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# BACKGROUND SCREENING

Industry Resource Guide  
2019-2020



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# About Us:



PreemploymentDirectory.com is the largest and most comprehensive background screening information portal on the web. It includes an extensive Background Screening Knowledge Center, Article Library, International Resource Center as well as a directory of background screening providers. It is designed specifically to make it easy for businesses to quickly find a company to meet their needs.

The Directory is an important resource for Human Resources, Talent Management and Hiring Managers interested in learning information about background screening.

The Directory is also a valuable tool for employers seeking a background screening provider. It contains the largest listing of background screening firms around the world, online or in print.

The Directory consists of several sections to guide organizations quickly to the information they need:

- The U. S. Domestic Section includes background screening firms (CRAs) that are listed by their headquarter location, State by State.
- The International Section includes firms that conduct background screening internationally. These firms are listed by country.

In a matter of minutes you can find a information about background screening or a provider to meet your needs anywhere in the world.

PreemploymentDirectory.com has become an important resource and tool to support organizations meeting their hiring needs. Visit us today and see how easy it is to find information about background screening or a provider to meet your needs.

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The 2019-20 Annual  
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In Search of Excellence in  
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## What HR Managers Need to know About the New NAPBS Accreditation Standards

*By: Derek Hinton, CEO, CRAzoom and W. Barry Nixon, COO, PreemploymentDirectory.com*

**The National Association of Professional Background Screeners (NAPBS)** offers an accreditation program for Background Screening Firms also known as Consumer Reporting Agencies (CRAs) located in the United States. Governed by a strict and thorough set of professional standards of specified requirements and measurements, the Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program (BSAAP) has become a widely recognized seal of approval bringing national recognition to an employment background screening-affiliated organization for its commitment to achieving excellence through high professional standards with accountability that results in continued institutional improvement.

The BSAAP is both a standard setting and conformity assessment program for CRAs. The governing body for the accreditation program and future personnel certification is the Background Screening Credentialing Council (BSCC).

The BSAAP provides a detailed process for evaluating and improving internal operating procedures that every CRA, and their clients, benefit from. Accredited CRAs have made a commitment to uphold and deliver the highest level of industry standards for the following critical areas:

- Information Security
- Legal and Compliance
- Client Education
- Researcher and Data Standards
- Verification Services Standards
- Business Practices

To become accredited firms must demonstrate initial and ongoing compliance with the accreditation standard as prepared by the Background Screening Credentialing Council (BSCC). Compliance is demonstrated through rigorous desk and on-site audits, all of which are completed by an independent third-party auditor. Firms must document each of their policies and processes as required in each of the areas within the Standard and demonstrate visible compliance with their policies to the auditor. Accreditation lasts for a period of five years, after which time firms are required to recomplete the process if they wish to remain accredited.

As of this writing, there are now 109 Accredited companies—and more are in the process.

There are few reliable statistics on how many employment screening firms there are in the United States. Estimates range from 2000-3000 depending on whether private investigator firms are included. Many of these are very small, perhaps only doing screens for a few employers.

There are about 470 background screening firms that are currently members of NAPBS. Some of these firms are primarily tenant screening with employment screening a small percentage of their business. The 109 firms that have been accredited have reached a significant number providing employers with a good amount of choice in choosing their employment background screening provider.

Employers are increasingly sophisticated in choosing their employment screening partner. They understand that while the industry is highly regulated with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (and state versions of the act), the Driver Privacy Protection Act (and state versions of this act) there are no licensing requirements to become an employment screening firm outside of some states' requirements that employment screeners have a private investigation license. The thought that the local nail salon



probably has more licensing requirements than their employment screening partner has made employers look for other, more objective means in which to qualify their employment screening partner.

NAPBS Accreditation has become the top objective means in which to evaluate employment screening firms. Several years ago, NAPBS accreditation was a “feather in the cap” of employment screeners that put them above most of their competitors. That has not changed, but NAPBS Accreditation is increasingly becoming a minimum standard when employers choose their employment screening partner. The “Are you a Member of NAPBS” question on ‘Request for Proposals’ has evolved into “Are you Accredited by the NAPBS.”

### **Insurers Recognizing Accreditation Value**

Insurers are increasingly looking at NAPBS Accreditation status when underwriting liability insurance for employment screening firms. Accredited companies are eligible for underwriting credits/savings from more insurers. The employment screening arena is highly litigious and settlements can be huge making this an important benefit for background screening firms.

The accreditation process was developed to assist employment screeners by providing a syllabus of best practices as well as practices to avoid—even if the identified practices were not illegal.

In addition, several sections of the NAPBS Accreditation process addresses the education and certifications employment screeners must provide for their clients. Accredited employment screeners have found that their clients appreciate this education because in many cases it led to updated policies and procedures that shielded them from potential liability.

