

# CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

## I. Policy Section

6.0 Human Resources

## II. Policy Subsection

6.20 Criminal Background Checks

## III. Policy Statement

Criminal background checks will be conducted for:

1. All finalists for employment with Grand Rapids Community College.
2. Students in specified academic programs.
3. Students who participate in some GRCC sponsored activities.
4. Employees in programs where these checks are required under state and federal law.
5. Employees serving at sites where these checks are required under state and federal law.
6. Volunteers.
7. Independent contractors as necessary.

The criminal background check takes place prior to hire, admission or participation. The academic programs that require criminal background checks for students are in health programs, preschool lab classes, Police Academy and study away programs.

## IV. Reason for the Policy

Criminal background checks are necessary to determine whether applicants for employment should be considered for positions within the College. Criminal background checks for students and employees in health programs, pre-school lab classes, Police Academy, and study away programs are necessary to comply with state and federal law. The practice of checking criminal backgrounds promotes a safe and secure environment for students, employees, property and confidential information.

V. Entities Affected by this Policy

All applicants who proceed through hiring process as a finalist  
GRCC Students in health programs, preschool lab classes, Police Academy and study away programs  
GRCC Police Department  
Human Resources and Student Employment Services Departments  
Academic departments requiring criminal background checks for students  
Volunteers

VI. Who Should Read this Policy

All employees  
All applicants  
Students considering enrollment in GRCC health programs, pre-school lab classes, Police Academy, and study away programs.  
Volunteers

VII. Related Documents

GRCC Health Programs websites  
Education Program websites

VIII. Contacts

Policy Owner: Executive Director of Human Resources  
Chief of GRCC Police or designee  
Human Resources Staff  
Associate Director for Student Employment Services  
Academic Leadership  
Department Heads  
Program Directors  
Director of Experiential Learning

IX. Definitions

A. Applicant: Applicants include potential student employees, regular employees, contingency employees, adjuncts and any volunteers or independent contractors who require key and computer access.

B. Student employees: Includes both student workers (funded through work study grants) and student assistants (funded through departmental budgets).

C. Regular employees: Employees whose positions include a benefit package. These may be part time or full time positions. Examples of regular employees include Faculty, CEBA, APSS, GRCC Police or Meet & Confer employees.

D. Contingency employees: Hired on a temporary basis. Usually, contingency employees are hired for a specific period of time to cover a peak period need, a specific activity or program or to fill in for a regular employee's FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) absence.

E. Adjunct employees: Part time faculty members hired on a semester by semester basis.

F. Volunteers: Persons who provide services and do not receive any compensation from the College.

G. Independent Contractors: This employment status is determined by Human Resources, per Fair Labor Standards Act guidelines.

## X. Procedures

A. Procedures for job applicants:

1. "Authorization to Investigate Criminal History" form (criminal background check form) is provided to an applicant.
2. Completed criminal background check form is sent to GRCC Police.
3. GRCC Police checks the criminal background. The focus of the GRCC Police background check is to verify the information provided on the criminal background check form.
4. Human Resources or Student Employment receives the confidential response from the GRCC Police department.

B. Impact of criminal history for job applicants:

GRCC will consider ex-offenders for employment; however, criminal background information will be closely reviewed by GRCC Police and Human Resources and/or Student Employment.

1. A decision to exclude an applicant from employment will be made on the basis of job relatedness. A job relatedness analysis is conducted in every situation where a criminal history is disclosed. This analysis considers the relationship of the crime to the ability, capacity or fitness to perform job duties and responsibilities.
2. Applicants for employment at GRCC may be denied employment for failing to disclose convictions on the criminal background check form. Any dishonesty shown by not revealing a conviction may result in elimination from the hiring process. Applicants who have been denied employment may appeal to Human Resources and/or Student Employment. The applicant must schedule an appeal within ten (10) business days of receiving notification. Requests for an appeal received after this time frame will not be considered. Appeals will be evaluated

with the assistance of GRCC Police. Additional questions may be asked of the applicant during the appeal process.

3. Applicants may be excluded from employment based on the following factors: Violence associated with their crime, sex offender registration or court ordered restrictions, level of offense (felony vs. misdemeanor), relationship of crime to ability, capacity or fitness to perform job duties and responsibilities, total number of crimes committed, connection to potential to cause property loss/theft or crimes associated with theft or dishonesty, time since conviction, evidence of rehabilitation.
4. Out-of-state background checks are conducted as needed. Any person denied employment, opportunity to volunteer, or participation in a program will be notified in writing via Human Resources departmental procedures.

C. Frequency of criminal background checks for applicants/employees:

1. If an employee has a break in service of more than one year, a new criminal background check will be completed. Adjuncts that have a break in service for more than two semesters (Fall and Winter) will be required to complete a new criminal background check.
2. By signing the authorization form, the College reserves the right to conduct a background check for any reason before or after employment begins.
3. GRCC reserves the right to conduct criminal background checks for current employees if the College becomes aware that an employee has been convicted of a crime that may impact his/her employment.

D. Procedures for employees who regularly work on K-12 property:

1. In addition to the criminal history checks conducted for all other applicants, fingerprint checks will be required for these faculties.
2. The fingerprint process is coordinated between the hiring authority and GRCC Police.
3. The College assumes the responsibility for cost of fingerprint checks for faculty who work on K-12 property.

E. Procedures for health program students:

1. The GRCC website contains complete information regarding criminal background check procedures for students who wish to be considered for the health programs. Students assume responsibility for the full cost of fingerprint checks required for admission to health programs. Complete information can be found at: <http://cms.grcc.edu/health-programs/background-check-information>

F. Procedures for preschool lab students:

1. The GRCC website contains complete information regarding criminal background check procedures for students who enroll in GRCC preschool lab classes. Complete information can be found

at: <http://www.grcc.edu/educationdepartment/backgroundcheckprocessandrequirements>

G. Procedures for Police Academy students:

1. The GRCC website contains complete information regarding criminal background check procedures for students who enroll in GRCC Police Academy classes. Complete information can be found at: <http://cms.grcc.edu/policeacademy>

H. Procedures for study away program students:

1. The GRCC website contains complete information regarding criminal background check procedures for students who wish to be considered as a participant for an international study away experience. Complete information can be found at: [http://cms.grcc.edu/GRCC\\_Study\\_Away\\_Student\\_Procedures](http://cms.grcc.edu/GRCC_Study_Away_Student_Procedures)

I. Procedures for employees charged with misdemeanors or felonies:

1. Any employee who is convicted of a felony or misdemeanor after they have been hired by GRCC must immediately report the charges to the Executive Director of Human Resources.

J. Procedures for former employees and guests with known criminal backgrounds:

1. GRCC may host guests or former employees who are on campus for events or speaking opportunities. While it is not our intention to complete a background check on all guests to our campus, if an event organizer is aware of a criminal background of a guest, please contact the Executive Director of Human Resources and/or the Chief of GRCC Police prior to booking the speaker. They will review the information with appropriate campus leaders. If an event organizer is asking a former employee to return to campus, please contact the Executive Director of Human Resources for a similar review.

XI. Forms

Human Resources form: Authorization to Investigate Criminal History

GRCC Police form: Authorization to Perform Fingerprint Check

Health Program Admissions form: Preliminary Background Check

Education and Child Development form: Criminal Background/Central Registry Check

Police Academy form: Police Academy Background Supplement

Study Away Program form: Study Away Experience Student Intake Form

XII. Effective Date

April 1, 2011

XIII. Policy History

New policy, effective April 1, 2011

Revised April, 2013

Revised June, 2017

Revised June, 2021

XIV. Next Review/Revision Date

June, 2025