
Background Verification

The following background verification procedures must be completed on the final candidate prior to extending an offer of employment.

Table of Contents

<input type="checkbox"/> Training Overview	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Why Conduct Due Diligence?	4
<input type="checkbox"/> Reviewing Resume and Application	5
<input type="checkbox"/> Issues from the Interview Process	6
<input type="checkbox"/> Conversation with the Candidate	7
<input type="checkbox"/> Five Components of Background Verification	8
<input type="checkbox"/> Overview of Verification Process	9
<input type="checkbox"/> What about Criminal Background	10
<input type="checkbox"/> How to Evaluate What you Find	11
<input type="checkbox"/> Searching Former Names	12
<input type="checkbox"/> Employment History	13
<input type="checkbox"/> Education Verification	14
<input type="checkbox"/> License Verification	15
<input type="checkbox"/> Reference Checking	16
<input type="checkbox"/> Reference Content Checklist	19
<input type="checkbox"/> Reference Checks – Troubleshooting	20
<input type="checkbox"/> Reference Checks – Internal Candidates	23
<input type="checkbox"/> Reference Check Resources	24
<input type="checkbox"/> Online Check	25
<input type="checkbox"/> Authorization of Background Verification Form	28
<input type="checkbox"/> Document Retention	29
<input type="checkbox"/> Confirming Verification in DORR	30
<input type="checkbox"/> Resources	31

Training Overview

- ❑ The first part of this training contains tips and reminders regarding the application review process and the interviews. For greater detail, please refer to the Recruiting Guide at:
http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/employment/recruitment/recruiting_guide.pdf
or consider a class:
 - Behavioral Interviewing
 - How to Unravel the Mysteries of Recruiting

- ❑ The second part contains detail on the background verification process. Please note there are two companion documents, as well as guidelines available on the HR website: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/employment/recruitment/resources.html>
 - Background Verification Supplement
 - Background Verification Overview

Why Conduct Due Diligence?

- ❑ Dartmouth is strongly committed to ensuring a rewarding and productive workplace for all employees. The College invests considerable time and money in hiring and training new employees. As stewards of the College resources and the endowment, hiring managers need all pertinent information before committing to a hire. This thorough review process starts with the review of the application materials and continues through the interview and the background verification process. In the background verification process, we verify the candidate's references, educational degrees, applicable professional license and credentials and other relevant background information.
- ❑ Hiring the right person brings new skills, ideas, experience and excitement. However, hiring the wrong person can hurt productivity and morale, and in the worst case scenario, cause real damage to our current employees and the College.
- ❑ Conducting a non-discriminatory application review, interview process and background verification are critical parts of making the right hiring decision.

Reviewing Resume and Application

- ❑ Does the information on the resume match the application information?
- ❑ Check for the disclosure of any criminal history
- ❑ Review length of time in each position
- ❑ Breaks in employment
 - Verify all breaks/gaps listed on application and resume
 - During interviews with candidates
 - During reference checks with past employers
 - What do gaps signify? When are gaps ok?
- ❑ Notes:
 - Layoffs are not unusual in this economy
 - Be sure to provide an opportunity for gaps to be adequately explained

Issues from the Interview Process

- ❑ Conduct phone and in-person interview with candidate
- ❑ Carefully consider the information gathered during the interview process
- ❑ Examples of causes for concern:
 - No clearly articulated reason why they are interested in this position
 - Consistent negative comments about previous employers
 - Candidate refers to jobs not on resume or application
- ❑ Potential red flags or areas of concern to explore during the reference check process:
 - Ability to work in a complex organization, ability to work in a large team, fluid priorities, customer service skills in a high volume environment, attention to detail, commitment to diversity

Conversation with the Candidate

- ❑ Prior to starting the background verification process, have a conversation with the candidate and confirm that the candidate is still interested in the position
- ❑ Let the candidate know you will be verifying background information and describe the areas you will be checking (based on the position requirements)
- ❑ Allow the candidate the opportunity to contact references in advance of your call, if they wish

