

# Background Checks in JAR – FAQs

## How will the initiator determine what start date to use since background checks vary in processing time?

- The departments can enter any hire date when initiating a request, regardless of lockout schedule.
- The department will be able to move the start date *forward*, within reason, once the background check has been approved.
- The department will only be able to move the start date *backward*, up to the background check endorsement date.
- Any actions entered with start dates that are prior to the background check endorsement (including start dates that are prior to job action entry) will be questioned and, if an exception is needed, directed to the AVC HR.
- **Because of this, any urgent hires (other than Student Workers or Z-Access Only who do not need a background check) should be entered with a start date of at least 2 weeks from the date the transaction is initiated.** The initiator should indicate that the hiring department would like the person to begin as soon as the background check is endorsed by setting the **RUSH flag** on the *Background Check* section of **Initiate Job Request**. **This will avoid confusion and questions when exceptions are not being sought.**
- **No actions** with start dates that will be prior to a background check endorsement will be approved by the BCP until either the AVC HR has approved the exception request **OR** the BCP has verification from the initiator that the start date will be moved forward.

## Who will receive the email notification to fill out a background check form?

- All hire/rehire/promotion/transfer actions for SHRA, EHRA Non-Faculty, Faculty, Temps, Unpaid Faculty/Non Faculty, and County Extension; regardless of past background checks or hire actions
- Student Workers, if the department has requested that a background check be conducted (*See Pg.5*)

## What does the email say? Who does the email come from?

- All candidates will receive an email from the system that appears to be sent by the HR initiator. The email provides instructions on how to access and complete the electronic background check form and what information will be needed to do so.
- If the initiator indicated an existing EMPL ID on the Job Action Request **and** the person has an **active** Unity ID, they will use their Unity ID to access the electronic form.\*
- If no EMPL ID was indicated on the Job Action Request, the candidate will receive a second email immediately after the first; it will provide a temporary username and password.\*  
\* Access to the form will time out 14 days from when the email is sent

## When will the candidate be sent the email?

- If there **is no** college/division level approval for the action, the candidate will receive the email once the initiator submits the action.\*
- If there **is** college/division level approval for the action, the candidate will receive the email once the action receives initial approval.\*  
\* EXCEPT – If the hire action is entered more than 90 days in advance of the start date, the action will come to the BCP for review; the candidate will not receive the email at entry or approval. The BCP will trigger the email once the start date is within an acceptable range OR upon their notification of acceptable circumstances that deem it necessary that a background check be conducted sooner.

## How long will this new process take?

- HRIM encourages that hiring departments allow at least 2 weeks for the entire hiring process, even when considering the time it will take to process a background check.
  - The average time to process a background check is 3 – 5 business days from when the candidate submits the form. Hiring department should encourage candidates to complete the form as soon as possible to avoid delays. Please note, May – August has the highest volume of requests and the average processing time could be affected.

## What information is important for the initiator to provide so that the BCP can most thoroughly conduct a background check and provide an endorsement decision?

- **Candidate Information**
  - It is important to enter the Student/Employee ID# if one exists
  - For new hires who have no previous Student/Employee ID#, you will only enter the candidate's email address and name from application. (Remember – the name on the transaction will update to the legal name upon background check if it differs)
- **HP # (if applicable)**
  - Allows the BCP to accurately reference the job posting if needed
- **References (if available)**
- **Job duties or special circumstances that may impact how the background check is completed; review and select all appropriate check boxes in the BGC section**
  - **Driving:** positions that require the individual to drive a state vehicle as a regular part of their job responsibilities or when a dedicated vehicle is provided to the individual for the purpose of conducting University business
  - **Handling money or managing accounts:** positions with access to, or responsibility for, cash receipts, cash accounts, blank checks, checking accounts, or money market accounts. Credit checks will also be required for positions that initiate accounting/financial transactions that are not reviewed or verified by others; positions that have override authority for spending, receipting, HR, or billing transactions; all positions designated as Dean, Director, or Department Head
  - **Working with minors**
  - **Living in University housing for more than 3 days:** when housing is provided by the University as a benefit of employment; could be owned or paid for by the University (can include on-campus apartments, research stations, farms, etc.). In these cases, any adult living with the employee would be subject to background checks as well.
  - **Sponsorship on any visa type that is handled through International Employment:** H1-B, E-3, O-1, or TN
  - **CDL (Commercial Driver's License):** when an individual may need to operate a vehicle which requires a CDL as part of their job duties; this includes even **infrequent** use  
NOTE: These positions also require pre-employment drug testing per federal regulation
- **Things to document in the Background Check Comments section**
  - **Working Title** (if differs from job code)
  - **If a degree is required**
  - **Additional information**
    - If the department does not wish that a background check be conducted (for some Unpaid Faculty/Non-Faculty) (*See Pg.6*)
    - If the department wishes to exercise the "faculty exception" to **not** require a background check for faculty rehires (*See Pg.6*)

- Clarification or additional information about the position's duties
- Special circumstances

