



# University of North Alabama

## Employee Policy Manual and Handbook

### **Background Checks**

In order to verify the pertinent backgrounds of individuals before being hired into positions at The University of North Alabama, the University conducts a pre-employment background check as part of its employment procedures. The University contracts with an outside agency to perform the background checks. The cost for the checks is to be borne by the University. At minimum, a criminal records search and verification of social security number is required for all recommended candidates for faculty and staff positions. \* As such, the background checks are conducted by the Office of Human Resources (HR) only upon receipt of a recommendation to hire a candidate for a position. A pre-employment credit history check will be conducted for selected candidates for, but not limited to, the following positions:

- Senior and executive level management positions;
- Positions with access to university financial and/or sensitive information, records/databases;
- Positions handling cash and checks on a regular basis.

Job postings for positions subject to background investigations will contain notification to applicants that, prior to hiring, the final candidate must successfully pass a pre-employment background investigation. As a general rule, the results of the investigation must be received before an offer of employment can be made. However, under extreme circumstances, an offer of employment may be made prior to the completion of the background check provided the employment letter states that employment is contingent upon a satisfactory report. For this particular situation, the employment letter must contain the following statement: "This offer is contingent upon the completion of a background investigation which reveals satisfactory results."

### **Background Investigation Procedure**

During completion of a staff/service employment application or a faculty profile application, candidates will be notified of the proper disclosures and asked to authorize the release of information for a background check.

*\*Background investigations for Teachers at Kilby School and for University Police Officers will continue to be conducted by their respective departments according to state requirements in addition to checks performed by HR.*

Although a background check will include, at minimum, a criminal history and social security number trace, and, for some positions, a credit history, it is the responsibility of the recommending official to check employment and/personal references and to verify required professional licenses and certifications prior to a formal background investigation request being submitted. Academic degrees will continue to be verified through official transcripts for faculty positions, which will be maintained in each selected candidate's personnel file. Academic degrees required for staff positions will be verified through our background check provider as part of the initial background check. If required for a particular position, a Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) may be requested by the recommending official. If a background check shows possible disqualifying information, the Office of HR, in consultation with the recommending official and his/her respective Vice President, will determine whether to exclude the candidate. In making this determination, the following factors should be taken into consideration: the nature and details of the conviction, the length of time that has passed since the offense occurred, how the crime relates to the responsibilities of the position, and any evidence of rehabilitation. However, the President reserves the right to make the ultimate decision concerning the disposition of each candidate.

If the possibility of adverse action exists, the Office of HR will provide a Pre-Adverse Action Notice along with a copy of the consumer report and a notice of rights to the candidate. The candidate has a minimum of five business days to refute information with the provider. If the candidate fails to respond in a timely manner to remove or to clarify the disqualifying information, the recommending manager will be notified by the Office of HR, and he/she may proceed with the selection process and recommend another candidate. If the decision is made not to hire the candidate, a Final Adverse Action Notice is mailed or emailed to the candidate by the Office of HR explaining the reason for not hiring. Background checks revealing misrepresentations may be grounds for immediate rejection of the application. All information received in the background investigation process will be maintained in the employee's personnel file or in a confidential file (for those individuals who are not hired).

*Approved by Board of Trustees June 11, 2007*