

# Standard Practice Guide Policies

## Background Screening

201.95

**Applies to:** Faculty; Postdoctoral Research Fellows (employee trainees); Staff (Regular and Temporary); GSIs; GSSAs; and GSRAs

**Policy Content:** It is important that the University's academic, research, patient care and service missions are supported by qualified employees and appointees with a safe and secure environment for all University constituents, including students, visitors, patients and employees. This policy is intended to support the verification of credentials, criminal history<sup>[1]</sup> ([https://spg.umich.edu/#\\_ftn1](https://spg.umich.edu/#_ftn1)), and other information related to employment and appointment decisions that assist the University in meeting its commitments.

### **Section 1: Faculty, Postdoctoral Research Fellows, and Staff (Regular and Temporary)**

A pre-employment background check must be conducted before a candidate may receive a firm offer of employment to a faculty<sup>[2]</sup> ([https://spg.umich.edu/#\\_ftn2](https://spg.umich.edu/#_ftn2)), postdoctoral research fellow<sup>[3]</sup> ([https://spg.umich.edu/#\\_ftn3](https://spg.umich.edu/#_ftn3)), or staff position at the University of Michigan.

For faculty, postdoctoral research fellow, and staff positions, the pre-employment background check includes, at minimum, a review of the individual's criminal conviction history, national sex offender registry screen, social security verification, and a verification of the individual's academic credentials. Additional review or verification may be required, based on the nature of the position sought. The University may, as needed, change the minimum requirements for a pre-employment background check.

The background check requirement applies to individuals newly appointed to the University. A background check must be completed before a candidate for a faculty, postdoctoral research fellow, or staff position may receive a non-contingent offer of employment at the University.

A candidate for employment who refuses to consent to the authorization to conduct a criminal records check will be excluded from consideration for employment.

A candidate for employment who provides false or inaccurate information during the application process will normally be excluded from consideration for employment. If the false or inaccurate information is discovered after an individual has begun employment, the individual's employment may be terminated pursuant to the appropriate dismissal procedures.

## **Section 2: Graduate Student Instructors, Graduate Student Staff Assistants and Graduate Student Research Assistants**

A pre-appointment background check must be completed before a graduate student may receive a firm offer of appointment as a Graduate Student Instructor (GSI), Graduate Student Staff Assistant (GSSA) or Graduate Student Research Assistant (GSRA). So long as a graduate student is enrolled (or on an approved leave of absence from their academic program) as a graduate student each fall and winter semester, a background check need not be performed prior to subsequent appointments as a GSI, GSSA or GSRA. If a graduate student ceases to remain enrolled (or on approved leave of absence from their academic program) each fall and winter semester, a new background check will be required prior to the first GSI, GSSA or GSRA appointment following re-enrollment.

For GSI, GSSA, and GSRA appointments, the pre-appointment background check includes, at minimum, a pre-appointment review of the individual's criminal conviction history, national sex offender registry screen, and social security verification. Additional review or verification may be required, based on the nature of the position sought. The University may, as needed, change the minimum requirements for a pre-employment background check.

A graduate student who refuses to consent to the authorization to conduct a background check will be excluded from consideration for a GSI, GSSA and/or GSRA appointment.

In such a circumstance, the academic unit that admitted the graduate student will not be obligated to offer alternative forms of support, irrespective of any financial support commitment made at the time of admission into the graduate program.

A graduate student who provides false or inaccurate information during the appointment application process will normally be excluded from consideration for appointment as a GSI, GSSA or GSRA. In addition, the graduate student may be subject to sanction under the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities and/or applicable school/college policies for providing false or inaccurate information. If the false or inaccurate information is discovered after an individual has begun his or her appointment, the individual's appointment may be terminated pursuant to the appropriate dismissal procedure.

## **Section 3: General Provisions**

An individual with a criminal conviction is not automatically excluded from employment or appointment. Appointing units, in consultation with the applicable Human Resources Office, will assess any criminal conviction history which is returned as a result of the criminal records check.

The Office of the General Counsel will be consulted as needed. This individualized assessment will consider the nature and gravity of the offense, the time elapsed since the offense or completion of the sentence, and its relevance to the particular position sought.

Additional review or verification may be required (a) for current employees as required by law, regulation, or policy or (b) if a current employee seeks to change positions based on the nature of the new position sought.

Procedures: <http://hr.umich.edu/procedures/spg201-95.html>  
(<http://hr.umich.edu/procedures/spg201-95.html>)

[1] ([https://spg.umich.edu/#\\_ftnref1](https://spg.umich.edu/#_ftnref1))The term “criminal” means any conviction for a misdemeanor or felony, or any pending felony charges.

[2] ([https://spg.umich.edu/#\\_ftnref2](https://spg.umich.edu/#_ftnref2))For purposes of this SPG, the term “faculty” means an appointment at any percent of effort greater than zero in the tenure track, research track, clinical track, supplemental appointment, visiting appointment, or Lecturer.

[3] ([https://spg.umich.edu/#\\_ftnref3](https://spg.umich.edu/#_ftnref3))For purposes of this SPG, the term “postdoctoral research fellow” means an employee-trainee as described in SPG 201.19.

## Notes

Note: Policy reviewed January 2019 with no changes

## File Attachments

Printable PDF of SPG Section 201.95  
(<http://www.spg.umich.edu/sites/default/files/201x95.pdf>)

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Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for  
Academic Affairs, University Human Resources, and  
Health System Human Resources

**Related Links:**

Procedures (<http://hr.umich.edu/procedures/spg201-95.html>)

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