The Five Components of Background Verification

Every Search*

- 1) Reference checks
- 2) Employment history
- 3) On-line check

When required by position or used to enhance candidacy

- 4) Degree verification
- 5) License verification

*Internal candidates – In most cases, will only need to check references

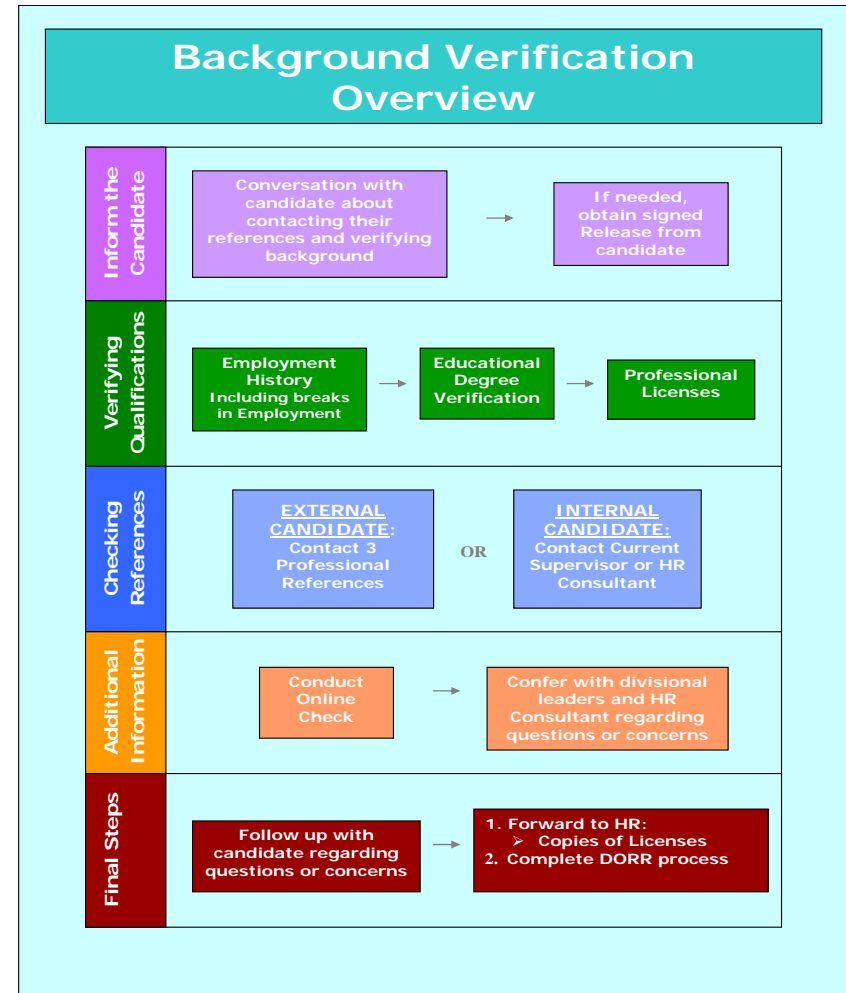
Overview of Verification Process

Who is Responsible

- Hiring manager must complete reference checks and on-line check
- Administrative support staff may verify educational degrees, employment history and professional licenses

Effective Date

- Effective July 1, 2008 there will be required fields on the salary setting page in DORR



Overview available at:

http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/employment/recruitment/background_verification_process_overview.pdf

What about Criminal Background?