Likewise, an employment screener that has policies and procedures for client education is less likely to become ensnared in client litigation—to say nothing of the decreased likelihood of becoming involved in litigation because their policies and procedures were lacking.

The NAPBS Accreditation program has proven benefit to both employment screening firms and their clients.

### **NAPBS Accreditation Standard Revised. Version 2.0 is Here**

On October 9, 2017, the NAPBS published a proposed new standard for NAPBS Accreditation. The proposed standard has 68 clauses. The previous standard contained 58. In addition, most of the existing clauses have modifications. Comments from the membership were solicited and many suggestions were received.

The new accreditation standard which was adopted on April 6, 2018 is a substantive change from the old. Companies becoming newly accredited after that date must comply with the new standard.

Currently accredited companies will lose their accreditation if they are not in compliance with the new standard by April 6, 2020. If you are currently using an accredited screener, be aware that if they are accredited under the old (Version 1.0) standard, they will not be accredited after April 6, 2020 unless they certify by that time they are in compliance with the new (Version 2.0) standard.

To re-certify they will need to amend current practices, policies and procedures to the new standard as well as adopt and show compliance with the new stipulations.

The new standard is a higher standard than previously. Many of the new standards increase or introduce new minimums regarding:

- Document Management (similar to ISO standards for ensuring control and accuracy of all documents used in the course of providing services),
- Information Technology Certifications and Assessments,
- Employee credentialing and training,
- Knowledge and compliance with changing laws and regulations.

### **NAPBS International Accreditation Standard in the Works**

Some domestic employment screening firms provide international background checks including employment verification, verification of education credentials, reference, criminal records, credit, reputation, sanction and terror list checks and other information to their clients on applicants that have lived, attended school or worked outside of the United States. International background checks bring another level of complexity and risk to comply with the specific laws of other countries

A special International Subcommittee of the BSAAP is working on an International Accreditation program for background screening companies that provide these services. The BSAAP may also design accreditation programs (or modules) for employment screeners that are located in other countries. Stay tuned for more information on this new developing aspect of accreditation



## Conclusion

Earning accreditation is a difficult and arduous process for background screening firms, however, employers that engage the services of accredited background screening firms stand to gain the best possible results.

Choosing an accredited firm is a cost-effective way for employers to stay informed about and navigate the maze of legal requirements that impact background screening without needing to overly invest in staff and resources. This is particularly important as we continue to see growth in FCRA lawsuits. The 2018 Year End Report of The Background Buzz (the leading newsletter for information on background screening) showed that FCRA lawsuits was the number one issue covered during the course of 2018. Other important issues include the influx of new 'ban-the-box' and "salary ban" legislation and numerous state or local requirements.

New "Ban the Box" legislation continues to sweep through states and cities. These new laws prohibit or mandate the timing on when employers may ask the applicant or obtain the applicant's criminal history in the hiring process.

Salary Ban legislation is also on the fast track in many states and cities. These new laws restrict employers from asking applicants about past pay and can affect employment applications and reference checking questions. Les Rosen, CEO of Employment Screening Resources® (ESR) ranked laws prohibiting employers from seeking salary history information about job applicants as fifth on the list of "ESR's top ten background check trends" for 2019. Rosen projects this issue will continue to increase in the united states as the pay equity movement to narrow the gender wage gap between women and men grows in 2019.

Of course, using an accredited background screening firm is not a guarantee that you will not be sued or made a target of an enforcement action, but if you get pulled into the fray you want to have the best possible players on your team that are using established industry standards

In the end, using an accredited background screening firm is your best bet in your effort to hire the best talent to meet your business needs and to provide a safe workplace. Accreditation is being achieved by more employment screeners, many insurers have accepted the value of accreditation, and the accreditation program itself is raising the bar Practices used throughout the industry.

Notification: This article was not written by nor endorsed by NAPBS. For detailed and specific information on the accreditation process visit [NAPBS.com](http://NAPBS.com).



### ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

Derek Hinton began his career with a CRA in 1984 and is President of CRAzoom, a company that has assisted many CRAs become NAPBS Accredited, and CrimApollo, a criminal record assessment and EEOC compliance service.



W. Barry Nixon, is the COO of PreemploymentDirectory.com, the leading background screening information portal on the worldwide web. He co-authored Background Screening Investigations: Managing Hiring Risk from a HR and Security Perspective and is publisher of The Background Buzz, The Global Background Screener and the Annual Background Screening Industry Resource Guide.



## Screening for Employment: Symphony or Cacophony?

Background screening is seldom a solo performance. It's more of a symphony as the background screening company orchestrates a complicated score involving many participants and processes.

While there is a single objective – the presentation of background information to help employers and landlords make informed choices – many people (musicians), processes (musical score) and tools (instruments) are needed to make that beautiful music.

Since a highly invested audience will witness each performance, you need a strong conductor. A professional, industry accredited background screening company is the key to creating a harmonious process and high-quality outcome for everyone involved.

