Q. Why is FSU requiring background checks for all new faculty and staff hires?
A. FSU is committed to maintaining and fostering the safety and security of all students, faculty, staff, and visitors. As part of this commitment, FSU will require pre-employment criminal history background checks on all new hire faculty and staff effective 8/1/15. OPS and Volunteers will require a background check if warranted by the duties.

Q. Who is responsible for conducting the background checks?
A. The background checks will continue to be conducted centrally in Human Resources.

Q. What is the difference between “criminal history” and “background check”?
A. The two terms are used interchangeably at the University. Currently titled “Employee Background Checks,” the official policy effective August 1, 2015 will become Criminal History Background Checks. While a “background check” is a more general term that may include education verification, employment verification, and a credit history review, generally the Office of Human Resources will only be conducting a criminal history background check for an applicant.

Q. Who is responsible for the cost of the background check?
A. Hiring departments are responsible for the cost of the background checks.

Q. How do I request a Criminal History Background Check?
A. Full details on how to request a background check can be found in the revised Department Process for Requesting Criminal History Background Checks document.

Q. How long does a background check take?
A. Barring extenuating circumstances, HR typically receives background checks results within 24–72 hours of one being initiated.

Q. Which positions require fingerprinting?
A. In addition to a Standard Criminal History Background Check, a Level 2 Criminal History Background Check shall be conducted for positions that require it under federal or state law, including, but not limited to the following:
   i. Candidates for positions of special trust or responsibility (see Section 110.1127, Florida Statutes), including those with any of the following duties:
      1. Working or volunteering with minors or other vulnerable populations such as the elderly or those with disabilities;
      2. Positions classified as Vice President level or above by job code/administrative code;
      3. Positions with the FSU Police Department (see Section 943.13, Florida Statutes), and positions with Transportation & Parking Services;
      4. Working with regulated materials [e.g. Select Agents or Toxins (42CFR73.10), DHS Chemicals of Interest (6CFR27, App. A), DEA Controlled Substances (21CFR13101.90), NRC Radioactive Material – Quantities of Concern (NRC EA-07-305) or those in facilities covered by a DOT Security Plan (49CFR172.800)], or for other positions/roles or contracted individuals that may have unescorted access to these materials; and
      5. As required by granting agencies for grants and contracts.

Q: How can I determine what level of background check will be required for a position?
A: The Office of Human Resources will be determining which level of background check is required based on the department completing the background check questionnaire within the Criminal History Background Check Portal prior to advertisement, or prior to appointment (for non-advertised positions, OPS Express, & volunteer/courtesy appointments).
Q. When is an International Background Check required?
A. An International Criminal History Background check is required in addition to the Standard or Level 2 screening if a candidate has resided in another country for six months or more within the past seven years. With regard to OPS and Volunteer appointments, if the duties of the OPS or Volunteer role don’t require screening in general, the candidate will not be subject to the International background check simply by having lived outside of the United States.

Q. How much do the International Criminal History Background Checks cost?
A. International background checks are conducted per country and as available. The price and turnaround time varies—be sure to plan in advance. Contact the Office of Human Resources as soon as possible for direction.

Q. If I hired a faculty member to start in the summer of 2015, does this policy apply to the candidate?
A. In general, no, as the policy is effective for new hire faculty starting 8/1/15 or thereafter. The only exception being faculty members (including OPS faculty) required by state or federal law to have a background check based on their duties, including those in positions of special trust or responsibility.

Q. If I hired an OPS faculty in summer 2015 and intend to hire them in a regular faculty line in fall 2015, must a background check be conducted for the fall 2015 appointment?
A. As the policy will be effective for fall 2015 new hires, and movement from an OPS position to salaried line would be considered a new hire; yes, a background check must be conducted for the fall 2015 appointment.

Q. In fall 2015 one of my faculty members will be getting promoted from one salaried line to another. Am I required to run a background check?
A. In general, no, as the policy relates to new hire faculty. The only exception being faculty members (including OPS faculty) required by state or federal law to have a background check based on their duties, including positions of special trust or responsibility.

Q. Will current staff and OPS employees moving into a new role be subject to a background check?
A. Although not all internal movement requires a background check, many actions will. Please reference Current Employees/Volunteers section B.1.a. & b. of the revised Criminal History Background Check policy for the specifics.

Q. What if a current A&P or USPS employee has never had a background check—does that person need to have a background check done now?
A. Current A&P and USPS employees would not be subject to a criminal history background check unless they are appointed into a new role that requires a background check or there is internal movement from one position number to another; however, if the position an employee currently holds (be it staff, faculty, or OPS) requires a background check under state or federal law, and one has not previously been completed, please contact Human Resources for guidance.

Q. If I have faculty who may be working with minors, what level of background check should I request?
A. If you have faculty who may be working with minors, a Level 2 criminal history background check must be completed. If they will also be working with summer camps, you will need to request the summer camp screening (run under DCF’s account per Section 409.175, Florida Statutes) closer to the time of the summer camp, as well.
Q. Does the following section of the policy mean that Graduate Assistants/Teaching Assistants that would have access to student rosters require a background check? “Persons with access to sensitive, secure, and/or confidential personal information on individuals, such as students, faculty, staff, or alumni (e.g. social security numbers, dates of birth, financial account numbers, etc.)”
A. This requirement does not relate to grades, names, majors, email addresses, and the like, but relates to information that could be used for identity theft, such as social security numbers, dates of birth, financial account numbers, etc.