- ❑ This process does not include conducting criminal background checks
- ❑ Candidates are expected to self-report any criminal history on the on-line application and hiring managers are expected to review this information. Please contact your HR Consultant if there are questions regarding any criminal history.
- ❑ For those few positions on campus that require a criminal background check, the normal procedures still apply

How to Evaluate What You Find

- ❑ All information gathered needs to be reviewed and assessed in context
- ❑ Do not eliminate the candidate from consideration based on background verification information without first consulting with department leadership and your HR Consultant

HR Support

- Employment Recruiters – questions on application, resume, questions for interview, reference checks, educational degrees, employment history and license verification
- HR Consultants – questions on evaluating content from interviews, reference checks and on-line check

Searching Former Names

- ❑ The employment application asks for any former names

- ❑ Consider former candidate names when checking:
 - Employment history
 - Education verification
 - License verification
 - On-line check

Employment History

- ❑ Call previous employer (if not already obtained through reference checks)

- ❑ Verify candidate's prior positions
 - Dates of employment for:
 - The previous ten years
 - Or at least the last two to three employers
 - Titles and duties
 - Eligibility for rehire

- ❑ Some employers may not verify all of the above information
 - Obtain as much verification as possible
 - At least dates and titles
 - Note: Some employers use outside vendors and charge for this information
 - Departmental p-card can be used for this service

Education Verification

- ❑ Start with the highest degree received
 - After verifying the highest degree received or the degree required for the position, verifying other degrees is discretionary

- ❑ Verify the education credentials listed on the candidate's resume by:
 - Contacting the institution's Registrar
 - An e-mail from the Registrar is acceptable if it contains the candidate name, institution, year graduated, degree earned and major
 - You do not need a transcript, but you do need a document directly from the institution
 - Using a third-party service provider
 - Please refer to the Background Verification Supplement for details
 - May be charged a small fee for this service

License Verification

- ❑ License verification is only necessary if the license is required for the position or is listed in the application materials to enhance the qualifications of the candidate

- ❑ Methods to obtain verification:
 - Ask for a copy of the license from the candidate
 - Note: some licenses may not be copied (e.g., nursing)
 - On-line verification with the licensing board or authority
 - Example: NH State Verification Website-
<http://www.nhlicenses.nh.gov/WebLookUp/>
 - Contact the licensing authority directly and request written verification

- ❑ A printed copy of on-line verification or an e-mail from a licensing authority is sufficient

- ❑ Forward a copy of verification to HR for the Personnel file, if the license is required for the position

Reference Checking

- ❑ Ask candidate for at least three professional references (if not provided on employment application)
 - At least one supervisor, current or recent
 - The number of references may be influenced by how long the candidate has been in the workforce and the number of jobs held

- ❑ The references must be work-related
 - In the event there is no work history, contacts from volunteer organizations, instructors from educational institutions, or other college employees may be used

- ❑ Letters of recommendation may serve as a secondary source of reference for a candidate
 - Letters provided will require confirmation of the content
 - Letters must be recent

Reference Checking (cont.)

- ❑ Reference questions should be developed prior to calling references and based on:
 - Relationship of reference to candidate - current or former supervisor, colleague, customer
 - Resume and cover letter – confirm position, responsibilities and dates of employment
 - Interview with candidate – information regarding projects, teamwork and workplace culture
 - Position requirements – skills and areas of knowledge
 - Work environment
 - Questions raised during the interview process
 - Behavioral questions

Reference Checking (cont.)

- ❑ Areas to avoid
 - Do not ask questions that would violate the College non-discrimination policy. The policy is available on the OIDE website at www.dartmouth.edu/~ide/policies/nondiscrim
 - Do not ask questions about personal information that is not related to the employees' conduct in the workplace

- ❑ When considering contacting individuals not on the candidate's reference list, please let the candidate know you would like to contact that person
 - You may have a colleague who knows the candidate's work, but is not on the list of references
 - Be mindful that contacts off the reference list can cause repercussions for candidates

Reference Content Checklist

At a minimum, be sure to ask references the following questions:

- What were the person's opinions of the candidate?
- Is/was the person you are speaking with the candidate's supervisor?
- What was the candidate's reason for leaving?
- Tell me how the candidate worked and cooperated on teams?
- Tell me about the candidate's workplace ethics?
- Was the candidate reliable?
- Would you consider this candidate eligible for rehire?

