

**45 Questions to Ask a Background Screening Firm**

1. Are you a member of the background screening trade association - National Association of Professional Background Screeners (NAPBS®) and does your firm actively participate and support professionalism in the screening industry?
2. Is your background screening firm accredited by the National Association of Professional Background Screeners (NAPBS®) Background Screening Credentialing Council (BSCC) as successfully proving compliance with the Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program (BSAAP)? If not, why not?
3. Does your background screening firm have legal staff and help desk with expertise on pre-employment screening and the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) and equivalent state laws?
4. Do you provide written documentation, whitepapers and online resources on safe hiring, due diligence, and legal compliance issues?
5. Does your background screening firm carry errors and omissions insurance coverage of at least \$2,000,000?
6. Has the firm never been the subject of a lawsuit for violations of the Fair Credit Reporting Act or equivalent state laws?
7. Does your background screening require its public record researchers to carry errors and omissions insurance?
8. Does your background screening firm have a highly automated completely paperless online system and processes that requires no special software and provides CPI compliant security and data privacy protection?
9. Does your background screening firm have real-time “assured compliance” built into the system assuring that all forms, notices, disclosures and consent documents are always up to date for use in all 50 states?
10. Is all work done in the USA to protect privacy and control quality -- i.e., nothing sent offshore to India or other “cheaper places” that puts applicants personally identifiable information and quality control at risk?
11. Is all information about your applicants available on the web 24/7, including real time status complete with notes?
12. Does your background screening system track the real-time status of every search so that nothing falls through the cracks?
13. Can your background screening firm archive all records so an employer can maintain paperless systems?
14. Does your screening firm operate on a platform that is HR-XML compliant that integrates seamlessly into HR Information Systems (HRIS) and Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)?
15. Can your background screening firm provide control features so an employer can set-up multiple sub-accounts, so that the Administrator can view all accounts, but each sub-account can only view their own reports?



16. Are all employment and education checks conducted by well trained personnel in a controlled, call center environment with nothing being sent to cheaper at-home workers where data privacy and the quality of work is at risk?
17. Are all employees with your background screening firm subject to an intensive training when they are hired, and attend documented ongoing training?
18. For employment verifications, are anti-fraud procedures in place, such as verifications of all past employer phone numbers instead of relying upon an applicant supplied number?
19. For Education verifications, are steps taken to verify if a college or university is accredited and to watch out for Diploma Mills?
20. Do you have a policy of NO Set-up fees and no minimum usage? (Credit report access requires a credit bureau mandated on-site inspection that is subject to a third-party fee fee.)
21. Do you offer 24/7 online ordering that gives an employer total control over the ordering process and speeds up turnaround time?
22. Does your screening firm undergo a yearly SOC 2® (SSAE 16) Audit Report that confirms the company meets high standards set by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) for protecting the privacy, security, and confidentiality of consumer information used during the background check process?
23. Are your background screening reports easy to read with important information summarized at the top for ease of use and do they come with delivery options?
24. Are criminal searches conducted using primary sources using the most accurate means, with no reliance on third party databases?
25. Where third party databases are used as a supplement to a primary source criminal records check, are results verified at the source before being reported?
26. Do you search for both felonies and misdemeanors when available?
27. When a criminal hit is reported, does knowledgeable person in your background screening firm report the findings (as opposed to having the information entered by some unknown court researcher)?
28. When there is a felony or high-level misdemeanor criminal record found, are you proactive in calling the client to advise them there is a potential problem?
29. Does your background screening firm take measures to ensure that ALL legal and relevant criminal records are searched, as opposed to just going back "seven" years, which can leave an employer exposed?
30. Do you accurately describe the pros and cons of criminal databases, and ensure clients are informed that databases are research tools only and are subject to false negatives and false positives?
31. Do you provide clients with all necessary FCRA and state specific forms and compliant procedures?
32. Do you notify your clients of changes in the FCRA and other applicable laws?
33. Is a member of your background screening firm a nationally recognized subject matter expert and speaker on safe hiring, use of criminal records and the FCRA?



34. Does the President of your background screening firm have an open door policy for any customer issues or questions?
35. Is your average turnaround time (TAT) 72 hours less?
36. If there is a delay for reasons that are out of your control, do you notify us online with in-depth notes and the estimated time of arrival (ETA)?
37. Does your background screening firm have large clients with nationally recognized names?
38. Do you partner with leading web sites and HR service providers?
39. Regarding customer service, will there be someone assigned to our account and familiar with our needs?
40. Does your background screening firm provide no-cost training programs and webinars?
41. Do you offer ordering options such as customized packages or individual searches and competitive pricing?
42. Do you provide a guide or interactive US map showing the significant rules for all 50 states when it comes to screening?
43. Has your background screening firm published a definitive book on background checks and safe hiring?
44. Does your background screening firm have extensive international capabilities?
45. Has your firm received notification from the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration (ITA) that its self-certification of adherence to the EU-U.S. Privacy Shield Framework that allows companies to transfer consumer data from the European Union (EU) to the United States (U.S.) in compliance with EU law is approved and effective?