### Who's in the audience?



**End Users.** These are the organizations requesting and receiving the background report, typically employers, non-profits, or landlords. Ultimately, it is the satisfaction level of end users that determines the success of the orchestra and music.

**Consumers.** The consumer is the person who is the subject of the background report, has the right to receive a copy of the same background report as provided to the end user, and has the right to all information in their file held by the screening company. Consumer satisfaction is instrumental in the success of the screening company. Dissatisfied consumers are likely to share their opinions through social media and other forums. They may even want compensation if subject to a particularly poor screening experience.



**Regulators.** Similar to critics, government regulators monitor and evaluate the performance of screening companies. They may choose to publish negative reviews in the form of investigations, sanctions, and even legal actions.



**Legal Counsel.** Attorneys may represent a single consumer or group of consumers who are dissatisfied with their treatment by the screening company. Ready to assist consumers in obtaining a financial settlement for real or alleged injuries, on behalf of consumers, legal counsel may even target other audience members, specifically end users of background screening.

### Who's in the orchestra?

**The End User.** The end user actually has two roles in our metaphorical performance. Not only are they an audience member, but they are also part of the orchestra. In this role they dictate the components of the background report and, to a certain extent, the flow of information. For example, an employer may select criminal record checks, employment and education verifications, and a drug test as screening components. Unless they are filling a regulated position, they get to decide exactly what they want and need from their background screening. They also determine if they or the consumer will enter the information needed for the background check, and if they will utilize an ATS, HRIS, onboarding platform, or other software application. Finally, the end user is the recipient of the screening results and decides how to use those results.



**The Consumer.** The consumer also holds a dual role. In addition to being part of the audience, as a member of the orchestra the consumer may enter information needed to conduct the background check.

**Symphony:** noun; characterized by a harmonious combination of elements.



**Cacophony:** noun; lack of harmony between persons or things. [dictionary.com]

Later they may choose to dispute background check results. If the consumer is dissatisfied, both the screener and end user may suffer negative consequences.



**Research Partners.** Contrary to popular belief, not all information is available online. What is available online often doesn't meet the accuracy requirement imposed on screening companies by federal law. The Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) requires background screening companies to "follow reasonable procedures to assure maximum possible accuracy of the information..."



As a result, screening companies work with field researchers, both domestic and international, who physically go to courthouses and other information repositories to conduct record searches. These research partners represent additional members of the orchestra who play a critical role in the development of accurate background screening information.

**Third-Party Agents.** Some academic institutions outsource verification of academic credentials to the "National Student Clearinghouse" and many employers outsource verification of employment history to third parties such as "The Work Number." When schools and employers outsource to a third party for verification purposes, they are unwilling to speak directly with screening companies. Therefore, background screening companies must develop protocols that provide efficient and secure access to information held by third-party agents, accurately extract results, and ensure ongoing availability.



**Information Sources.** Screening companies directly contact a broad range of sources for information – schools, employers, references, regulatory agencies such as state DMVs and professional licensing boards, courthouses, departments of correction, and more – via phone and email to obtain information or to clarify information received through other means. These information sources are worldwide, requiring the screener to develop strategic global partnerships to accommodate country and even local requirements.



**Service Providers.** Many screening companies offer drug testing, occupational health services, Form I-9, E-Verify, and/or onboarding services in addition to background screening. These additional services add players to the orchestra, whether a drug testing collection site, laboratory, government agency, occupational medical clinic, or other provider. While delivering "one-stop shop" convenience for clients, it requires additional coordination, management, expertise, and technical proficiency by the screening company.



**Law and Regulation.** Acoustics impact the transmission, reception, and effect of sound within a space; and the finest music will be diminished by poor acoustics. This is analogous to law and regulation in background screening which rigorously controls the preparation, delivery, and use of background screening information. Failure to comply with legal requirements has the potential to severely damage a screening program, its providers and users.



Most prominent in the screening landscape is the U.S. Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA). It is, however, far from being the only law or regulation of importance in screening. Additional legal and regulatory requirements come from state FCRA, ban the box, salary inquiry, criminal reporting, and privacy laws.

## What instruments are used?

**Screener's Platform.** One of the most important tools of a screening company is their software platform. This is the technology used to manage all elements of the screening process, including system integration, data collection, research administration, development and presentation of results, regulatory safeguards, end user interaction and experience (both client and consumer), and management reporting. This application must be powerful but easy to use, resulting in a positive consumer and client experience.