Reference Checks - Troubleshooting

- ❑ Playing “phone tag” with a reference can become frustrating
 - Schedule time on your calendar to be available for reference calls and plan on 15-30 minutes for the conversation
 - Consider using e-mail to schedule phone time with the reference

- ❑ Enlist the help of the candidate to reach references

Reference Checks - Troubleshooting

(cont.)

- ❑ If a reference is called but not available for an extended period of time, ask if they can suggest anyone else who may also be able to speak about the candidate's work

- ❑ A reference call is made, but the contact refuses to provide information as per company policy or personal preference
 - Offer to describe the position the candidate is being considered for and ask how the candidate would fit the job
 - Ask for a description of the job duties done by the candidate and what skills it takes to be successful; ask if the candidate was successful
 - Obtain employment verification only
 - Contact the applicant to request another reference at that company
 - Proceed to others on the list of references

- ❑ If the reference is unsatisfactory, conduct follow-up with the candidate and, if appropriate, give him/her an opportunity to explain

Reference Checks - Troubleshooting (cont.)

If the candidate is reluctant to provide contact information for a current or previous supervisor or employer— explore the reasons why

- Candidate has not notified employer of job search
 - Assure the candidate that you are very serious about their candidacy and references are not checked until the final selection process. Avoid telling the candidate they are “the final” candidate, since discoveries in the background verification process may end their candidacy.
- Performance or disciplinary problems in another position
 - Tell the candidate you would like to hear from them what happened in the previous position and why they believe those challenges would not be present in this position. You would like this information before you talk with the supervisor and the supervisory reference call needs to proceed.

Reference Checks - Internal Candidates

A current or former Dartmouth College employee:

- References should ALWAYS be checked for internal candidates
 - It is in our best interest to share information within the College to properly support employee development and success
 - If the employee has been employed by the College for less than a year, the supervisor from the previous non-College employer should be contacted as well as the current Dartmouth supervisor
- The hiring manager may contact:
 - HR Consultant to ask about the candidate's history
 - Current or past Dartmouth College supervisors for references
 - A candidate's reluctance to provide their Dartmouth supervisor as a reference may signify that they have not notified them of their current job search and should be explored with candidate
 - At a minimum, the hiring manager should inquire as to why the candidate did not give their Dartmouth supervisor as a reference

Reference Check Resources

- ❑ Additional reference check content information is available in the Background Verification Supplement at: http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/employment/recruitment/background_verification_supplement.pdf
- ❑ Guidelines for reference calls are available on the HR website at: http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/employment/recruitment/reference_check_guidelines.pdf
- ❑ Behavioral based reference check questions are available on the HR website at: http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/employment/recruitment/behavioral_based_reference_questions.pdf
- ❑ The Dartmouth Recruitment Guide has additional information at www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/employment/recruitment/recruiting_guide.pdf
- ❑ To learn more about how to conduct Behavioral Interviewing, go to the HR website and review the new Human Resources Management Essentials at Dartmouth (MEAD) series at: http://www.abcsignup.com/view/view_month.asp?as=48&wp=531&aid=DOP

Always feel free to contact your Recruiter for tips and guidance

On-line Check

Why are we doing this?

- A search of a third-party verified national or local media mention of the applicant could be a valuable piece of information for hiring consideration as it relates to previous positions held and professional life.
- The results can confirm accomplishments or open a dialogue on other work-related topics.
- In the event there is information on the internet that would cause concern, you will have investigated the information and be prepared to respond to others with your findings.

On-line Check (cont.)

- ❑ What are you looking for?
 - Information related to previous positions and professional life

- ❑ What do you not consider?
 - Any information that would violate the College non-discrimination policy
 - Information that is not work related, such as life style choices and personal political views
 - Social networking sites and blogs with non-work related material

- ❑ What do you do if you find something of concern?
 - Consult with department leadership and HR Consultant

On-line Check (cont.)

