



## **TEACHER EDUCATION AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK**

**Policy Title:** Teacher Education and School Personnel Criminal Background Check

**Policy Type:** Administrative

**Policy Number:** 36-01 (2021)

**Approval Date:** 11/04/2021

**Responsible Office:** School of Education

**Responsible Executive:** Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Applies to:** Candidates for Field Experiences, Practicums, and Internships

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Norfolk State University is committed to promoting and maintaining a safe environment for students, faculty, and staff. Safety in classrooms—on and off campus—is paramount as the University prepares students who work with minors in their educational programs.

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### **DEFINITIONS**

**Criminal Background Check:** Students will apply for a universal background check to verify that no disqualifying criminal history exists in any jurisdiction within the United States that may impact persons involved in the program.

**Licensure Program:** A program that prepares individuals to work in public schools in which



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state criteria must be met for endorsement, certification, and employment.

**Non-Licensure Program:** A program that prepares individuals to work with students from birth to age 21 in agencies, private schools, and other entities with the exception of public schools.

### **CONTACT(S)**

The School of Education, Dean's Office and Office of Clinical Experiences and Student Services, officially interprets this policy. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for obtaining approval for any revisions as required by BOV Policy # 01 (2014) *Creating and Maintaining Policies* through the appropriate governance structures. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to (Dean's Office and/or Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs).

### **STAKEHOLDER(S)**

University Community

### **BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY: POLICY CONTENTS PUBLICATION**

Effective fall 2014, all School of Education students pursuing programs leading to state licensure and programs preparing persons to work with children from birth to age 21 will be required to complete a universal background check prior to enrolling in any field experience, practicum, or internship.

- The background check will determine whether there are convictions in a student's history that would pose a risk to persons involved in the program and/or prohibit the individual from being licensed or employed. Students will be responsible for any fees associated with the universal background check.
- For additional information on procedures and fees, students should contact their academic advisor or consult the Office of Clinical Experiences and Student Services. Convictions that may impact persons involved in the program as reported on the background check may result in the student's inability to be enrolled in a field experience or clinical practice and may result in dismissal from the program. Each student also bears responsibility for forthright and accurate reporting of any criminal history to the School of Education so that concerns can be addressed in a timely manner. Students are required to report any criminal activity to their academic advisor, department chair, or Director of the Office of Clinical Experiences and Student Services in writing when any new activity occurs that has not been previously reported.

If a report indicates a history of criminal activity, the Office of Clinical Experiences and Student Services will send a letter to the student requesting a written explanation of the indicated incident(s). The Director of the Office of Clinical Experiences and Student Services and the



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appropriate Department Chair will review the student's response for continued course enrollment and/or matriculation in the program. The Dean of the School of Education will receive notification from the Director of the Office of Clinical Experiences and Student Services and the appropriate Department Chair.

The handling of all records and student information will be strictly confidential and in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws.

### **EDUCATION AND COMPLIANCE**

Students will be required to participate in mandatory field experience, practicum, and internship sessions that review the background check policy. Students will be required to sign a statement acknowledging their understanding of the criminal background check policy for each field experience, practicum, or internship. Each semester, students newly admitted into programs that require a field experience, practicum or internship will participate in a new student orientation, which will require the signing of an acknowledgement form. To reinforce understanding of the criminal background check and the importance of sharing information in a timely manner, students must meet with their advisor prior to submitting an application for a field experience, practicum, or internship. Program advisors will review the criminal background check policy with the student again prior to providing approval for the student to move forward with submitting the application for the field experience, practicum or internship.

### **PUBLICATION**

The policy will be published in program, departmental, and School of Education handbooks, the School of Education and departmental websites, and other departmental materials (e.g. curriculum sheets). The policy shall be widely published or distributed to the University community. To ensure timely publication and distribution thereof, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will make every effort to:

- Communicate the policy in writing, electronically or otherwise, to the University community within 14 days of approval;
- Submit the policy for inclusion in the online Policy Library within 14 days of approval;
- Educate and train all stakeholders and appropriate audiences on the policy's content, as necessary.

Failure to satisfy procedural requirements does not invalidate this policy.

### **REVIEW SCHEDULE**

- Next Scheduled Review: 11/04/2024
- Approval by, date: Board of Visitors, 11/04/2021
- Revision History: 04/04/2021



## **TEACHER EDUCATION AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK**

- Supersedes:

### **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

*There are no related documents associated with this policy.*

### **FORMS**

*There are no forms associated with this policy and procedures.*