Some platforms are proprietary, some off-the-shelf, and others are hybrids. Regardless, as the screener's operational mainstay and the primary interface for clients and consumers, this application must be:

- Functional – it must work correctly as designed, producing expected outcomes
- Reliable – it must be free of frequent software malfunctions and have high uptime 24/7
- Usable – it must allow non-technical users to navigate software features proficiently without an extensive learning curve
- Efficient – it must produce desired results without unnecessary steps and delays
- Maintainable – it must be easily upgradable and remain operational during the upgrade process
- Portable – it must operate on a variety of devices

**Integrations.** Candidate data is often moved electronically from one source to another. Examples include: ATS/HRIS to screener's platform; screener's platform to researchers, data sources, and service providers; return of results from researchers, data sources, and service providers; screening results to ATS/HRIS and onboarding applications.

These integrations promote efficiency, reduce keying errors, and add to a positive user experience. The transmission of data, as well as use and retention by the source, must be carefully controlled to ensure data integrity and security.



**Security.** Although often occurring in the background, screeners must protect the confidential information of consumers and clients, especially personally identifiable information (PII). Screeners must have a rigorous security program which controls: system and data access, physical security, confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements, data transmission, data-at-rest, backup protocols, disaster recovery, data breach protocols, data disposal and destruction, presentation of PII, and permissible uses of portable devices, cameras, and other data-capture tools. Security must permeate all activities and processes of the screener; it cannot be an add-on at the end of the screener's work.



**Customer Service.** The best technology enhances high quality customer service, but does not replace it. Whether provided by phone, text messaging, email, or live chat, clients and consumers sometimes need to have a conversation with a person. This service should be easy to access, responsive, and staffed by people who provide first call resolution.



## Will the performance garner accolades and awards?



**Third-Party Certifications and Accreditations for the Organization.** There are hundreds of screening companies apparently offering the same products and services, and end users hear the same claims again and again. Third-party certifications and accreditations are a useful tool in determining which providers are "on key." End users can seek a screening partner with certifications in: 1) quality – such as ISO, NSF, ANSI, or JCAHO, 2) information security – such as ISO, SOC II

Type 2, NIST, or SSAE 16, and 3) overall competency and performance within a highly specialized industry – such as NAPBS (National Association of Professional Background Screeners) Accreditation.

**Third-Party Certifications for Individuals.** Another indicator of a highly qualified screening company is certifications held by individuals. One such certification is Advanced FCRA Certification, awarded by NAPBS. As the primary U.S. federal law governing the preparation and use of background reports, industry players should know FCRA musical score without continually referring to sheet music. Other areas where third-party credentials distinguish between virtuoso and beginner include compliance, ethics, information security, technology, legal, and privacy.



**Continuous Improvement.** New music is written every day; interpretation of existing music continues to evolve. Orchestras that play the same musical score year after year are unlikely to satisfy an audience long term; continuous evolution and innovation is needed and expected. The same applies in background screening.

In a rapidly changing industry, remaining on the same page is not a viable option for a screener provider, screening program, or end user. A structured continuous improvement program, based on a strong quality management model, will drive quality and performance advancements. Evidence of the seriousness with which the organization views continuous improvement include an active management review board, a rigorous audit program, root cause analysis, and audience input.

## How do audiences find the right symphony?

Unlike music, "liking" a screening provider is not a reliable predictor of success. For detailed information on selecting a screening partner, request ["Best Practices for Selecting a Background Screening Partner"](#) from EBI.



## What is the role of the screening company?

The screening company needs to deliver a Grammy winning performance!



**About EBI.** Employment Background Investigations (EBI) is a privately-held background screening firm known for its commitment to US-based customer service & operations, and for its agile and dependable cloud-based screening technology. EBI provides modern background screening solutions for today's talent acquisition needs. Voted #1 Overall Enterprise Screening provider in the industry in HRO's Baker's Dozen Customer Satisfaction survey, as well as number one in Quality of Service and Breath of Service Offering, EBI specializes in creating solutions that complement your existing talent acquisition workflow. With ISO 9001 and ISO 27001 Certifications, EBI is committed to providing the most secure, highest quality solutions in the industry.





## **Should Employers Consider Workers with a Criminal Record? A Look at Second Chances.**

*By Dawn Standerwick*

*VP Strategic Growth, Employment Screening Resources*

You may be surprised to learn that there are millions of individuals with a prior criminal history living and working in society. They have served their time, have rehabilitated themselves and become productive members of society contributing to their communities instead of consuming limited resources.

According to federal Bureau of Justice statistics, nearly 700,000 individuals are released from state and federal prisons every year, and there are nearly 70 million people in the United States with a state criminal record(s) history - about 30 percent of the adult population.

There are countless examples of individuals who have made a mistake – and if we're honest – some are not minor crimes and then there's the matter of pattern behavior. After an individual is sentenced and fulfills their debt to society, then what? Should a past criminal deed prevent a person from obtaining gainful employment for the rest of their lives? The immediate answer that comes to mind is no – but it's not that simple because without deliberate consideration, the stigma around a criminal history may be the basis for employers to decide that person doesn't have a place within their organization, regardless of how long ago it occurred or rehabilitation efforts.