How Much is Enough?

- Enter the candidate's name into a major search engine and narrow as necessary using other identifying factors (state, profession, etc.)
- Search sites of previous employers
- Search professional associations and networks
- For most candidates a 3-5 minute search will be sufficient

Authorization for Background Verification

The following is on the College employment application:

I hereby authorize investigation of all statements contained in this application and on my resume, if provided. I certify that such statements are true, and understand that misrepresentation or omission of facts called for in this form, or on any resume provided by me, may be cause for termination of employment or withdrawal of employment offer. I further understand that if I am selected as a candidate for a phone and/or personal interview, I will release references for background checks.

The candidate provided an electronic signature to this statement on the application

This form will only be used if a source (college, licensing board, reference, former employer) requires a signed authorization. This form is located on the HR website.

Authorization form available at:

http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/employment/recruitment/authorization_background_verification.pdf



Authorization for Background Verification

I hereby authorize investigation of all statements contained in my Employment Application and on my resume, if provided. I certify that such statements are true, and understand that misrepresentation or omission of facts called for in that form, or on any resume provided by me, may be cause for termination of employment or withdrawal of employment offer. I further understand that if I am selected as a candidate for a phone and/or personal interview, I will release references for background checks.

Date: _____

Signature

Printed name

Document Retention

- ❑ Your notes are an important part of the College employment record

- ❑ Maintain in your on-site supervisory file:
 - Notes from phone and on-campus interviews
 - A copy of application, resume and cover letter
 - Notes from reference checks
 - Notes from on-line check (only information that was used during the considering process)
 - Notes from employment history verification
 - Copy of degree verification
 - A copy of any documents submitted to HR for the personnel file

- ❑ Forward to HR for the official personnel file:
 - A copy of license verification

- ❑ All interview notes and selection materials for all candidates should be maintained for three years from the close date of the search

Confirming Verification in DORR

- ❑ This page will be activated on July 1, 2008
- ❑ The Background Verification questions are on the Salary Setting page
- ❑ If the hiring manager completed the reference checks and on-line check and administrative staff completed the verification of the educational degree, employment background and professional license, the responsible parties should be indicated in the “comments” section in DORR.
- ❑ If the DORR user is not the hiring manager, the hiring manager’s name should be entered in question one and any sharing of duties should be described in the “comments” section.
- ❑ All questions must be answered before a salary recommendation request can be submitted
- ❑ If desired, documents may be uploaded into DORR and they will become part of the employment record

Dartmouth founded 1769

• Welcome **Diane Musbach**. You are logged in.
Your Current Group: Hiring Managers. Tuesday, June 17, 2008

Create Salary Setting for Position Description Listed Below

Salary Setting | Search Internal Employees to Link to Salary Setting | Supplemental Documentation

*Required information is denoted with an asterisk.

Employee Information

* Approved Title:

* Employee First Name:

* Employee Last Name:

Position Number:

Verification of Employment History and Credentials

Complete the "Verification of Employment History and Credentials" questions below and contact your HR Consultant with any questions or concerns. These questions must be answered before a salary recommendation will be made.

If the verification of employment history and credentials process was completed by someone other than yourself, please provide that name:

I certify that the employment history of this candidate was verified. The employment history includes dates of employment, position held and company name for at least the last two positions held. Breaks in employment have been explained to my satisfaction.

Yes No Not Applicable No Response

I certify that the educational credentials of this candidate were verified. This includes educational institution and degree. Breaks in education have been explained to my satisfaction.

Yes No Not Applicable No Response

Resources

- ❑ There are a variety of resources available from the Office of Human Resources to hiring managers and any delegates. The Employment Recruiters and HR Consultants are available to assist with the process.

Employment Recruiters

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/employment/recruitment/index.html>

HR Consultants

www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/

- ❑ On-line resources and tools are available through the Office of Human Resources web site at:
<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/employment/recruitment/resources.html>