



---

## AUHR 3.16 BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

### Purpose

To establish a mechanism for investigating the background of applicants and/or employees who have access to restricted records and sensitive information and/or who are in positions identified as requiring a background investigation. Applicants/employees whose background investigation causes the Auditor's Office to question their suitability for a position or assignment will either be ineligible for hire or will be subject to reassignment or layoff. However, in some cases, information obtained during a background investigation concerning a current Auditor's Office employee may result in discipline up to and including termination

### Scope of Investigation

The scope of the investigation required depends on the particular position or assignment. A background investigation is intended to be more comprehensive than a criminal conviction check. See [Administrative Rule on Criminal Conviction Checks](#). A background investigation is required for those positions/assignments designated by the City Auditor as having access to restricted records and sensitive information.

### Procedure

1. Determine the scope of investigation required for each position. There must be a nexus between the assigned duties and the scope of the investigation.
2. The City Auditor must approve the investigation the first time it is conducted for a particular position or assignment and thereafter if significant changes are made.
3. Note on the job announcement form that a background investigation is required before hire or assignment to the position.
4. If an applicant's credit history is intended to be part of the background investigation, consult with legal counsel prior to implementation. State law prohibits discrimination in employment based on information in the credit history of an applicant except under certain circumstances: if the applicant is applying for a position in law enforcement or the credit history information is substantially job-related and the reason for the use of such information is disclosed to the applicant in writing.
5. Depending on the scope of the background investigation, the applicant/employee may be required to sign a release.

6. The content of the background investigation is confidential.

### **Employment/Assignment Contingent on Results**

The hiring manager may make a preliminary offer to the selected person that includes a statement that the offer of employment is contingent on the results of the background investigation.

### **References**

HR Administrative Rule on Criminal Conviction Checks

---

### **Human Resources Rule Information and History**

Questions about this administrative rule may be directed to the [Management Services Division](#) of the Auditor's Office.

Adopted by the City Auditor December 11, 2017.

Adapted from City of Portland Human Resources Administrative Rule 3.16  
Background Investigations

Adopted by Chief Administrative Office October 15, 2002.

Last revised November 4, 2011.