

Introduction

Background checks are governed by the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), but you should know that there are an array of other laws that affect them, depending on state and region. Companies are not required to perform them by law. Checks should be applied to all employees consistently and fairly.

Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/mikalbelicove/2012/10/26/the-10-dos-and-donts-o-conducting-employee-background-checks/>

Basic Background Check

1. Criminal records check

Provides criminal history for the applicant. Especially important for positions of trust/security. Should include national and county records.

2. Social security validation

Ensures the candidate's social security number is legitimate and finds all names, including aliases and variations, dates of birth and address history associated with the social security number. This shows employers if the candidate has lived in undisclosed locations or under other aliases, which may reveal criminal records that wouldn't have been found otherwise.

3. Address history check

Traces previous addresses for the candidate. Finding out where a candidate has lived will make it easier to verify other research, and may reveal jurisdictions where criminal background checks should be performed.

4. U.S. terror watch list check

Most background checks will look to see if the candidate is on the U.S. terror watch list. Especially important for security jobs.

5. Sex offender registry check

Extremely important for positions of trust, this check is included with most background checks.

Additional Background Screening to Consider:

Want to go more in-depth with your background checks? There are several other types of checks you can do to get additional information that may be important depending on the job you're hiring for. Character References: Great for seeing what a person is like to work with. Remember, asking for these falls under FCRA rules - get legal advice first.

1. Driving records

Hiring a driver? You'll definitely want these.

2. Student transcripts

Need to verify an applicant's school performance? Transcripts are helpful, but you'll need applicant permission.

3. Credit report

Gives you perspective on an applicant's history of meeting financial obligations, as well as previous address information.

4. Military service records

Helpful if an employee's military service plays a big role in your decision to hire them. You'll need permission for this.

5. State licensing records

Double check to be sure candidates have the state licenses they need.

6. Professional license records

Check to be sure candidates have professional licenses they need.

7. Workers' compensation

Employers may want to check a candidate's past workers' comp claims. This may be subject to legal restrictions - get legal advice.

Background Check