Q. Does the following section of the policy mean that if I have OPS employees who work around surplus inventory in my department they must be screened? “Persons with access to surplus property inventory.”
A. This section of policy relates particularly to OPS who work with surplus inventory in the FSU Surplus Property department.

Q. If my department hires a Contractor who will be appointed on a Courtesy record in OMN and will perform duties listed in Pre-employment section A.3. of the revised Criminal History Background Check Policy, must they be screened by FSU?
A. Yes, based on those circumstances, they must be screened by FSU.

Q. If I already provided offer letters to my faculty hires starting in fall 2015, but the letters didn’t contain the contingent language regarding background checks, what do I do now?
A. In that case, an Offer Letter Addendum must be completed. Click here to access the addendum, which can also be found on the HR Website under Department Rep Resources > Employment > Faculty Hiring Resources. (Reference HR Memorandum sent 2/6/15 for more details.)

Q. Are new hire Graduate Assistants/Teaching Assistants/ Research Assistants required to be screened?
A. A Criminal History Background Check must be completed only if the new hire GA’s job duties warrant one (reference Pre-employment section A.3. of the revised Criminal History Background Check Policy).

Q. How does this policy apply to current Graduate Assistants/Teaching Assistants/Research Assistants moving into another GA/TA/RA appointment, or those that I’m reappointing?
A. Current Graduate Assistants, Teaching Assistants, and Research Assistants must complete a criminal history background check only if required by state or federal law, including for positions of special trust or responsibility (reference Pre-employment section A.2. of the revised Criminal History Background Check Policy).

Reappointed Graduate Assistants will require a new background check if they’ve had a break in service (terminated in OMNI) for 31 days or more or it’s required by law. Note: If working with a vulnerable population, a new background check is required for any break in service more than 31 days, or if unfunded for 90 days or more.

Q. Can contingent language be included in offer letters to Graduate Assistants since the letters are prepared in advance, like that of faculty?
A. Yes, due to the nature of Graduate Assistant recruitment, the offer can be made prior to the background check as long the contingent language has been included in the offer letter. The background check must be completed prior to the appointment being keyed into OMNI and the candidate starting work.

Q. Do I place contingent language in my Staff offer letters?
A. No, Staff and OPS background checks shall be conducted pre-offer, so an offer letter would not be issued until the background check process has been completed.
Q. For faculty postings which were already posted online (jobs.fsu.edu) without the background check requirement, will departments need to add the new background check requirement and re-advertise the position?
A. If the position has already cycled off of the jobs website, no; however, if the position is still being advertised Human Resources is making updates accordingly.

Q. Who reviews the results on background checks?
A. If a criminal history background check reveals any criminal history, the Human Resources Criminal History Background Check Committee will review the report and make a recommendation to the department. If the candidate is applying for a faculty position, the Office of Faculty Development & Advancement and/or the Office of the Provost will review all adverse actions prior to them becoming final. The existence of criminal history does not automatically disqualify individuals from employment. Each case will be reviewed on its own merit with respect to the factors outlined below; however, any false answers, statements, or omissions made on the employment application may be grounds for rejection as a candidate for employment or immediate discharge, if employed.

In accordance with Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines, the Human Resources Criminal History Background Check Committee takes the following factors into consideration when reviewing criminal history records: the nature and gravity of the offense or conduct; the time period that has lapsed since the offense, conduct and/or completion of the sentence; and the nature of the job held or sought.

Q. Will I have to update all of my USPS and A&P position descriptions in OMNI with the new criminal history background check requirements?
A. The Office of Human Resources, Compensation Services will be updating the position descriptions for departments.

Q. Will there be additional training available?
A. A detailed, in-class training session regarding the new Criminal History Background Check process is scheduled for August 5, 2015, from 9–10:30 a.m. at the Training Center; an updated online version is also now available. If you have not already attended one of the previous training sessions on this topic, please either plan to attend this in-class session or view the online version of the class. You can register for both via OMNI by logging in to myFSU at https://my.fsu.edu and navigating to: HR > Main Menu > Self Service > Learning and Development > Request Training Enrollment > Follow the prompts to submit your request. The course information is: COCHB1 for the in-class session and COCHB0 for the online version.

Additionally, we have scheduled the following walk-in help sessions to address any individual questions you may have:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, August 11, 2015</td>
<td>9–11 a.m.</td>
<td>UCA, 6201 (Computer Lab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, August 13, 2015</td>
<td>1–3 p.m.</td>
<td>UCA, 6201 (Computer Lab)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. Where can I get more information?
A. Please visit the Background Check Policy 2015-Update page devoted to keeping departments updated on the policy as it rolls out.

Q. What if I still have questions?
A. If you still have questions, please feel free to contact April Smatt, HR Specialist, at asmatt@fsu.edu or (850) 644-6035.

Last updated 7/23/15