



Criminal Background Screening FAQ

1. How does the Chicago Public Schools obtain my criminal history information?

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) and the Illinois State Police (“ISP”) provide detailed criminal history reports. The CPS has an obligation to investigate any information that is reported.

2. What is included in the results reported by the FBI and ISP?

Any arrests that have ever occurred, including traffic offenses; any instances where you were in custody following a conviction; immigration violations; arrest warrants; and Sex Offender Database registry information.

3. What documentation may I be required to provide as part of the background screening process?

If your criminal background reports indicate a criminal history, the Background Check Team will inform you of what is needed to evaluate your file. Please note that you **must** be responsive to any requests, and you are responsible for any costs that may be incurred for the required documentation. Required documentation must be provided within the following time frame from the date you were notified:

- **5 Days** to provide any in-state documentation, resubmit information or be re-fingerprinted
- **10 Days** to provide any out-of-state documentation

Extensions must be requested within the allotted time period and are subject to the Background Check Team’s approval. Out-of-state documentation may be difficult to obtain and should be gathered as soon as it is requested.

4. How long does criminal background screening take?

Fingerprint processing can take up to 30 days to complete. If your criminal background reports indicate a criminal history and require additional information, you will be contacted by the Background Check Team. Once your file is deemed complete it will be reviewed by the Background Check Team and may be sent to the Background Committee for further review. The Committee’s decision is generally made within ten (10) business days.

5. What happens if I have criminal history information?

You cannot work for the CPS if you have been convicted of any offense listed in Section 5/21-B80 of the Illinois School Code (“disqualifying offense”). Please refer to the last page of this FAQ for a list of disqualifying offenses. If you have not been convicted of a disqualifying offense but have other criminal convictions, the Background Committee will conduct an individualized assessment of your background history.

6. What if I was a juvenile at the time of my arrest?

Judges may transfer juvenile cases to adult court in certain circumstances on request from the State’s Attorney Office. Accordingly, you may be asked to provide information from an adult court record so that the CPS is able to determine how and where the juvenile matter was resolved.

7. Can I appeal the decision if I did not pass the criminal background screening?

If the Background Committee denies your application, you may petition to have your file re-reviewed if the position is still available. Instructions on how to appeal will be provided to you in a letter from Employee Services or the Background Check Team. You have 10 days from the date you were first contacted about your denial to file an appeal or request an extension. The Background Committee’s decision is generally made within ten (10) business days, and you will be notified of the decision by mail.

8. Can my former employer’s background check be used instead of doing a new one?

No. Pursuant to the Illinois School Code, all applicants for employment with the CPS are required to authorize a fingerprint-based criminal history records check as a condition of employment.