What happens if we create a segment of our population who, due to their past, cannot get a job and are unable to support themselves and their families? One reality is the likelihood that they will re-offend or may forever be a consumer of social programs like welfare -both are endless cycles that are not ideal for our society.

Under the Obama administration, the introduction of the Fair Chance Business Pledge sought to break this cycle and challenged businesses to allow individuals with criminal records, including formerly incarcerated individuals, a fair chance to participate in the American economy. Under his administration, a ban the box law was passed that prevents the federal government from asking job applicants about their criminal history until after a conditional job offer is made.

More recently, the First Step Act, a criminal justice reform law, was passed under the Trump administration. The law takes steps to ease what has been viewed as very punitive prison sentences at the federal level. It only affects the federal prison system, which currently has approximately 181,000 individuals imprisoned, but may serve as model legislation for states which could impact the 2.1 million people who are currently serving sentences in U.S. jail and prisons. The law takes steps to ease mandatory minimum sentencing requirements under federal law such as the "three strikes" rule that mandates certain sentencing minimums. Overall, the law would lead to shorter prison sentences for the future and takes steps to encourage rehabilitation programs in prisons to affect a reduction in the term of sentences.

While it may seem unlikely for the background screening industry to support second-chance efforts, our company and many other firms agree that individuals with a prior criminal history should not be prevented from having gainful employment. We believe in the thoughtful consideration of all aspects of a person's background, but, that there should be a job for every person. I have personally attended a number of second chance events and have heard the stories of employers who have embraced a second chance program within their organization.

The employers reported that “restored citizens” within their companies have outperformed workers with no criminal history. They report that those individuals are more committed because they recognize that the company took a chance on them and that if they lose this opportunity to work, the next one might not be so easy to find. I was moved to tears by some of the laid bare accounts of workers with children who were trying to get out of bad situations who recognized their past mistake and were desperate for a second chance to redeem themselves and to be able to support themselves and their families.

Employers absolutely have both the right and obligation to protect their assets, employees and their customers from both financial and physical harm, but doing so in a way that is fair and equitable to job seekers is important.

## **What You Can Do**

### **Follow the EEOC’s Guidance on the Use of Criminal Records in Hiring Decisions**

Employers should follow sensible procedures in considering the past conviction records of job applicants, in line with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s (EEOC) 2012 guidance and ensure factors such as the nature and gravity of the offense, the time since it occurred and how it relates to the job being held or sought are considered. A criminal history used to disqualify an individual should have a direct connection to a discernable risk to the business before it is used to exclude a person.

### **Provide the Opportunity for an Individualized Assessment**

The guidance provides that individuals being disqualified based on a criminal record should be offered the opportunity for an individualized assessment after the above-mentioned factors have been applied and the applicant is still disqualified. The individualized assessment gives the candidate an opportunity to provide additional information and details about their criminal history for the employer to consider such as age when it occurred, the total number of prior offenses, rehabilitation efforts and evidence that they performed the same type of work post-conviction without any problems.

Providing a fair review of qualifications and background, then, following non-discriminatory practices will enable employers to protect their interests and the interests of those they serve, without excessively burdening applicants for past mistakes.

### **Review Your Policy & Consider Taking the Pledge**

Employers should not automatically reject an applicant just because they have a criminal record. Brightline policies that automatically reject a candidate because they have a criminal record are vanishing and, potentially, an illegal practice.

There are fair chance initiatives and laws everywhere you look. A movement is underway that recognizes that the best person for the job may be an individual who has a prior criminal record. We applaud companies who want to make their communities a better place and who embrace the concept of a second chance.



## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

A subject matter expert with over 27 years of experience, Dawn Standerwick has extensive knowledge in all facets of workforce screening while specializing in background screening, drug testing, occupational health testing, and related HR technologies. She has served the industry’s trade association in leadership positions and the organization’s Chairperson in 2017. Before joining ESR, Dawn held senior positions in the screening industry as Vice President of Operations, Vice President of Sales and Marketing and Vice President of Business Development.



# **INVISIBLE EMPLOYEES: IS THE SCREENING OF YOUR THIRD-PARTY LABOR (BPO) UP TO THE SAME STANDARDS**

*By: David Robillard, CEO, MultiLatin Background Screening*

For more than twenty years companies have sought to improve profitability and efficiency through the outsourcing of their non-core processes. Because of their proximity and shared time zones Mexico and other countries in Latin America have become attractive to many US companies for such offshoring or “nearshoring” requirements.

What is lost on some companies is the fact that by virtue of outsourcing these processes they are creating a new category of “Invisible Employee” who may represent potential risks in a region whose compliance measures haven’t caught up to speed with those in the US

By design, client companies, rarely know who the individuals are responsible for conducting outsourced processes, yet these knowledge workers handle confidential and sometimes sensitive personal data.

