

MCEDD Background Check Policy **Adopted December 15, 2022**

Mid-Columbia Economic Development District conducts job-related background checks prior to hire in order to ensure a safe and secure work environment in which MCEDD staff, clients, resources, and assets are protected, while protecting the integrity and confidentiality of information gathered during the evaluation. Background checks are normally conducted on the finalist only following the issuance of a contingent offer of employment.

A criminal history does not automatically rule out candidates depending on the job-related nature of the offence.

Types of Background Checks

A standard background check will include a Social Security Number verification, a misdemeanor and felony criminal history check, and National Sex Offender Registry check.

Additional background checks may be required for specific positions based on job-related need, including but not limited to the following:

- **Motor Vehicle Record:** required for positions where it is anticipated that an individual will regularly drive a MCEDD-owned vehicle. See Driver Evaluation Matrix as Appendix A.
- **Credit History Check:** Conducted only for positions with extensive authority to commit financial resources of MCEDD or with extensive fiduciary responsibility for financial resources of MCEDD; or as required by law, and as appropriate for positions with the following responsibilities:
 - Broad and extensive access to personally identifying information about staff or clients;
 - Direct access to and handling of cash and cash equivalents (i.e., checks, credit card receipts);
 - Note that federal law prohibits discrimination as a result of personal bankruptcy.
 - Typically these positions include Executive Director, Finance and Operations Manager, Loan Fund Manager, Office Administrator.

Processing Time

MCEDD is charged with obtaining background check reports and the initial evaluation of findings in order to ensure that decisions about findings are made consistently and are based on job-related analysis, taking into account the nature and context of the offense.

Background checks are typically completed within three business days.

Candidates for employment who fail to participate fully or who provide inaccurate information in a background check will be eliminated from consideration for the position. Candidates may decline to authorize a background check; in such cases, no background check will be performed, but the candidate will not be considered further.

Evaluation of Results

Candidates and the supervisor are notified by email when finalists have successfully completed the background check process.

If findings are present, the background report will be reviewed by the Executive Director, Finance and Operations Manager, and the position's supervisor based on job-related analysis, taking into account the nature and context of the offense. MCEDD will notify the finalist of a finding (pre-adverse action notification), including providing access to the complete report and advising the finalist of their rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act. MCEDD will also ask the finalist to confirm that the report pertains to them and invite the finalist to provide any additional information for consideration.

Following this step, MCEDD will make an initial determination as to whether the finding is sufficiently job-related.

- If findings are determined to not be sufficiently job-related, then MCEDD will consider the background check process successfully completed.
- If findings are determined to be substantially job-related and a decision is made to withdraw the contingent offer of employment, the Executive Director will notify the finalist that they are not eligible to fill the position based on the unsatisfactory results of a background check. MCEDD reserves the right to keep the reason for failure undisclosed. MCEDD will provide the finalist with all required notifications pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act and/or other applicable law(s), including the right to review the report and how to contact agency(ies) that provided the background check results (adverse action notification) through the vendor.

Confidentiality

Information gathered as a result of background screening is considered sensitive, and disclosure is restricted to those individuals who need the information in order to perform their job duties. Records are maintained by the Finance and Operations Manager in accordance with MCEDD's records retention schedule.

Current MCEDD Employees

For current employees, changes in employment will require a background check if the new assignment is designated as requiring a background check or required check(s) was not previously performed. If a current employee has recently had a background check and is being considered for a new assignment designated as requiring a background check, the findings of the check will be reviewed for relevance to the new assignment.

Appendix A: Driver Evaluation Matrix

The purpose of the Driver Evaluation Matrix is to determine eligibility for an employee when driving is a function of the job. The driver’s motor vehicle record will be reviewed using the matrix below to determine whether driving record is clear, acceptable, borderline or poor.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

1. Past driving records are highly predictive of future performance as a safe, dependable driver and statistically, there is a high correlation between recent driving history and future accident frequency. A driver, who had four moving violations, more than three years ago, may be a better risk than a driver who has two violations within the last 12 months. However, do not base any hiring, promotion, or transfer decisions solely on this one factor. Persons with borderline driving records can be advised of their status and coached to improve.

2. Consider the applicability of the individual’s past violations to the job the applicant or employee will perform.

3. Review the details of the violations listed on the driving record with the applicant/employee to determine if any extenuating circumstances exist regarding the violation.

4. Most convictions and violations are kept on a driving record for five years from the date of conviction or adjudication. Departmental actions, such as, suspensions, revocations, or disqualifications are kept on a driving record for ten years from final release date. Certain violations appear on a driving record in perpetuity, such as alcohol-related convictions, vehicular assault and vehicular homicide convictions and deferred prosecutions.

Authorized drivers should only be allowed to operate a vehicle on behalf of MCEDD if their driving record demonstrates they will be a safe driver. Those possessing an invalid or suspended license are not eligible to operate a vehicle for MCEDD under any circumstances.

Moving Violations (1 pt. ea.)	# of Accidents (at-fault, 2 pts. ea.)			
	0	1	2	3+
0	CLEAR	A	A	P
1	A	A	B	P
2	A	A	P	P
3+	A	B	P	P
Major	P	P	P	P

Only Accidents and Moving Violations in the last three years and Major Violations in the last ten years are considered.

A = Acceptable: Those with none or fewer than four points.

B = Borderline: Management should give consideration prior to placing or maintaining this individual in a driving position and may want to provide additional training or other requirements.

P = Poor: Management should give serious consideration to not placing or maintaining this individual in a driving position.

Major Violations include:

- DUI – Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Negligent homicide in the use of a motor vehicle
- Using a motor vehicle for the commission of a felony
- Operating a vehicle without a valid unsuspended license or while uninsured
- Aggravated assault with a motor vehicle
- Grand theft of a motor vehicle
- Reckless driving or speed contest/racing
- Hit and run (bodily injury and/or property damage)

Moving Violations include violations other than Major Violations. These consist of speeding and other moving traffic infractions. Traffic photo enforcement and parking tickets do not appear on driving records as Moving Violations. If multiple citations are issued on the same day, they will be counted as a single violation.