### Why are references needed on the Job Action Request? When should they be attached?

- "References" will show as an attachment type on all hires (all EMPL classes). If reference check notes (from phone calls) or reference letters exist, the department should attach them to the transaction, at time of entry preferably. This would be the natural workflow since references come *first* - prior to offers. References are the one document we would expect departments to have at the **Initiate Job Request** step, while offer letters and patent agreements (based on the typical hiring process) could come much later and are required only prior to final approval.
- Depending on the situation, a background check endorsement may not be possible unless reference information is readily available; not being attached could cause a delay. Positive references can provide a more holistic view of the candidate and help overshadow some criminal history concerns, making a positive (but still sound and defensible) outcome possible.
- Housing the reference information in PeopleSoft will ensure that the information is available in a **permanent** capacity if a need to produce the documentation arises; there will be greater security for the documentation ensuring it does not get misplaced/destroyed. Reference checks, in addition to criminal background checks, provide protection against unwise or negligent hiring.
- In addition, the documentation will now be easily accessed by department HR personnel allowing them to better support hiring managers by making sound and well-documented hiring decisions. This safe, secure, and central storage of hiring documentation will enable transparent hiring processes and may help to identify if a hiring manager needs additional assistance or training to maintain quality hiring practices.

### How will the hiring department be able to track the background check status?

- The initiator, as well as any person in the department that has the same JAR access, can monitor the progress of the background check through the Activity Guide on the transaction. The following statuses will show, as applicable:
  - **Pending BGC Review** – the candidate hasn't received the link. This could be because the hire date is more than 90 days out OR because the BCP has not yet created an EMPL ID for a new Access Only-No Pay
  - **Sent to Applicant** – the candidate has been sent the email that allows access to the electronic form, but it has not yet been completed
  - **Pending Results** – the candidate has completed the background check form; the BCP is working toward an endorsement decision. This could mean that the BCP must clarify information provided by the candidate prior to processing, the check is in process, or additional research is needed
    - **Common delays** – the candidate providing incorrect information, out-of-state residences, multiple names, common names (i.e. Smith, Jones, etc.), possible record matches that require additional research to confirm/exclude, candidate non-responsive to BCP attempts for additional information or clarification
  - **Complete** – the BCP has completed all steps. This could mean any of the following:
    - The candidate was endorsed for employment
    - The candidate was endorsed, but not endorsed for all duties indicated (see information on Confirm Job Request)
    - The candidate was not endorsed for employment (the transaction will now show as canceled)
    - An exception was granted to allow hire prior to background check endorsement (the initiator will still receive an email once the background check finishes processing)
    - The check was canceled for any reason

- No background check needed to be processed
  - **Skipped (Student Workers/Z-Access Only)** – the candidate did not receive an email to complete the electronic background check form, no background check was processed, no EMPL ID was created
- The initiator will receive email notifications regarding any endorsement decision.

### **What if the candidate experiences difficulty or hasn't completed the form in a timely manner?**

- It is most helpful for the hiring department to provide initial troubleshooting. These are things you should consider before contacting the BCP for assistance:
  - Was the email address entered correctly on **Initiate Job Request**?  
\* *The HR initiator also would have received a bounced-back email they could forward*
  - Has the candidate already checked their SPAM folder?
  - Has the candidate waited longer than 14 days to complete the form from when they received the email?
  - Is the hire date more than 90 days out?
  - Has the candidate forgotten their Unity ID and/or password? If so, they should contact the NCSU help desk
- If the email needs to be resent, please email the BCP (including the transaction ID #). The department should continue to follow up with the candidate and track their progress.

### **How will the hiring department be able to ensure that appropriate background checks were conducted? What can be done if the initiator failed to indicate proper information?**

- The BCP will review the information listed in the *Background Check section* of **Initiate Job Request** and will process the appropriate checks based on that information.
- When the department (or college-level approver) is ready to approve the transaction, they should go back and reference the *Background Check section* of **Initiate Job Request** to ensure information was not left out in error.
- If pertinent information was not included in the *Background Check section* (comments or check boxes), the transaction must be “pushed back” to document the missing information in **Initiate Job Request**.
  - If the transaction **has already been** through **Monitor Background Check** (other than those showing as “skipped” for Student Workers) then the department **MUST** also contact the BCP in case additional checks must be conducted. The department should not approve the transaction until they are notified that the candidate is still endorsed for the position based on the updated information. This will be a manual approval process – the transaction **WILL NOT** route to **Monitor Background Check** based on any of these changes.
  - If the transaction **has not been** through **Monitor Background Check**, no further action is needed.

### **What if the correct information is listed in the *Background Check section* of **Initiate Job Request**, but the transaction is “pushed back” for other reasons?**

- If the transaction has been approved by the BCP, and is then “pushed back” for reasons that include a job code change, the transaction must be re-approved by the BCP.  
\**No background check email will be sent to the candidate*
- If the transaction has been approved by the BCP, and is then “pushed back” for incorrect information that is unrelated to background checks or the job code (FTE, pay rate, etc.), no further action will be needed by the BCP.

