



### 3.16 BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

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#### Purpose

To establish a mechanism for investigating the background of applicants and/or employees who have access to restricted records and information, such as, but not limited to, confidential public safety records and/or who are in positions identified on the job announcement as requiring a background investigation due to the nature of the assignment. Applicants/employees whose background investigation causes the City to question their suitability will either be ineligible for hire or will be subject to reassignment. However, in some cases, information obtained during a background investigation concerning a current City employee may result in discipline up to and including termination.

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#### Scope of Investigation

The scope of the investigation required depends on the particular position or assignment. A background investigation is intended to be more comprehensive than a criminal history check. [See Administrative Rule on Criminal History Checks](#). A background investigation is required for positions/assignments listed in [Appendix A](#). Positions/assignments that are not listed in Appendix A may be subject to a background investigation at the discretion of the appointing authority and approval by the Director. The appendix is not part of this Administrative Rule and may be changed at any time.

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#### Procedure

1. Determine the scope of investigation required for each position. There must be a nexus between the assigned duties and the scope of the investigation.
  2. The Director of the Bureau of Human Resources must approve the investigation the first time it is conducted for a particular position or assignment, and thereafter if significant changes are made.
  3. Note on the job announcement form that a background investigation is required before hire or assignment to the position.
  4. If an outside agency conducts the investigation, comply with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA). Consult with the City Attorney's Office concerning FCRA requirements.
  5. Depending on the scope of the background investigation the applicant/employee may be required to sign a release.
  6. The content of the background investigation is confidential.
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**Employment/Assignment  
Contingent on Results**

If the bureau is conducting a background investigation, the bureau may make a preliminary offer to the selected person, however, any offer must be conditional on the results of the background investigation.

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**Public Safety Bureaus  
Exempted**

Applicants and employees of the Portland Police Bureau, the Portland Bureau of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services and the Bureau of Emergency Communications are subject to the bureaus' procedures and rules for background investigations rather than this Administrative Rule.

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**References**

[HR Administrative Rule on Criminal History Checks](#)

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**Administrative Rule  
History**

Adopted by Chief Administrative Office October 15, 2002  
Effective October 15, 2002  
Revised July 28, 2003

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **POSITIONS OR ASSIGNMENTS SUBJECT TO BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS**

- Bureau of Information Technology employees who have access to police data and information, including access to police computers and data systems and/or to other confidential public safety data and information.
- Human Resources Coordinator assigned to the Portland Police Bureau.
- Human Resources Site Team Manager assigned to the Public Safety Team.
- Employees of the Independent Police Review Division.
- Other positions or assignments as determined by the Appointing Authority and approved by the Director.