



Suggested Background Checks and What They Can Tell You

- Driving record—A Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) check is very important for any applicant. A DMV check reveals driving history of the applicant and any alcohol or drug-related incidents.
- Social Security—Checking that the applicant's Social Security number is that person's ensures that the applicant is not fraudulently using another person's number. In addition, a potential employer may verify the applicant's current or prior addresses via the Social Security Administration.
- Credit history—Credit history demonstrates an applicant's financial performance and allows a potential employer to judge an applicant's responsibility. According to the U.S. Fair Credit Report Act, if an employer uses credit reporting as part of the background investigation, then he or she must provide an applicant with a copy and summary of his or her credit report if he or she is rejected for employment.
- Criminal conviction (county, state, and federal)—Shows an applicant's criminal activity and prevents negligent hiring.
- Drug testing—Presents any drug use by the applicant.
- Personality testing—Guides employers in hiring decisions, often allowing the employers to gauge whether an applicant will mesh with others in the workplace.
- Sex offender/child abuse registry—Lists any person charged with any crimes involving children.
- Professional licensing—When a professional designation is necessary for the job, a check to determine whether the applicant possesses the designation or certification helps determine if he or she is qualified to do the job.
- Higher education verification—Checks the accuracy of the information submitted by the applicant, and depending on course of study, demonstrates to a degree whether he or she is qualified for the job.
- Fingerprinting—Verifies whether the applicant has a criminal history.
- Employment references—Verifies past employment and dates, as well as the accuracy of the information the applicant submitted.

There are also newer screening methods that allow an employer to narrow down the search for a new employee. A candidate's social networking profile on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or even just 'Googling' a candidate may provide a wealth of information about what they might have done or said or achieved in the past. However, an employer must be very careful not to discriminate against a candidate according to the law. It is also worth remembering that a candidate has a professional and a personal life and therefore an "online persona" might not truly represent their character strengths and weaknesses. Before doing any background check, it is advisable to obtain prior written consent with a signed release from the job candidate.

For more information or questions about background checks, please contact GTM's Household Employment Experts at (800) 432-7972.