

Hamilton College

Background Screening Process for Non-Faculty Employees

The College seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for students, faculty and staff and protection for the financial and material assets of the College. To accomplish this goal, the College performs background checks on new employees to identify individuals whose presence in the workplace would create an unacceptable risk to our campus community.

An employee may not begin work until all appropriate background checks have been completed. Falsification of application materials, including failure to disclose misdemeanor or felony convictions, is grounds for refusal or termination of employment.

Employment Verifications or general reference checking will be performed prior to the extension of any job offer. Reference checking will be the responsibility of the hiring supervisor or department head since he or she has the greatest familiarity with the duties and requirements of the position. Letters of reference or personal references provided by the job applicant should not be relied on. Human Resources has developed guidelines to assist the hiring supervisor in appropriately checking references.

Verbal offers will be contingent upon satisfactory findings from:

1. **Degree Verification** for positions requiring a degree or professional certification and in cases where the employment decision was based on the completion of specific academic work.
2. **Criminal Record Check**, to be initiated by Human Resources. Convictions revealed in the employment process and/or as a result of the criminal history investigation will be carefully reviewed by the Director or Associate Director of Human Resources, the hiring supervisor and other individuals as deemed appropriate to determine whether or not the employee or candidate should be disqualified from employment. Criminal convictions will not automatically disqualify an applicant from employment. Except where employment is expressly prohibited by law, the College will consider factors such as, but not limited to, the nature of the crime, the age of the individual at the time the crime was committed, length of time since the conviction, the nature of the position and the job-relatedness of the conviction, the individual's employment history and employment references.

Depending on the position in question, after a verbal offer of employment has been made and accepted, a background check may also include one or both of the following:

1. **Credit Checks** will be conducted on candidates offered positions that allow access to currency or other financial transactions of the College. Prior to taking any adverse employment action based on information contained in a credit history record check report obtained from a consumer reporting agency, Human Resources will provide the employee or candidate with a copy of the report and a notice summarizing the individual's rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act. The employee or candidate will also be given information on the credit reporting agency providing the report and a reasonable opportunity to submit information to Human Resources disputing the accuracy or completeness of the report before a final decision is made and communicated.
2. **Motor Vehicle Checks** will be conducted on candidates offered positions that entail the use of vehicles owned or rented by the College, or that require a valid driver's license. Additional motor vehicle license checks may be performed throughout employment. If the record indicates negligent driving, driving while impaired, loss of license and/or a pattern of repeated violations, this will be treated as an indication of poor judgment or lack of behavioral control. Employees whose positions require driving personal or College owned or rented vehicles are required to maintain an unrestricted, valid driver's license and insurance coverage. Employees must promptly report any changes in restrictions on their license or in insurance coverage to their supervisor and Human Resources.