Third parties who provide outsourcing services for business processes need to comply with the same compliance standards that affect their clients. The Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry, which is increasingly driven by technology, has evolved from low-end services such as customer support to high-level services such as software development, research, and IT operations support.

The capacity to meet data protection and fraud prevention regulations will be an important differentiator for the BPO sector when it comes to competing in the market.

## **IN COMPLIANCE: A PREREQUISITE FOR SUCCESS**

Technology now plays an important part in helping BPO teams comply with multiple regulations involved in each outsourced contract: monitoring processes for IT spending, change management, system security, service level agreements (SLAs), etc. This technology should be set up together with policies and procedures that guarantee compliance in all areas of the company.

Most BPOs clearly understand the value of complying with regulations in order to maintain certification levels that back their operations. They are increasingly aware of the importance of observing laws on data protection and information security. And the integrity of employees plays a definitive role.

## **COMPLIANCE AT TWO OPERATING LEVELS**

There are two main segments in the BPO industry:

Internal Providers or Shared Services Center. Subcontracting decisions are made by the parent organization. Business activities can be located in high-quality, low-cost offshore locations. The offshore center is viewed as an extension of the company, and the organization itself must make sure that the offshore center complies with all regulatory matters inherent to operations.

External providers. External providers must self-regulate in order to stay competitive in the market. This means observing the highest standards of compliance aligned with the latest regulations that impact technology providers as well as maintaining high quality services.

## **PROTECTING PRIVACY AND PREVENTING FRAUD**

Issues of privacy and integrity in handling data are the main concerns related to outsourcing. This is especially relevant for companies that have intellectual property (IP) and private data to protect, such as banks, telecommunications companies or companies in the healthcare sector. These must be very careful to maintain the confidentiality of their clients’ records.

Contractors that are conscientious in following regulations can more successfully attract interest from local and global companies if they make sure their employee selection process includes high screening standards by establishing a background check program.

If BPOs do not guarantee the required level of information security and risk prevention, they will lose important business opportunities. Best practices to safeguard the confidentiality of a client are a minimum requirement for these types of companies. They must also ensure compliance in their operations both locally and abroad.

#### **PRACTICES THAT CAN IMPROVE YOUR COMPLIANCE:**

1. Incorporate prevention programs in the candidate selection process. A risk matrix will allow for background checks that verify each candidate's information based on their degree of responsibility in handling client information.
2. Have clearly documented policies and procedures. This helps satisfy both the client and the regulatory or certification authority and increases the company's own confidence level for landing new business opportunities.
3. Provide regular training programs to internal users. Knowledge of compliance policies should permeate from top management to operations.
4. Have detailed security policies and an appropriate structure, from controlling levels of access to data to configuration of firewalls and intrusion detection systems (IDS). It is useful to supplement this with internal and external auditing mechanisms.
5. Prepare, document and test incident management and escalation procedures.

#### **A BACKGROUND CHECK PROGRAM IN THE CANDIDATE SELECTION PROCESS:**

- Lowers the company's risk of being fined for non-compliance.
- Significantly reduces information leaks and unauthorized access.
- Provides greater preparedness for compliance audits.

#### **WHY DO BACKGROUND CHECKS RAISE YOUR STANDARDS OF COMPLIANCE?**

1. People manage technology. Outsourcing the candidate selection process not only affects the effectiveness of the process itself but also raises your confidence level when you have a provider who adheres to international quality standards and complies with local regulations.
2. Reinforcing the candidate selection process reduces the risk of fraud and mismanagement of sensitive personal data as well as confidential company information. Internal staff commits the greatest number of frauds in most industries.
3. A well-defined risk matrix will take into account different levels of responsibility and access to information for each position and will define the most appropriate variables to review or verify during the background check process.

#### **BACKGROUND CHECKS VS SOCIOECONOMIC STUDIES**

In Latin America the practice of using socioeconomic studies in the candidate selection process is still widespread. In order for BPOs to upgrade their screening measures, such studies will not do. Companies must insist on verifying candidate supplied information instead of compiling information. The following explains some of the major differences between socioeconomic studies and background checks as a prevention tool for HR compliance.

##### **SOCIOECONOMIC STUDIES**

1. Only compile information.
2. Not all information requested is relevant for mitigating risks.
3. Information handling tends to manual.
4. Can easily lead to discrimination.

##### **BACKGROUND CHECKS**

1. Verify whether information provided by the candidate is true.
2. Are based on a risk matrix that defines different scopes for different positions.
3. Information handling is encrypted and can be monitored at any time by the company's HR area.
4. Non-discriminatory, respects the candidate's privacy and starts with their consent.

If your company is considering the outsource of business processes make sure that the employees of your third parties are screened to the same level of diligence as you would use for employees who work directly for you. This way you will avoid hiring invisible employees.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

David is President of MultiLatin and has more than 20 years of experience advising boards of directors and senior management on integrity and corporate reputational risk issues in Latin America. David is Chairman of the Latin American Task Force for NAPBS. You can contact David at [info@multilatin.com](mailto:info@multilatin.com).





