



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

Student Background Check Policy

School of Social Work

Effective Date: 12-09-2015

Revised: 2-02-2017

Purpose:

This policy is implemented to secure the safety and well-being of future clients, students, faculty and the profession. This document establishes policy and procedure for the requirement of student background checks, to inform students of background checks required for admission into and progression through degree programs in the School of Social Work.

Scope:

While a criminal history does not necessarily preclude admission to the BSW or MSW degree program, past legal issues may limit or prevent placement into practicum. Practicum is required for completion of the BSW and MSW degree programs. In addition, some backgrounds may render a graduate ineligible to receive a social work license and/or unable to obtain employment in the field.

Students who are planning on working in Idaho should address questions about licensing eligibility to the Idaho Board of Social Work Examiners in the Bureau of Occupational Licensing (<http://ibol.idaho.gov/IBOL/BoardPage.aspx?Bureau=SWO>). In addition, the Idaho Department of Health & Welfare Administrative Rule 16.05.06 on Criminal History and Background Checks contains a list of disqualifying crimes and relevant records that render an applicant unable to provide services, have access, or be licensed or certified by the Department.

Students who are planning on working in a state other than Idaho should consult with the licensing board of that particular state. Contacts for the licensing board as well as the licensing laws and regulations for every state can be accessed through the Association of Social Work Boards (<https://www.aswb.org/licensees/member-statutes-and-regulations/>)

Responsible Party:

The Director of the School of Social Work or designee.

Definitions:

Criminal history for the purposes of this policy, shall mean:

When a judgment of conviction, an adjudication, a finding of guilt, a plea of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere has been entered against the individual by any federal, state, tribal, military, or local court. Entrance into or participation in a first offender, deferred adjudication or other arrangement or program where judgment of conviction has been withheld may also constitute a conviction (from Idaho Administrative Code 16.05.06.04). An arrest (pending charges) until a verdict is rendered shall also be considered a criminal history for purposes of this policy.

Policy Statement

I. Admission

1. Applicants for admission into the BSW or MSW program must disclose any conviction, pending charges or indictments for crimes. The individual must also disclose any notice by a state or local agency of substantiated child or vulnerable adult abuse, neglect, exploitation, abandonment. The disclosure must include a description of the crime or substantiated maltreatment and any relevant circumstances.
2. All applicants being considered for admission into the BSW or MSW programs must complete a background check before final recommendation of admission can be made.
3. Background checks used for admission, under this policy, must have been conducted no more than twelve (12) months prior to the deadline for admissions materials.
4. Applicants are required to report within two business days all arrests for any misdemeanors or felonies to the School Director, regardless of type. Failure to provide notification of arrest is grounds for removal from the degree program.
5. All information revealed in the background check process will be kept confidential within the School of Social Work. Background check information will not be stored with student records. Access to background check information will be limited to the Director, Director of Field Education, BSW Program Coordinator, and MSW Program Coordinator. In situations where an admissions committee needs additional information in order to make an admissions recommendation, background check information may be shared with the admissions committee. In situations where background check information may impact a field practicum, background check information may be shared with a faculty field liaison.
6. The School of Social Work will use the following guidelines in evaluating an applicant's criminal history:

- a. Severity or nature of the criminal behaviors.
 - i. Minor traffic violations such as moving violations or traffic infractions that do not involve alcohol or controlled substances are irrelevant in considering an applicant's criminal behaviors.
 - b. Number and pattern of criminal behaviors.
 - c. Circumstances surrounding the criminal behaviors that would help determine risk.
 - d. Relationship of the criminal behaviors to the care of children or vulnerable adults.
 - e. Activities since the criminal behaviors that may be evidence of rehabilitation
 - f. Individual's age at the time of the criminal behavior
 - g. Time elapsed since the criminal behaviors.
 - i. A criminal history that includes a felony should be at least seven years old, depending on the severity of the felony. Certain felony convictions, such as those involving violent crime, sexual assault, sexual abuse, or other crimes against a person may permanently preclude admission.
 - ii. A criminal background that includes a misdemeanor, including those related to substance misuse, should be at least 3 years old.
 - h. Probation or parole status.
7. The School of Social Work, operating at the discretion of the faculty, may deny an application for admission if the applicant's criminal history make the applicant unfit for social work practice. If a criminal history demonstrates behavior deemed to be unprofessional or that puts clients, other students, faculty, agencies, or the profession at risk, the student will be denied admission to the degree program.
- a. The applicant may appeal this decision following Boise State University and College of Health Sciences policies for appealing admission decisions.

II. After Admission

1. Failure to fully disclose convictions, pending charges or indictments for crimes, substantiated child or vulnerable adult abuse, neglect, exploitation, abandonment is grounds for removal from the degree program.
2. Students are required to report within two business days all arrests for any misdemeanors or felonies to the School Director, regardless of type. Failure to provide notification of arrest is grounds for removal from the degree program.

3. The School may check the arrest records of students without prior notification.
4. Field agencies may require additional background checks. The student may have to pay the fees associated with these additional background checks. The criteria used by the field agency may be more stringent than those used by the School of Social Work and this may prohibit some students from completing a field practicum.
 - a. Additional information discovered during an additional background check will be considered in determining if the student may continue in his/her degree program.
 - b. A field agency where a student has expressed interest in a practicum placement may request the student to provide a copy the background check used for the admissions process. The student is required to share this information with the field.
 - c. In situations where background check information may impact a field practicum, background check information may be required to be shared with a faculty field liaison.
5. The School of Social Work will use the following guidelines in evaluating a student's criminal history:
 - a. Severity or nature of the criminal behaviors.
 - i. Minor traffic violations such as moving violations or traffic infractions that do not involve alcohol or controlled substances are irrelevant in considering an applicant's criminal behaviors.
 - b. Number and pattern of criminal behaviors.
 - c. Circumstances surrounding the criminal behaviors that would help determine risk.
 - d. Relationship of the criminal behaviors to the care of children or vulnerable adults.
 - e. Activities since the criminal behaviors that may be evidence of rehabilitation
 - f. Individual's age at the time of the criminal behavior
 - g. Time elapsed since the criminal behaviors.
 - i. A criminal history that includes a felony should be at least seven years old, depending on the severity of the felony. Certain felony convictions, such as those involving violent crime, sexual assault, sexual abuse, or other crimes against a person may permanently preclude admission.
 - ii. A criminal background that includes a misdemeanor, including those related to substance misuse, should be at least 3 years old.
 - h. Probation or parole status.

Procedure

Students must have a background check performed by CertifiedBackground.com. The cost is approximately \$45.00

Steps:

1. Applicants or students will go to portal.castlebranch.com/BJ53 and enter Boise State University School of Social Work's package code (BJ53).
2. The applicant or student will set up a CastleBranch account. At a minimum the applicant needs to supply full name, date of birth, social security number, current address, phone number, and email address. Additional information may be requested
3. The applicant or student will pay the required fee.
 - a. A limited amount of funds from the School of Social Work are available to current students experiencing financial hardship and are unable to pay the background check processing fee. Current students should contact the Director of the School of Social Work to request financial assistance to complete a background check.
4. Results will be made available to the applicant and the School of Social Work. Results are typically available in 3-5 business days.