

# WVU BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY FAQs

## **Q: Why is WVU implementing background checks for faculty?**

**A:** WVU is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for the University community in support of its overall mission, by requiring the use of background checks in the hiring process for all employees. Previously, background checks only were required for staff positions at the University and positions covered by [Board of Governors Rule 1.7 – Rule on Child Protection](#). WVU previously was the only Big 12 university that did not require background checks of all employees.

## **Q: Who must complete a background check?**

**A:** A background check is required for:

- All final candidates for positions that are full-time or part-time,
- former employees with more than a one-year break in service, and
- employees whose required duties and responsibilities materially change.

## **Q: Do new employees who are supported by a grant need to complete the background check?**

**A:** Yes. Background checks are required of all final candidates for positions that are full-time or part-time, including graduate assistants, regardless of funding source. This includes employees who are supported by a grant.

## **Q: When does the background check take place?**

**A:** The background check takes place after a verbal offer is made and prior to employment.

## **Q: Are additional background checks required after the initial background check is completed on the new employee?**

**A:** In most cases, only those employees who have a break in employment of more than twelve (12) months will need an additional background check when they are rehired. Additionally, a background check may be required for employees changing positions/departments due to a transfer, reassignment or change in status, unless the person has already had a background check within the previous year. Promotions in rank or awards of tenure do not require a background screening.

Please contact the Office of the Provost or the Division of Talent and Culture with questions relating to additional background checks.

## **Q: Who conducts the background check?**

**A:** WVU has contracted with a third-party vendor to conduct all background checks for all employees.

## **Q: What steps must the candidate take to complete the background check, and what information will the candidate need to provide?**

**A:** The final candidate must complete an online form in its entirety and execute a signed consent and disclosure form. As part of the form, the candidate must provide their first and last names; current address with city, state and zip code; date of birth; social security number; and telephone number.

## **Q: What does the background check include?**

**A:** The background check includes: address verification; social security number check (to verify the person is who they claim to be); a county, statewide and federal criminal records search; search of sex offender registries; driving records; and examination of state and federal debarment lists. For faculty and/or specific staff positions, the background check will also include verification of academic credentials.

## **Q: Does the background check include a credit history check?**

**A:** For the majority of positions, background checks do not include a check on credit. However, a more comprehensive background check, including credit, may be required pursuant to a University administrative decision, local, state or federal law or for certain sensitive positions.

## **Q: How does the University protect an individual's right to privacy?**

**A:** WVU follows state and federal laws that ensure a candidate's right to privacy, which prohibit employees and others from using or disclosing personal information except within the scope of their assigned duties.

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**Q: Does a candidate have to give permission or consent for a check to be conducted?**

**A:** Yes. If a candidate does not give permission or neglects to give all of the information required to process a background investigation, the check will not be conducted. However, a person who does not give permission or does not provide all of the information needed cannot be employed by WVU.

**Q: If a candidate has adverse information reported in the background check, is that individual automatically disqualified from employment at the University?**

**A:** No. Adverse information is not an automatic bar to employment. WVU will consider the passage of time and the severity, frequency and nature of a conviction, as well as its relationship to the position in question. If the background check reveals information that affects the University's decision to not offer employment, the candidate will be provided an opportunity to see the findings and provide an explanation.

**Q: Who makes the decision on what constitutes adverse information?**

**A:** The Division of Talent and Culture receives the initial report and makes the decision of employment eligibility based on the results. If appropriate, Talent and Culture will share the background check results with the Office of the Provost and/or vice president for a final determination of employment eligibility.

**Q: How will the hiring department be notified of the background check results?**

**A:** If the background check comes back with no adverse information, Talent and Culture will move forward with the hire. However, if the check reveals adverse information that would affect the candidate's employment status with the University, Talent and Culture will notify the department that the results of the background check make the candidate ineligible to be hired.

**Q: Will Talent and Culture share the results of the background check with the hiring department?**

**A:** No. In order to protect the confidentiality, Talent and Culture will only share the background check results with the Office of the Provost (for faculty and certain staff positions) and/or the vice president (for staff positions) if appropriate. The Office of the Provost and/or the vice president will review the information and make a final determination whether or not the candidate may be employed.

**Q: How long does it take to get the results of a background check?**

**A:** Most background check results are made available within two (2) business days from submission. However, a background check may take up to five (5) business days to process. Additional time may be needed if the candidate has lived overseas or in multiple states.

**Q: Do candidates have the right to receive a copy of their background check?**

**A:** Yes. Candidates are given this right under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA). To receive a copy, the candidate will need to request one from the third-party agency.

**Q: Who may candidates contact if they have additional questions about the background check process?**

**A:** Candidates should contact Talent Strategy at [employment@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:employment@mail.wvu.edu) or 304-293-0898 with any questions.