

HARFORD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT POLICY

Title of Policy: Pre-employment Screening Policy	
Program Area: Human Resources	
Approved By: <i>Susan Kelly</i>	Original Effective Date: <i>7/1/13</i>
Susan Kelly, Health Officer	Revised Dates:

1.0 POLICY

The Pre-employment Screening Policy of the Harford County Health Department (HCHD) requires that all candidates for employment have certain credentials, criminal and other background information verified as a condition of employment based on the State of Maryland Department of Budget and Management (DBM) job specifications of each job classification.

2.0 PURPOSE

This policy applies to candidates applying for the following types of positions:

- Merit – permanent budgeted position
- Contractual – Special Payments (SP)
- Emergency/Temporary (EM) positions

This policy is intended to support the verification of credentials, criminal history, and other information related to employment decisions that assist the HCHD in meeting its commitments. Special Payment contractual employees who convert to a merit position will not have to complete a second background check.

3.0 PROCEDURES

3.1 Definitions

- 3.1.1 “Criminal history check” means verifying that the selected candidate does not have any undisclosed criminal history.
- 3.1.2 “Educational verification” means ensuring that the selected candidate possesses all education credentials reported on the application and required by the DBM job specifications.
- 3.1.3 “Employment reference” means obtaining three professional references (at least one should be a supervisor) as well as verifying the experience required by the job specification. This latter verification should include dates of employment and verification of position held.
- 3.1.4 “License verification” means ensuring that the selected candidate possesses all the licenses required in the job specifications and listed on the application, including verification of the status of such licenses. This includes any motor vehicle driver’s licenses required for the position.
- 3.1.5 “Hiring Manager” means Division Director or hiring designee.

3.2 All candidates should have the following background checks completed as a condition of employment with the HCHD:

- Criminal History Check (Maryland and/or FBI)
- Maryland Case Search
- Office of Attorney General

- State of Maryland Pre-Offer Check
 - 3.2.2 Verification of education and employment reference information that qualifies candidates for the position.
 - 3.2.3 Human Resources will ensure that the background check, including finger printing, is completed.
- 3.3 Human Resources Responsibilities
 - 3.3.1 After receiving the hiring recommendation from the hiring manager, Human Resources will complete a Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) Background Application Form and email this to the selected candidate. The candidate is responsible for scheduling an appointment at an authorized fingerprinting service provider. Candidates who live out of state or who will work in a program where they will be serving minors will be required to have a federal criminal background check.
 - 3.3.2 Human Resources will ensure that the hiring manager has completed verifying the employment references before the hire date.
 - 3.3.3 Human Resources will complete educational and license verifications before the hire date.
 - 3.3.4 If the criminal history check reveals convictions that the individual disclosed on the Criminal Disclosure Form, Human Resources will review the report to evaluate each conviction, including any additional information that the individual provides, before the offer of employment is confirmed or withdrawn. Human Resources will consult with the Director of Administration who will contact the DHMH Office of Employee Relations if necessary. The existence of a conviction does not automatically disqualify an individual from employment. Relevant considerations may include, but are not limited to, the nature and number of convictions, their dates, and how the conviction(s) are related to the duties and responsibilities of the position. Any decision to accept or reject an individual with a conviction is solely at the discretion of the HCHD.
 - 3.3.5 For current employees: If subsequent Criminal Justice Information Reports indicate felony convictions, the individual may be terminated from employment, unless the individual proves that the report is in error. The decision to reject or terminate an individual with an unreported conviction is solely at the discretion of the HCHD Health Officer.
 - 3.3.6 In the event the results of the background check influence a decision to withdraw an employment offer or terminate employment, Human Resources, the HCHD Health Officer or Director of Administration will inform the hiring manager and the individual.
 - 3.3.7 For all employment, education, and license verifications required, records of the verifications will be kept in the employee's file in the office of the HCHD Human Resources Unit.
- 3.4 Violations of the HCHD policies, including providing false or misleading information used for any of the above employment verifications, references, and background checks shall be handled in accordance with applicable HCHD or Maryland State policies and procedures, which may include corrective action up

to and including termination from the HCHD or termination of the ability to apply for positions at the HCHD. Disqualification of a candidate based on information discovered in the background check is not subject to grievance or appeal by the candidate.