## Make Sure Your Background Screening Program Has Value

*By Todd Carpenter, President, IntelliCorp Records, Inc.*

If you ask yourself what's the most important thing a screening provider can offer, it may be somewhat difficult to name a single attribute. Instead, you probably would name common items such as compliance, price, accuracy, turnaround times, and of course, customer service. To put it in context, when it comes to background screening value is far more than just the report. It's a combination of multiple elements working in tandem to provide you with a positive experience and confidence in your hiring process.

Therefore, it's important that you understand what it takes to create a successful and meaningful background screening program that is legally compliant and provides real value – not just a report.

### **Compliance**

Think about it. Compliance, along with privacy and security should be givens, especially if you're using a reputable company. Of course, a major part of why organizations conduct background checks is to avoid risk. It's why quality background screening providers make compliance a priority, for both their organization and for you.

Make sure your screening provider is an expert in federal, state and local laws that impact the employment screening process, including the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA). Moreover, they should offer you the most recent disclosure, authorization, pre-adverse and adverse action forms that take in account specific state or local jurisdictional requirements. It's always recommended that you consult with your legal counsel prior to using any forms.

### **Price**

The adage of you get what you pay for can apply to background screening. Is the lowest price really the best? It can be a challenge to work within budget constraints to perform the proper due diligence on your applicants. However, do you understand what you're getting in a search for the price you pay? It's wise to compare providers and their products and services when evaluating your background screening program – and be sure to compare apples to apples.

Learn if your screening provider is searching multiple sources of data to compile a complete report on your candidate. Sometimes, less expensive and cursory background checks are missing key data which can be concerning. Background checks are a key component of the hiring process and bring significant value, much more so than the cost of conducting them. How much are they worth to your organization? The lowest price may not be your best solution especially when other services are offered.

### **Quality Data/Accuracy**

The information received in a background check report is about a real person, and the decision-making process that follows can impact the candidate, your employees, as well as your organization. Because it's a crucial step in the hiring lifecycle, you need the most up-to-date information on your candidate to make a fair and compliant evaluation.

Database searches do not contain all criminal record information for every individual across the country. A true nationwide database simply doesn't exist, so gaps in information occur. Quality providers use a database only as a component and look to other sources to help ensure a thorough search for records. Additionally, the method of applying FCRA rules should be based on where the candidate lives or works, not the jurisdiction the record came from. This way, you can be confident that a compliant search has been performed, which provides you with additional value and increased assurance when making hiring and recruiting decisions.

### **Turnaround Times**

Time is of the essence and turnaround times must be fast. You, as the customer, depend on it. When there are excellent candidates, it's important to get them through the recruiting process quickly so they don't leave and go elsewhere. However, a background check should not sacrifice quality and compliance for speed. It can be a fine balancing act for your screening provider, and sometimes patience is a virtue.

There are over 3,000 counties or county equivalents in the United States. The amount of time it takes to obtain search results varies greatly from county to county (from minutes to weeks). Automation and other innovation can help, but turnaround times for background checks can vary greatly depending on many factors. Provisions to keep in mind: the components of the screen, data source availability, information supplied for the background check, and other circumstances such as court closures, holidays and clerk only criminal searches.

## Customer Service

But the overarching component that surrounds your screening program just may be customer service.

You deserve great customer service, right? Many people think that customer service begins and ends with a phone call when you need a question answered or problem solved. While superior customer service can vary from company to company, it starts behind the scenes before you even thought of picking up the phone, sending an email, or initiating a live chat. And it doesn't end after the conversation is over. It's about the overall "end-to-end experience" you receive from your background screening provider.

Information is power, and another good measure of expert customer service is keeping you informed on legislative issues, industry trends and product offerings via mediums such as monthly newsletters, blog posts, alerts/announcements and emails. It's also about having access to sample forms, reference guides, how-to manuals and compliance information to help you achieve screening standards. The more knowledge you have the better chance your program will be successful.

Ask yourself some of the following questions. Is the provider's the staff in-house (not offshored)? Are employees FCRA certified and trained with extensive product line and industry knowledge? Are they caring? Do they provide complimentary training sessions on their system, products and compliance? Does your background screening provider ask for your feedback through surveys or offer beta testing opportunities? The answer to these may lead you to the thought that perhaps the greatest value to you is your screening provider's customer service.

## Overall Value

What is of most importance from a background screening provider will vary from organization to organization. While all the items above are important components of a meaningful background screening program, the whole of the sum of your relationship with your provider should be greater than the sum of its parts. This is the overall value.

Take a moment to think about your overall experience with your background screening provider and make sure it provides more value than just a report.

