

MEMORANDUM

TO: Vice Presidents, Deans, Chairs, Directors, Department Heads and Business Managers

FROM: Steve Cunningham
Associate Vice President
Administration and Human Resources

DATE: January 31, 2006

RE: Background Investigations

Effective February 1, 2006, the university will begin processing background investigations for positions identified as “security sensitive” through a new vendor, AccuSource Inc. There is a new price structure associated with conducting background investigations through this vendor and, upon request by the department, the ability for approved departmental personnel to enter applicant information directly.

The price structure for background investigations will change and depending upon the services requested the cost for conducting the investigations may be more or less than what departments are accustomed to paying. The price structure for required services is as follows:

Social Security Number Trace	\$ 5.00
County Criminal Check (per county)	\$ 13.00
Federal Criminal Check	\$ 15.00

AccuSource will also check sex offender registers at no additional cost when the above services are requested. For an additional fee, departments may also request a check of an applicant’s employment background; resume content; and/or credit history. Please contact Human Resource Services (HRS) if you are interested in any of these additional services. In accordance with federal law and university policy, departments are required to secure authorization from the applicant before a background investigation can be conducted. The Authorization for Release of Information form can be found at: <http://www.hr.niu.edu/resources/files/Backgroundcheckauthorization.DOC>.

The AccuSource system will allow multiple representatives to enter data at the departmental level while Human Resource Services monitors the system and maintains access authorizations. This new voluntary feature (to be offered during the 2006 spring semester) will give departments the option of submitting information directly to AccuSource, thus reducing the turnaround time. AccuSource reports will then be transmitted to HRS and processed through existing procedures.

The following parameters must be followed for departments to utilize this feature:

1. The Authorization for Release of Information form must be completed and signed by the applicant **before** his/her information is submitted for a background investigation.
2. The original Authorization for Release of Information form must be submitted to Human Resource Services immediately after the applicant's information has been entered into the system.
3. Individuals authorized to submit information directly to AccuSource must attend training conducted by HRS. Sign-in numbers and/or passwords will only be distributed to individuals who have attended a training session.
4. Departments must maintain all required procedures as a condition of access to the direct input feature.

Departmental representatives who have been authorized to enter data directly into the AccuSource will be solely responsible for conducting this portion of the background check process. The training will cover everything that is required to submit information to AccuSource. Sign-in numbers and passwords will be distributed at the conclusion of the training session. The department-level data input option is entirely voluntary. If you are interested in using this new service, please contact Jessica Webb at jewebb@niu.edu or 753-6032 with your name and contact information. We will notify you of the training dates when scheduled.

Additionally, based on your feedback the Position Funding Summary and the Position Pool Report have been modified to reflect a "Background Check Required" field to assist departments with identifying positions that have been tagged as "security sensitive". If you have any questions regarding background investigations, please refer to the Pre-Employment Background Investigations Policy and Procedures located at: <http://www.hr.niu.edu/resources/files/Backgroundprocedures.doc>.

SC/bjr

cc: Karen Baker
Eric Smith
Celeste Latham