



Cochise County Board of Supervisors

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Policy Title: Background Screening

Policy Number: 2233

Effective: July 13, 2021

Scope/Coverage: All county applicants, employees, interns, and volunteers; excludes elected officials, board members, and commission/committee members

Policy Contact: Director of Human Resources

I. Contents and Purpose

Cochise County is committed to protecting the safety and welfare of our citizens and safeguarding county assets. To that end, this policy provides for background screening for applicants, interns, and volunteers. Employment, internships, or volunteer service is contingent upon the satisfactory outcome of the background screening.

II. Requirements and Procedure

- A. All non-elected, non-AZ POST positions require a comprehensive background screening by the Human Resources Department. Exceptions to this section are described in section B.
 1. An appointing authority may request that Human Resources perform background screenings before initial interviews are conducted. To ensure equal treatment, this request shall apply to all candidates the appointing authority plans on interviewing. Otherwise, background screenings shall be performed after a verbal or written employment or volunteer offer and acceptance. The job announcement shall include notification that a background screening is required. If a pre-interview background screening is performed, a background screening shall not be performed after an offer of employment has been made.
 2. Candidates shall be asked to authorize the county to perform a background screening. Refusal to authorize a background screening shall eliminate the candidate from consideration for the position.
 3. Current employees who are transferred to a different position at the employee's request or promoted to a new position are required to authorize the county to perform a background screening if one has not been performed within the last year. If an employee chooses not to authorize a background screening, the employee will forgo the transfer or promotion and remain in his or her current position.
 4. Volunteers, interns, part-time, temporary, or seasonal employees who provide intermittent service to the county shall be required to complete a background



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screening annually. Failure to authorize a background screening shall result in dismissal.

5. Individuals considered for positions that require driving are subject to an initial Motor Vehicle Division records check, followed by annual records checks, conducted by the Risk Management Department.
- B. Positions that are directly appointed by the Cochise County Sheriff are subject to an extensive background screening process handled by the Sheriff's Office. Background screenings for sworn officer positions within the Sheriff's Office shall be required to meet AZ POST standards. For applicants of departments or elected offices who require a background screening by the Sheriff's office (e.g. County Attorney's Office, Detention Medical, Constable's Office), the standards applied to non-AZ POST certified candidates shall comply with federal and state laws.
- C. The results of background screenings performed or overseen by Human Resources that produce a criminal record shall undergo an individualized assessment by the Human Resources Department with full consideration to:
 1. The nature and gravity of the criminal offense(s).
 2. The time that has passed since the conviction and/or completion of the sentence.
 3. The nature of the position.
- D. If consideration is being given to rejecting the candidate due to background screening results *provided by an outside vendor*, the candidate shall be provided:
 1. Notice either in writing or electronically, informing the candidate that they may be rejected based on the results of a background screening.
 2. A copy of the report that was obtained and is being relied upon to make the hiring decision.
 3. A copy of *A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act*.
 4. The name, address, and phone number of the background screening vendor that provided the screening report.
 5. An opportunity to refute any disputed information within seven (7) business days.
- E. If the decision is made to reject the candidate based on background screening results performed by an outside vendor, the Human Resources Department shall provide the candidate with notice in writing or electronically, informing the candidate the offer of employment or volunteer opportunity is being withdrawn based on the results of a



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background screening. Consideration may be given to keeping the position open during the dispute process; however, the county has no obligation to do so.

- F. A candidate shall not begin work or attend new employee orientation until results of the background screening are received. Human Resources shall notify the hiring department or office concerning whether an applicant has passed or failed the background screening and advise the department or elected office whether the applicant is eligible for hire based on the background screening results.