Tenure Track positions.). Candidates will complete a Disclosure and Authorization Form (Appendix A). The Office of Human Resources will conduct a Criminal History Search and a Sex Offender Registry check. Academic Affairs will conduct employment and education verification checks on faculty candidates as required by the position.
- For Non-Faculty and non-academic administrator positions, upon a conditional offer of employment, candidates will be provided a Disclosure and Authorization Form (Appendix A). The Office of Human Resources will conduct a Criminal History Search and a Sex Offender Registry check on candidates except in cases where the respective department conducts the checks in conjunction with a more extensive review as noted in the next section. Employment candidates for positions requiring the driving of University vehicles will be subject to Motor Vehicle Record checks. All other background checks will be conducted as follows:
 - Civil Service Candidates: The Office of Human Resources will conduct employment verification and education verification as required by the position. Professional reference checks will be conducted by the hiring agent.
 - Administrative and Professional Candidates: The Office of Human Resources will conduct education verification on the final candidates as required by the position. Academic Affairs will conduct employment and education verification on academic administrator positions. Screening Committees will conduct professional reference checks.



- For Special Appointments, upon approval of the appointment, the individuals will be provided a Disclosure and Authorization Form (Appendix A). The Office of Human Resources will conduct a Criminal History Search and Sex Offender Registry check on all appointed individuals except in cases where the nominating department conducts the checks in conjunction with a more extensive review as noted in the next section.

Once the Authorization and Consent for Release of Information form has been completed, the process of background checks will begin. Results may take up to ten business days.

Extensive Checks:

In addition to the Standard Checks, candidates for employment in the following positions will be subject to more extensive review.

- **Center for College Access and Success:** The Center for College Access and Success will conduct background checks on employment candidates who may work with children in early childhood, elementary, secondary, bilingual, or physical or special education. These checks must comply with the Illinois School Code 105 ILCS 5/10-21.9.
- **Instructors or Adjunct Faculty:** The Office of Human Resources will conduct background checks on any employment candidates who will be in schools, particularly to supervise Northeastern students for a program that requires school-based experiences.
- **Child Care Center:** The Child Care Center will conduct background checks on all candidates including checks of the Sex Offender Registry, Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System, and a fingerprint check with the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- **Financial-Related and Security-Sensitive Positions:** The Office of Human Resources will conduct credit history checks on certain employment candidates in positions where handling money, access to confidential information, or designated budget authority is a bona fide occupational requirement. The Office of Human Resources will determine which positions are subject to the checks based upon the criteria allowed per the Illinois Credit Privacy Act 096-1426. Candidates subject to the credit history check will be issued a copy of the Act.
- **University Police:** The University Police Department will conduct background checks of all University Police candidates that include: a Personal History Statement, Law Enforcement Agency Data System (LEADS), Secretary of State, fingerprint with the Illinois State Police and Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Defense (if prior military), drug screen, medical clearance, home visit, personal reference, and neighborhood visit. Once the required checks are completed, University Police will notify the Office of Human Resources to conduct a Credit History Check.

The respective departments will provide the Office of Human Resources the results of the extended checks within two weeks of receipt.

Results of Background Check

The Office of Human Resources will review the results of the Criminal History Search and Sex Offender Registry checks for all positions before an official offer of employment is extended.

Results from a Background Check will be considered in the following manner:

- The existence of a conviction does not automatically disqualify an individual from eligibility for employment. A committee comprised of the Director of Human Resources, Employee and Labor Relations; and the Director of Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Ethics Compliance, or designees, shall make a determination as to whether or not the background check results disqualify the candidate for the position.



Relevant considerations shall include, but not be limited to, the following factors:

- Number of offenses or misconduct and the nature and circumstances of each;
 - Length of time between the offense or misconduct and the application for employment;
 - Other employment history;
 - Evidence of applicant's rehabilitation efforts;
 - Severity of the offense or misconduct; and
 - The relevance of the offense or misconduct to responsibilities of the position.
- The Committee will determine whether an individual with a felony or conviction may be employed after a review of the position and the applicant's background (Appendix B). When an applicant has a felony arrest or conviction, employment eligibility is limited to employment in positions that do not create a risk to the University Community.
 - All results of the background checks will remain confidential, be maintained by the Office of Human Resources and will be disclosed only to candidates and authorized employees who have a need to know.
 - A candidate may appeal a decision made due to the results of background checks in writing to the University's Director of Human Resources, Employee and Labor Relations for committee review. The appeal letter must be postmarked and mailed to Northeastern Illinois University, Office of Human Resources, 5500 N. St. Louis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60625 or delivered to the Bernard Office Building (BOB) within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the letter announcing the decision not to hire or to terminate employment.

Federal laws prohibit discrimination against an applicant or employee as a result of bankruptcy.

