



The University of Texas at Tyler
School of Health Professions

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CLINICAL AND SOME SCHOOL-BASED SITES

Student Background Check Policy

I. Applicability

- A. Not all students enrolled in degree plans of the School of Health Professions require background checks; only those who are enrolled in courses requiring direct patient contact or those who enroll in an Internship/Practicum in a school-based setting. However, not all school districts require student background checks.
- B. In student background check must be completed the semester **BEFORE** beginning the experience. **Students requiring background checks may not begin Internships or Practicums until this process has been completed with appropriate results.**

II. Policy & Procedures

- A. If a non-teaching track degree plan student chooses an Agency that is a school setting for which the school district requires student background checks, the school will notify the School of Health Professions if the background check is deemed unsatisfactory based on their standards. In the event of an unsatisfactory background check, the school district's human resources department may opt to schedule a meeting with the student concerning the issue or flatly deny the student's application for Internship/Practicum. In such case, the student would need to choose an alternate school district to fulfill Internship/Practicum requirements or choose another site which is not school-based.
- B. For Internship/Practicum site locations which are clinic-based, the background check report will be initially read by Mr. Cowan (**only after he receives the signed Consent and Release Required Background Check form from the student**), and forwarded to the Asst. Dean of the School of Health Professions for further review only in the event the report contains negative finding(s). Should this additional review process be warranted, the Assistant Dean may request that the applicant submit additional information relating to the negative finding(s), such as a written explanation, court documents and police reports. If the background check is still deemed unsatisfactory, the student can opt for a non-clinical based Internship/Practicum if acceptable under the degree plan.
- B. School of Health Professions FACULTY REVIEW STANDARDS. In reviewing the background check reports and any information submitted, the Assistant Dean of the School of Health Professions may consider the following factors in making its determinations: the nature and seriousness of the offense or event, the circumstances surrounding the offense or event, the relationship between the duties to be performed as part of the educational program and the offense committed, the age of the person when the offense or event occurred, whether the offense or event was an isolated or repeated incident, the length of time that has passed since the offense or event, past employment and history of academic or disciplinary misconduct, evidence of successful rehabilitation, and the accuracy of the information provided by the applicant or student in the application materials, disclosure forms or other materials. The Assistant Dean will bear in mind both the safety interests of the patient or school-aged student and the workplace, as well as the educational interest of the student. In reviewing background checks and supplementary information, advice may be obtained from University counsel, University police, or other appropriate advisors.

III. Rationale

- A. Health care providers are entrusted with the health, safety and welfare of patients, have access to controlled substances and confidential information, and operate in settings that require the exercise of good judgment and ethical behavior. Thus, an assessment of a student or applicant's suitability to function in such a setting is imperative to promote the highest level of integrity in health care.
- B. Clinical facilities are increasingly required by accreditation agencies, such as the Joint Commission of Healthcare Organization (JCAHO), to conduct background checks for security purposes on individuals who provide services within the facility and especially those who supervise care and render treatment. To utilize these facilities for educational purposes, educational institutions are required to conduct background checks for students and faculty.
- C. Clinical rotations as well as Internships or Practicums in school-based settings are essential elements in certain curriculum programs. Students who cannot participate in these areas may be unable to fulfill the requirements of the particular program. Additionally, many professional organizations responsible for licensure, registration, or certification require individuals to pass a criminal background check as a prerequisite for these credentials or for employment.
- D. The University of Texas at Tyler School of Health Professions is obligated to meet the contractual requirements contained in affiliation agreements between the University and various institutions including healthcare facilities and school districts.

IV. Background Check Report

A. Obtaining a Background Check Report

1. *Non-Teaching Track Degree Plan School-Based Internships/Practicums.* It is the student's responsibility to notify the Internship/Practicum faculty advisor if the chosen school district requires a background check. Students need to contact the administration staff within the school district for specific instructions pertaining to that district. After completion of the background check, the district will notify Mr. Cowan of the findings. There is generally no charge to the student from school districts for this service. (Exception: Trinity School in Longview.)
2. *Clinic-based Internships/Practicums.* The School of Health Professions has designated castlebranch.com, a division of Castle Branch, Inc. to conduct the background checks and issue reports directly to the School of Health Professions. **Results from a company other than that designated will not be accepted.** Students and these applicants are responsible for payment of any fees (\$40) charged by the designated company to provide the background check service. See castlebranch.com for specific instructions.

