

## **Recommendations for Background Checks for the Healthcare Industry**

The healthcare industry is one of the largest and fastest growing sectors of our economy. Many medical facilities struggle to find qualified employees. In this industry where millions of patients put their lives into the hands of trusted caregivers, the importance of background screening has never been more critical.

The following list outlines some of the reasons healthcare facilities are strongly encouraged to screen prospective employees:

- **Risk to Patients:** A potential employee who has been convicted of a violent or drug related offense is not suited to work in a position with close proximity to patients, or in areas with accessibility to pharmaceuticals as this could expose both the patients and facility to enormous risk.
- **Risk to Staff:** If someone with a violent or drug related criminal past is hired, fellow staff members could be at risk as they are often busy caring for patients and are not able to watch co-workers. Healthcare facilities are full of instruments, hazardous materials and medications that can cause them harm.
- **Potential for Lawsuits:** If patients or staff members are harmed or incur loss as a result of insufficient pre-employment screening, the facility can be sued for negligent hiring. Lawsuits can be expensive, can award millions in damages to patients and victims of workplace violence and can be very damaging to a facility's reputation.

To reduce risk, it is recommended that background checks be conducted on every job applicant from temporary workers, volunteers, administrative/clerical, technicians, pharmacists, nurses and aides to physicians. These background checks can be tailored for the position, but below are some recommended guidelines:

**Temporary/Volunteer employees: Social Security Trace and a National Criminal Database Search**

**Administrative/Clerical/Other: SS Trace, National Criminal, 7 year Criminal History search**

**Technicians/Pharmacists/Lab: SS Trace, National Criminal, 7 year Criminal History search, Credit Report, Healthcare Panel Drug Screen, Education Verification, Professional License Verification, OIG plus All States**

**Nurses/Aides: SS Trace, National Criminal, 7 year Criminal History search, Credit Report, MVR, Healthcare Panel Drug Screen, Education & Employment Verification, Professional License Verification, OIG plus All States**

**Physicians: SS Trace, National Criminal, 7 year Criminal History search, Credit Report, MVR, Healthcare Panel Drug Screen, Education & Employment Verification, Professional License Verification, OIG plus All States, National Federal Criminal, Civil Search**