HISTORY

02/11/2020 – Revised; updated employment application form
04/20/18 – Revised; updated Authorization for Background Check Form
12/01/16 – Revised; updated Policy Statement and Purpose and added language to include background checks on Special Appointments
05/15/15 – Revised; added language regarding reappointing employees under procedures
Formerly Administrative Memorandum No. 70 – Criminal Background Investigation, effective dated 03/01/1995
Formerly Administrative Memorandum No. 22 – Prior Criminal Record of Employment Applicants, effective dated 03/01/1995

APPENDIX

- A. Authorization for Background Check Form (found on NEIUport in the Employment Channel on the Employee tab)
- B. Employment Application: Civil Service and Administrative and Professionals

RELATED POLICIES AND OTHER INFORMATIONAL MATERIAL

Refer to the hiring department for copies of the related policies and/or procedures.

Center for College Access and Success

- A. Center for College Access and Success Procedures for Fingerprinting
- B. Center for College Access and Success Background Checks for New Hires

Child Care Center

- C. Employment Application: State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
- D. Child Care Certification of Employment and Authorization for Background Check
- E. Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Authorization for Background Check



- F. Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Request for Transfer of Background Clearance Information

University Police

- G. Personal History Statement – Peace Officer

- H. Northeastern Illinois University Police Department Authorization for Release of Personal Information

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please direct questions or concerns about this policy to:

Contact	Phone	E-Mail
Director of Human Resources, Employee and Labor Relations	(773) 442-5200	Human-Resouces@neiu.edu

DISCLAIMER

The University reserves the right to modify or amend sections of this policy at any time at its sole discretion. This policy remains in effect until such time as the Responsible Officer calls for review. Requests for exception to any portion of this policy, but not to the policy statement, must be presented in writing to the Responsible Officer.



APPENDIX A - DISCLOSURE AND AUTHORIZATION FORM

**NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
 DISCLOSURE AND AUTHORIZATION FORM
 Disclosure Regarding Background Investigation**

Northeastern Illinois University (the University) may request background information about you in connection with your application for employment. This background information may be obtained in the form of consumer reports and/or investigative consumer reports (commonly known as "background reports"). These background reports will be obtained after receipt of your authorization.

HireRight, Inc. will prepare or assemble the background reports for NEIU. HireRight, Inc. is located and can be contacted by mail at 5151 California, Irvine, CA 92617, and HireRight can be contacted by phone at (800) 400-2761.

The types of background information that may be obtained include: social security number verifications; address history; criminal records and history; public court records; driving records; accident history; worker's compensation claims; bankruptcy filings; educational history verifications (e.g., dates of attendance, degrees obtained); employment history verifications (e.g., dates of employment, salary information, reasons for termination, etc.); personal and professional references checks; professional licensing and certification checks; and drug/alcohol history in violation of law and/or company policy. This information may be obtained from private and public record sources, government agencies and courthouses; educational institutions; former employers; and other information sources.

If the University should obtain information bearing on your credit worthiness, credit standing or credit capacity for reasons other than as required by law, then NEIU will only use such credit information to evaluate whether you would present an unacceptable risk of theft or other dishonest behavior in the job for which you are being evaluated.

If you are a California, Maine, Massachusetts, New York or Washington applicant, or if you require more information about the nature and scope of any investigative consumer reports contact NEIU. A summary of your rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act or specific state protections will be provided upon request.

Authorization of Background Investigation

I have read and understand this Disclosure and Authorization form. By my signature I consent to preparation of background reports by HireRight, Inc., and to the release of such background reports to NEIU for the purpose of assisting NEIU in making a determination as to my eligibility for employment. The University will hold the background reports in a confidential manner.

I understand that information contained in my employment application, or otherwise disclosed by me before my employment, if any, may be used for the purpose of obtaining and evaluating background reports on me. I also understand that nothing herein shall be construed as an offer of employment.

I hereby authorize law enforcement agencies, learning institutions (including public and private schools and universities), information service bureaus, credit bureaus, record/data repositories, courts (federal, state and local), motor vehicle records agencies, my past or present employers, the military, and other individuals and sources to furnish any and all information on me that is requested by the consumer reporting agency.

By my signature below, I also certify the information I provided in my application to the University and on this form is true, accurate and complete. Discovery of falsification of employment application is grounds for immediate termination. I agree that this form in original, faxed, photocopied or electronic (including electronically signed) form, will be valid for any background reports that may be requested by or on behalf of the University. **PLEASE PRINT RESPONSES BELOW**

Referring Hiring Agent: _____ Department: _____

Position Applied for: _____

Print (applicant) Last Name: _____ First: _____ Middle: _____

Social Security Number: _____ Date of Birth: _____

E-mail address: _____

Home Phone Number: _____ Cell Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

City, State and Zip code: _____

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____



APPENDIX B – EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION: CIVIL SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROFESSIONALS



Employment Application

Revised 9/30/2019

Applicant Information			
Last Name:	First:	M.I.:	Date:
Street Address:		Apartment/Unit No.:	
City:	State:	Zip:	
Phone: ()	Email Address:		
Date Available:		Social Security No. XXX-XX-	
Position Applied for:		<input type="checkbox"/> Full Time <input type="checkbox"/> Part Time <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary	
Are you a citizen of the United States? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If no, are you authorized to work in the U.S.? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Previously employed by Northeastern Illinois University? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, when?			
Have you ever been convicted of a felony? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, explain:			
Education			
1	High School:	Did you graduate? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Address:	Degree:	
2	College:	Did you graduate? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Address:	Degree:	
3	College:	Did you graduate? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Address:	Degree:	
4	Other:	Did you graduate? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Address:	Degree:	
Military Service			
Veteran: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>If yes, please include copy of DD214</i>			
Branch:		Type of Discharge:	From: To:



Employment History (Please list most recent experience and use MM [month] and YY [year] format for ALL employment dates.)	
1	Company:
	Phone:
Address:	Supervisor:
Job Title:	<input type="checkbox"/> Full Time <input type="checkbox"/> Part Time
Responsibilities:	
From (MM/YY):	To (MM/YY): Reason for Leaving:
May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2	Company:
	Phone:
Address:	Supervisor:
Job Title:	<input type="checkbox"/> Full Time <input type="checkbox"/> Part Time
Responsibilities:	
From (MM/YY):	To (MM/YY): Reason for Leaving:
May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3	Company:
	Phone:
Address:	Supervisor:
Job Title:	<input type="checkbox"/> Full Time <input type="checkbox"/> Part Time
Responsibilities:	
From (MM/YY):	To (MM/YY): Reason for Leaving:
May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
4	Company:
	Phone:
Address:	Supervisor:
Job Title:	<input type="checkbox"/> Full Time <input type="checkbox"/> Part Time
Responsibilities:	
From (MM/YY):	To (MM/YY): Reason for Leaving:
May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	



References <small>(Please list three professional references.)</small>							
1	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Full Name:</td> <td>Relationship:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Company:</td> <td>Phone:</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Address:</td> </tr> </table>	Full Name:	Relationship:	Company:	Phone:	Address:	
Full Name:	Relationship:						
Company:	Phone:						
Address:							
2	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Full Name:</td> <td>Relationship:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Company:</td> <td>Phone:</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Address:</td> </tr> </table>	Full Name:	Relationship:	Company:	Phone:	Address:	
Full Name:	Relationship:						
Company:	Phone:						
Address:							
3	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Full Name:</td> <td>Relationship:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Company:</td> <td>Phone:</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Address:</td> </tr> </table>	Full Name:	Relationship:	Company:	Phone:	Address:	
Full Name:	Relationship:						
Company:	Phone:						
Address:							

How did you hear about the vacancy at NEIU? <small>(Please check all that apply.)</small> Full Name:	
<input type="checkbox"/> NEIU website?	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper? Name:
<input type="checkbox"/> Job Fair? Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> NEIU employee? Name:
<input type="checkbox"/> Radio?	<input type="checkbox"/> Other?

Disclaimer and Signature	
<p>The filing of this application and the acceptance thereof does not indicate that there are positions open, and in no way obligates Northeastern Illinois University. The information contained herein will be considered private and is, together with all attached papers, photos, etc., the property of Northeastern Illinois University.</p> <p>In making this application for employment, you give your consent to a background check. This includes authorizing Northeastern Illinois University to investigate all references and to secure additional information about you as related to this employment application, including and not limited to contacting law enforcement and consumer reporting agencies.</p> <p>I understand that any offer of employment I may have received from NEIU is contingent upon the results of this background check. _____ Initials.</p> <p>In compliance with Federal Regulations and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, 20 U.S.C. 1092 (a) and (f), Northeastern Illinois University takes this opportunity to inform you that its Safety and Security Information report is available on the University's webpage at http://www.neiu.edu/clery_report.html. Any individual who wishes a paper copy of the Safety and Security Information report may obtain one upon request from the Department of University Police.</p> <p>I understand that applications must be fully, accurately, and honestly completed. Any misrepresentation or omission of facts called for in the application or other university records will be cause for rejection of the application, or will be sufficient grounds for termination of employment at any time thereafter. I certify that my submissions are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.</p> <p>The undersigned hereby certifies that I am not in default, for a period of six months or more for the repayment of \$600 or more of any educational loan guaranteed by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission or made by an Illinois institution of higher education or any other loan made public funds for the purpose of financing my attendance at an institution of higher education.</p> <p>If this application leads to employment, I also understand that false or misleading information submitted by me or presented by me in any submitted documentation or during an interview process may also be sufficient grounds for termination of employment at any time thereafter.</p> <p>Signature _____ Date _____</p>	