### About The Company



IntelliCorp provides a comprehensive view of your candidate with quality, compliant background screening services. NAPBS accredited, the company offers mobile-friendly applicant portals, strong data, FCRA training and compliance guidance, ATS/HRIS integrations and outstanding U.S. based customer service. Our uniqueness is the value of the "entire package" you receive when conducting background screening with IntelliCorp. This encompasses our products, service and consumer report we deliver to you. In 2018, our customers helped us achieve the number one ranking on HRO Today magazine's Baker's Dozen list of the top 13 midsize-program screening providers, and the top spot on the quality of service list.



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## **Brittany Bollinger**

President

Alliance Background

12651 Walsingham Rd Ste. C

Largo, FL, USA

727-287-5690

[bbollinger@alliancebackground.com](mailto:bbollinger@alliancebackground.com)

Founded in 2018, Alliance Background leverages both a fresh point of view with years of industry experience. Alliance delivers services using advanced technology to deliver industry leading speed and accuracy, superior customer service and unbeatable value to achieve a perfect “3 out of 3”.

Alliance founder Brittany Bollinger is active in many associations and organizations including Junior Leagues International, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Delta Gamma and currently serves on the Board of HR Tampa. Ms. Bollinger previously served as the youngest elected board member to the National Association of Professional Background Screeners (NAPBS).



## Contact Information:

(800) 771.7703

[sales@ainsight.com](mailto:sales@ainsight.com)

[www.ainsight.com](http://www.ainsight.com)

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**Patricia Cinkle**

President

Candid Research, Inc.  
3111 N. Tustin St. Suite 280  
Orange  
CA 92865 USA  
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**Matt Scott**

Director of Marketing

Direct (901) 312-8647

Office (901) 685-7599 ext 8647

Email [mscott@datafacts.com](mailto:mscott@datafacts.com)

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**Chris Fucci**

VP of Marketing

Employment Background Investigations, Inc.

800-324-7700 x.136

[www.ebiinc.com](http://www.ebiinc.com)

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**Dawn Standerwick**

Vice President, Strategic Growth

Employment Screening Resources (ESR)

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Direct: (415) 761-9027

[dstanderwick@esrcheck.com](mailto:dstanderwick@esrcheck.com)

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**Christine M. Cunneen**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Hire Image LLC  
www.hireimage.com  
contact@hireimage.com  
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**Tammy Cohen**

Founder & Chief Visionary Officer  
InfoMart  
1582 Terrell Mill Rd Marietta  
Marietta, GA, United States 30067  
Phone #: 770 984 2727  
Sales@BackgroundScreening.com  
www.BackgroundScreening.com



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3000 Auburn Drive, Suite 410  
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shravan.kumar@neeyamo.com  
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## **Suzanne Peterson**

Marketing Engagement Manager  
Orange Tree Employment Screening.  
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info@otes.com  
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## **Sarah Price**

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VP of Business Development  
Shield Screening, LLC.  
6810 East 121st South  
Bixby, OK 74008  
(P) 800-260-3738  
(F) 800-737-5184  
[www.shieldscreening.com](http://www.shieldscreening.com)

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**Jerry Nielson**

President  
TruDiligence  
3190 S Wadsworth Blvd, Suite 260  
Lakewood, Colorado, USA 80227  
800 580 0474  
[info@trudiligence.com](mailto:info@trudiligence.com)  
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**Chris Fucci**

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800-324-7700 x.136

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### **Tammy Cohen**

Founder & Chief Visionary Officer  
InfoMart  
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Beachwood, OH, USA 44122  
800-539-3717  
Sales@intellicorp.net  
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**Daniel Fallows**

Executive Director  
Mintz Global Screening  
Unit 1001 – 305 Milner Ave  
Toronto, Ontario  
Canada - Postal Code : M1B3V4  
+1 877 359 8130 x 7882  
salesinfo@mintzglobal.com  
<https://mintzglobalscreening.com>

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**Shravan Manthena,*****Global Client Partner***

shravan.kumar@neeyamo.com  
+ (408) 930-7495

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14317 La Rinconda Drive,  
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Neeyamo is a niche provider of global HR Outsourcing services. Our international Background Verification (iBGV) solution caters to conducting searches in 185+ countries.

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# OrangeTree

## **Suzanne Peterson**

Marketing Engagement Manager  
Orange Tree Employment Screening.  
7275 Ohms Ln,  
Minneapolis, MN 55439  
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## **Alysha Sankey**

National Account Manager | Sales  
2235 Sheppard Ave East  
Suite 1503  
Toronto, Ontario. M2J 5B5  
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### Jimmy Critchfield

Director of Government Sales

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708-887-9245

[jvcritchfield@accuratebiometrics.com](mailto:jvcritchfield@accuratebiometrics.com)

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**Chris Fucci**

VP of Marketing

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**Shravan Manthena,**

**Global Client Partner**

[shravan.kumar@neeyamo.com](mailto:shravan.kumar@neeyamo.com)

+ (408) 930-7495

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