## When will the BCP notify the department if a foreign degree verification (WES) is needed?

- It is most effective for departments to monitor if WES is appropriate at time of offer, based on the person's country of education. In general, background checks will not be initiated until the hire date is within 90 days, therefore the department should be proactive as the WES process can be lengthy. The background check website will be updated to house formal WES instructions so that they are readily available for departments/candidates. Of course, if a department or candidate needs assistance with WES, the BCP can provide assistance and instruction, regardless of whether a background check is in process or not.
- In accordance with existing processes, if the BCP sees that a candidate will need to complete a WES evaluation when processing the background check request, the department (initiator) will be contacted.

## What is the “Confirm Job Request” step?

- Though this step will always show on the Activity Guide as a “bus stop,” only a few transactions will be routed through this step before the department can proceed.
- If the initiator indicates duties (driving, finance, accounting, etc.) at the time of the **Initiate Job Request**, but there are concerns about these types of duties based on the background check results, the BCP will notify the initiator to discuss.
- If after discussion, the hiring department chooses to proceed with hiring the individual because the duties are not essential to the role or the department realizes the additional duties were marked in error, the transaction will route to **Confirm Job Request** to receive the department’s approval.

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## Important Things to Remember - by EMPL Class

### Students

- Student workers are not required to undergo background checks when their employment is secondary to their primary role as a student at NC State University. However, the department should examine the job responsibilities of the position they are being considered for and request background checks as appropriate based on risk. Factors that may warrant a background check for a student hire include, but are not limited to duties related to working with minors, driving, handling cash or working with financials, access to confidential information, or key-holder access to University buildings or dorms.
- If a department does not wish that a student undergo a background check, they should not complete **any** information in the Background Check section of **Initiate Job Request**  
\*\* Student workers who will drive a Commercial Motor Vehicle and who to do so, must hold a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL), **MUST** undergo a background check and drug test per Federal DOT regulation – you **MUST** request a background check.  
\*\* Student workers who serve alcohol as a job responsibility, **MUST** also undergo a background check per NC Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Commission.
- It is important to remember that **Monitor Background Check** will show as a “bus stop” on all activity guides, regardless of EMPL class. A green circle at **Monitor Background Check** indicates that this *step* has been completed – not necessarily that a *background check* was completed. If the initiator did not request a background check, you will see “Skipped.”
- If the initiator or final approver realizes that a background check should have been performed, **but was not**, the department must “Push Back” the transaction to make this correction on **Initiate Job**

**Request.** Once the hire action is resubmitted, the candidate will receive the background check email. (if hire date is within 90 days)

*\*This can be realized when reviewing the Background Check section of **Initiate Job Request**, where check boxes must be indicated **OR** in **Monitor Background Check** when a “Skipped” status shows.*

### **Unpaid Faculty and Non Faculty (N Job Codes)**

- Unpaid Faculty and Non Faculty positions are not required to undergo criminal background checks unless requested by the department. The department should examine the job responsibilities of the position and request background checks as appropriate.
- However, the system **will** send the email with the background check link to the candidate; the candidate **should** complete the form (specifically important for new hires who are unknown to the system). If the department **does not** wish that a background check be *processed*, **they must note this in the comments box of the *Background Check* section on **Initiate Job Request**.**
- The BCP may verify education for these individuals if appropriate, based on the type of appointment *or* if the initiator requests this to be done in the comments section. (only applies to degrees issued in the US)
- Volunteers that work with minors must be hired through this EMPL class; the correct job code to use is N970. \*Additional information will be provided regarding the hiring of volunteers separately

### **Faculty**

- The “faculty exception” provided in the background check regulation only applies to those being considered for reappointment, promotion, or tenure. For rehire actions handled in JAR, this can be used to waive the background check requirement for those who have previously undergone a background check for a faculty role and who have not separated from employment for more than an academic year when they are being rehired for a faculty role. It **does not** apply and cannot be used for promotions to Senior Academic or Administrative Officer (SAAO) positions or those of Dean, Director or Department Head.
- The system will send the email with the background check link to the candidate; the candidate should complete the form. However, if the department **does not** wish that a background check be processed, because they wish to use the “faculty exception” provided in the background check regulation, **they must note this in the comments box of the *Background Check* section on **Initiate Job Request**.**

### **Z-NO Pays/Access Only**

- **Monitor Background Check** will show as a “bus stop” on all activity guides, regardless of EMPL class. A green circle at **Monitor Background Check** on the Activity Guide indicates that this *step* is completed – not necessarily that a *background check* was completed.
- For these hire types, the BCP will only be responsible for EMPL ID creation if needed for a new hire. No demographic info will be obtained and the candidate will **not** complete a background check form. The system will load generic person information. (other than first name, last name and email address)
- Because the background check form will not be completed, the hiring department **MUST** search-match and obtain any basic demographic information needed to do so, in order to locate any existing EMPL ID. This must be done **prior** to entering the job action request.