

BACKGROUND CHECK FAQs

1. What information is obtained or verified during the background check process?

The following information is checked during the process:

- social security number and address verification
- state criminal history
- county criminal history
- federal criminal history
- national sex offender registry search
- known terrorist search

For a few positions with specific job duties, a credit check may also be obtained. In most cases, a credit check will not be included in the background check.

2. If an applicant has been arrested, does that bar him/her from employment at Winthrop?

No. An arrest cannot be a determining factor for employment eligibility, only convictions. Pending offenses with no disposition may be considered in employment decisions.

3. If an applicant has been convicted of a crime, is he/she automatically ineligible for employment at Winthrop?

No. The Office of Human Resources will evaluate convictions on a case-by-case basis by taking into consideration the nature or gravity of the offense or conduct, the amount of time that has lapsed since the conviction, and the nature of the position for which he/she has applied.

4. When should the Self-Disclosure Form Regarding Pending Offense and Conviction be completed?

This form should be completed:

- when a temporary or adjunct faculty member is beginning a new work assignment and has experienced a break in service of one year or less (a break in service begins with the last day of the previous work assignment and ends with the first day of the new work assignment)
- within three days when a current employee has been arrested or convicted of a misdemeanor or felony
- when a final candidate is given a conditional offer and is approved to work while the background check results are pending

5. If I disclose an arrest or conviction to the Office of Human Resources, will my supervisor be notified?

The Office of Human Resources will notify a supervisor if the arrest or conviction will affect the employee's ability to perform his/her job. For instance, an employee whose job requires him/her to operate a university vehicle may not be able to perform the duties of his/her position if the employee was arrested for driving under the influence.

6. If I am a current employee and I am arrested or convicted of a crime while employed, will I be terminated as a result?

Not necessarily. Based on the nature of the offense and the employee's position at Winthrop, each circumstance will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

7. What will happen if I do not disclose an arrest or conviction to HR within the required period of time?

Failure to follow the requirements of the Background Check Policy, including completing and submitting the Self-Disclosure Form Regarding Pending Offense and Conviction as necessary may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

8. Is a background check required for Winthrop retirees who return to work in a temporary position?

If the retiree returns to work within one year, he/she will be required to complete the Self-Disclosure Form Regarding Pending Offense and Conviction. If there is a break in service of more than one year, a new background check will be required.

9. If I am a current adjunct faculty member who teaches in the fall and spring but not during the summer, am I required to complete the Self-Disclosure Form Regarding Pending Offense and Conviction due to the break in service?

No. An adjunct faculty member who teaches both fall and spring semesters in the same academic year are not considered to have a break in service. Adjunct faculty members who teach only one semester per academic year will be considered to have a break in service and will be required to complete the Self-Disclosure Form when the new work assignment begins. A new background check will be conducted on any temporary employee, including an adjunct faculty member, who experiences a break in service of more than one year. (A break in service begins with the last day of the work assignment and ends with the first day of the new work assignment.)

10. If a temporary employee has more than one assignment, will the employee be required to have a background check completed for each department in which he works?

No. Only one background check is needed and will be processed based on the earliest assignment.

11. Is a background check required for temporary employees paid on Winthrop's payroll who will not physically work on campus?

The need for a background check for employees who do not physically work on Winthrop's campus will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the Office of Human Resources for more information.

12. If my department hires a temporary employee for a one-day assignment, is a background check required prior to the start of the assignment?

A background check is not required for temporary employees hired for a one-day assignment. However, the hiring department is responsible for ensuring that the temporary employee is not left in one-on-one situations with students or employees. Temporary employees who are hired for multiple one-day assignments during a one year period may be required to be background checked.

13. If I am a temporary employee who has been offered a permanent position at Winthrop, will I need a new background check?

If a background check was conducted within one year or less while in your temporary position,

you will not be required to have another background check. Only the Self-Disclosure Form Regarding Pending Offense and Conviction will be required.

14. What is the typical turnaround time for the background check results?
Generally, the results are available within two business days. For international checks, the process ranges from five to 30 business days, depending on the country. English speaking countries typically respond faster than countries that require translation.
15. When is a background check required for students or volunteers?
A background check is required for student workers or volunteers who may be responsible for the direct care of minors or vulnerable adults. For example, students who are working with camps for minor children should have a background check.
16. How do I initiate a background check for a student or volunteer?
The Office of Human Resources will work with hiring departments to establish an account with Winthrop's current background check vendor. Once an account is established, the hiring department will have access to the online system and may initiate the background check.
17. If I have established an account with the background check vendor and I receive results that indicate the student or volunteer has a criminal conviction, what should I do?
Contact the Office of Human Resources immediately. The Office of Human Resources will review the report and determine the student's/volunteer's eligibility for employment based on consistent application of the Background Check Policy. Because Winthrop must follow the requirements of the Fair Credit Reporting Act in communicating with an individual who is barred from employment based on the results of a background check, hiring departments must work with the Office of Human Resources with the notification to applicants.
18. If I hire students or volunteers who work off campus at facilities that conduct their own background checks on the student/volunteer, am I required to initiate a background check with WU's vendor as well?
No. Winthrop will concede the interpretation of the background check results to the off-campus facility based on their practices for student or volunteer work on their premises. Departments should obtain and retain a statement from the off-campus facility indicating that a clear background check was obtained based upon the practices/policy of the facility. A background check from any source other than Winthrop's approved vendor will not be accepted for work or volunteer activities on Winthrop's campus.
19. If an applicant, student, or volunteer who will be working on campus provides a copy of his background check results from his current or previous employer, is this acceptable in lieu of using Winthrop's vendor?
No. All prospective employees and volunteers who physically work on campus must have a background check that has been completed by WU's background check vendor.