PACKAGE CODE: NV39 for the background check at castelbranch.com.

B. *Scope.* Background checks include the following and cover the last seven years:

- Texas Statewide Criminal
- Nationwide Sexual Offender Index
- Residence History
- Social Security Alert
- Nationwide Fraud and Abuse Scan
- Nationwide Patriot Act
- Additional counties if out of state

C. *Rights.* Students and applicants have the right to review the information reported by the designated company for accuracy and completeness and to request that the designated company verify that the background information provided is correct. Prior to making a final determination that will adversely affect the applicant or student, the School of Health Professions will provide applicants or students a copy of or access to the background check report issued by the designated company, and inform them of their rights, how to contact the designated company to challenge the accuracy of the report and that the designated company was not involved in any decisions made by the School of Health Professions.

V. Confidentiality and Recordkeeping

- A. Background check reports and other submitted information are confidential and may only be reviewed by university officials and affiliated clinical or school-based facilities in accordance with the Family Educational Records and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- B. Background check reports and other submitted information of applicants denied admission into the program will be maintained in accordance with the University's record retention policy.

VI. Other Provisions

- A. A background check will be honored for the duration of enrollment if the student is continuously enrolled. A student who has a break in enrollment is required to complete a new background check. A break in enrollment is defined as non-enrollment of at least one semester in the approved curriculum of the degree program. An officially approved leave of absence is not considered a break in enrollment.
- B. Falsification of information, including omission of relevant information, may result in denial of admission or dismissal from the educational program.
- C. Criminal activity that occurs while a student is in attendance at the university may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal, and will be addressed through the university's academic or disciplinary policies.

Immunization and Tuberculosis Screening Requirements

In accordance with State law, the following immunizations are required for all students enrolled in health-related courses which will require direct patient contact in clinical settings.

1. Measles: proof of two doses of measles vaccine administered on or after the first birthday and at least 30 days apart or proof of immunity.
 2. Mumps: proof of one dose of mumps vaccine administered on or after the first birthday or proof of immunity.
 3. Rubella: proof of one dose administered on or after the first birthday or proof of immunity.
 4. Tetanus/diphtheria: proof of one "booster" dose of tetanus/diphtheria (within 10 years).
 5. Hepatitis B virus (HBV): proof of serologic immunity to HBV or certification of immunization with a complete series of Hepatitis B vaccine. Students will be required to present a letter or other suitable written certification.
- **NOTE:** Certain exemptions are allowed from the immunization requirements; students should contact the Office of Student Services for information.

Additionally, students enrolled in health-related courses which require direct patient contact or students who are enrolled in a non-teaching track degree plan where a school-based setting is chosen for Internship or Practicum, are required to submit written verification of an annual TB skin test with the date and results verified by a physician or public health personnel. Students with known positive skin tests must submit a yearly release from a physician, Physician's Assistant, or Nurse Practitioner. Any validated document of immunization is acceptable, provided it shows the day, month, and year when each immunization was received. The documents must be signed by a physician or public health personnel. Students who have not had a recent TB skin test, may have this performed at The University of Texas at Tyler Health Clinic, which is a service provided under Student Health Fees.

Student Insurance Policy

Student Insurance Policy: It is the policy of the School of Health Professions that before any student can begin an Internship, student liability insurance must be purchased through the cashier's office. The purchase of the insurance provides liability coverage of up to \$1 million dollars for 12 months from the purchase date. The student will not be registered for the Internship without documentation that the insurance has been acquired. The sales receipt must then be brought back to Mr. Cowan for proof of payment.



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**CONSENT AND RELEASE
Required Background Check**

A background check is required as part of the requirement when working in a clinical setting. Some University-affiliated clinical facilities may also require disclosure of a student's background check report prior to permitting the student to participate in the educational program at the facility. The UT Tyler School of Health Professions engages the services of a private agency to conduct this background check. A favorable review of this information by the UT School of Health Professions is not binding upon a clinical facility. A clinical facility may refuse to permit a student to participate in the clinical rotation / internship / practicum at the facility if background check information is not provided, or if upon review of a student's background check, it determines the student is disqualified. Please complete the following information to authorize the UT Tyler School of Health Professions to obtain and review background check reports.

Signature

Printed Name

Student Identification Number (required)

Date

Return form to:

**Reuben Cowan, Lecturer
The University of Texas at Tyler
Department of Health and Kinesiology
3900 University Blvd.
Tyler, TX 75799**