3.5 Responsibility for Costs

The hiring division will be responsible for the costs associated with the background check. The investigation will be conducted by a vendor approved by the State of Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services.

3.6 Security and Storage

3.6.1 All results of the background check will remain confidential. Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) files/records are filed in the employee's personnel file and locked in the Human Resources Unit's office out of public view.

3.6.2 HCHD is committed to protecting the security, safety, and health of employees and others, safeguarding the assets and resources of the health department, and assuring individuals in responsible positions are worthy of the trust they are given.

3.7 Access

Only Human Resources staff, Health Officer, or Director of Administration of the HCHD are permitted access to the files when making hiring and termination decisions. Each individual accessing the CHRI must have had a fingerprint supported background check.

3.8 Dissemination

3.8.1 Only authorized agencies are allowed to view CHRI and personnel files for purposes of auditing personnel records. These agencies include the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

3.8.2 Upon written request, the employee/applicant may view his/her own CHRI. If a copy is requested, "COPY" should be written across the top of the page. All individuals, whether employee or agency auditors, are required to sign the Human Resource's dissemination log to document their access to personnel files.

3.9 Retention and Destruction of CHRI

All CHRI/personnel files of former HCHD employees are retained for a period of time based on the Department of Mental Health and Hygiene Records Retention and Disposal Schedule (see attached). The CHRI/personnel files are then destroyed by a company procured by the Harford County Health Department. A member of the Human Resources Unit staff will witness the shredding process to ensure that confidentiality is maintained.

DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES-STATE RECORDS CENTER		SCHEDULE NUMBER
RECORDS RETENTION AND DISPOSAL SCHEDULE		PAGE 1 OF 1
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & MENTAL HYGIENE		
Operations		Office of Human Resources
SECRETARIAT		OFFICE / ADMINISTRATION / BOARD
Item No.	Description of Records Series (from Inventory Form)	Authorized Retention Period & Instructions
	Supersedes schedules 917, 930 (item 1D) & 1690	
1.	Personnel files for inactive employees contain all standard personnel forms and data accumulated over a period of employment. The file generally includes documents relating to initial appointment, performance during employment, payroll, leave and benefit, and information relating to termination of employment through resignation, retirement, transfer or other removal.	Retain for 3 years after termination of employment, then retain in State Records Center for 2 years and then destroy.
2.	Medical files contain all pertinent employee medical information such as EAP, Accident Leave, IWIF, referral to State Medical Director and results, FMLA, application for disability retirement, leave bank, and other related documentation.	Retain for 2 years after termination of employment, then retain in State Records Center for 3 years and then destroy.
3.	Recruitment and testing files include recruitment activities such as eligibility criteria, testing information, employment applications, rating sheets to evaluate education and experience, job announcements, selection information, position selection plans, panel notes and evaluation criteria, inactive applications, etc.	Retain for 2 years after recruitment closes then retain in State Records Center for 1 year.
4.	Grievance files contain records pertaining to first, second or third step grievances filed by DHMH employees. Records may include grievance forms, documentary evidence, decisions, and correspondence.	Retain for 5 years after grievance process completed, then destroy.
5.	Training and tuition reimbursement files includes outservice training and tuition reimbursement files for DHMH employees and may include applications, obligated service agreements, work release forms, invoices, and career development plans.	Retain for 2 years after completion of training or obligated service, then destroy.
6.	Time and payroll accounting records includes payroll exception time reports, payroll positive time reports, payroll accounting records, overtime reports, biweekly timesheets, leave registers, etc.	Retain for 5 years or until all audit requirements have been fulfilled, then destroy.
7.	Special Payments Payroll Contracts include all records pertaining to DHMH contractual employment.	Retain for 2 years after termination of employment, retain in State Records Center for 3 years, then destroy.
APPROVED BY: (DHMH Official)		AUTHORIZED BY: (MD STATE ARCHIVES)
DATE: _____		DATE: _____
SIGNATURE: _____		SIGNATURE: _____
NAME/TITLE: _____		NAME/TITLE: <u>EDWARD C PAPENFUSE, JR., STATE ARCHIVIST</u>