

Background Check and Drug Testing Requirements for Health Science Programs

Students accepted into specific Health Science programs must purchase an on-line screening package which includes:

1. Criminal Background Check 2. Government Registry Search 3. Urine Drug Test

Program acceptance is contingent upon meeting deadlines for completion of the screening and results which allow the student to participate in the clinical portion of the program.

1. Criminal Background Check

Program acceptance letters will include deadline details and directions for accessing and purchasing the on-line screening for criminal background checks. Background checks are required for the clinical portion of health science programs and may also be required after graduation to take licensure/registry/certification examinations, which are required for employment.

Criminal Background Check Details:

- ❖ Background checks are conducted for Illinois, Missouri and every state in which the student has lived or worked since the age of 18.

Criminal Convictions:

- Certain criminal convictions are identified as “disqualifying” for working with patients or their personal information. Fines, probation, or conditional discharge are convictions and will appear on a criminal history check. If the student is unsure as to whether an arrest resulted in a conviction, he or she should contact the county in which the arrest occurred and speak to a representative in the Circuit Clerk’s or State’s Attorney’s office, or contact an attorney.
- A complete list of disqualifying convictions is available from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) at the following website: <http://www.idph.state.il.us/nar/disconvictions.htm>
- **Students convicted of a “disqualifying” offense will be asked to produce a waiver from the Illinois Department of Public Health and will be removed from the program if a waiver cannot be produced.**
- Required clinical sites will be surveyed to determine if clinical placement can be accomplished with identified conviction(s). Students will be dropped if clinical site(s) prohibit conviction.

Waiver Process for Disqualifying Convictions:

- Students with disqualifying criminal convictions as listed on the IDPH’s website must obtain a waiver in order to retain their seat in any Health Science program which they have been accepted into.
- Typically, it takes 8-12 weeks to receive a waiver determination from the IDPH, so **students should start the waiver process as soon as possible, before program acceptance.**
- **Applicants should be aware that obtaining a waiver does not guarantee program admission, and that not every clinical facility accepts the IDPH waiver, therefore obtaining the waiver is not a guarantee that the clinical portion of the program can be completed.**
- Applicants should also be aware that less than half of those who apply for an IDPH waiver receive one. Each waiver application is reviewed on an individual basis. **In general, a waiver is not granted in the following circumstances:**
 - a. The crime committed involved an elderly or disabled person.
 - b. There are more than 2 similar crimes.
 - c. The crime involves murder, sexual assault, aggravated battery, armed robbery, exploitation of a child, child pornography or kidnapping.
 - d. The offense occurred less than 2 years ago.

How to Request a Waiver:

- Call the Illinois Department of Public Health at **1-217-785-5133** and ask for a **waiver application**.

2. Government Registry Search

The on-line screening package also includes a search for the student’s name on multiple government registries. Students whose names appear on these registries as offenders will lose their seats in the program.

Government Registry Search Details:

- ❖ A search will be conducted to confirm that the student is not listed as an offender on any government registry. A standard set of registries will be searched for all programs, while select programs require additional registries to be searched.

Registries for All Programs:

The following registries will be searched for all students accepted to Health Science programs:

- Disqualification list for the MO Department of Health and Senior Services
- Division of Family Services (DFS)
- The Office of Inspector General (OIG)

Additional Registries for Select Programs: *Note: These additional registry checks increase package cost.*

Certain Health Science programs will use additional registries, based on clinical site requirements. These registries include:

- The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Employee Disqualification List
- The Department of Mental Health Employee Disqualification Registry

3. Urine Drug Testing

Purchase of the on-line screening package also includes a random urine drug test **that will be completed at a time determined by the college.** **At the time the package is purchased, instructions may be listed on the website to complete the urine drug test.** **Students should ignore these directions and wait for further instructions from the college regarding the date for their random drug test.**

Urine Drug Testing Details:

- ❖ A urine drug test will be conducted to ensure that the student has not used illegal drugs or taken a prescription medication that belongs to someone else. If the student's drug test result is positive for any substance, proof of prescription is required or the student will be dropped from the program. The use of prescriptive medication is not a problem as long as the medication is prescribed to the student. **Note: Medical marijuana, which is not FDA approved, is also considered a positive drug testing result.**

When to Take the Test:

- The college will assign each student's drug test at a random time after the on-line package has been purchased.
- When the test is assigned, students **MUST** complete the test within 48 hours regardless of schedule conflicts.

Where to Take the Test:

- All drug testing will be completed at a Quest Diagnostics Lab.
- Students schedule a drug test appointment with a Quest lab after notification from the college.

Communication with Quest Diagnostics:

- If contacted, it is vital that students communicate with Quest Diagnostics and their affiliates during the drug testing process.
- In the event that a drug test is positive, students will be contacted and must provide proof of prescription.

4. Cost

All costs associated with the on-line screening package (Criminal Background Check, Government Registry Search and Urine Drug Test) are the responsibility of the student. **Costs are set by the vendor of the screens and may change at any time.**

Cost Details:

- ❖ Students are required to visit the website of the vendor to order an on-line package through the website.
- ❖ The cost of the on-line package varies based on the program applied, resident history and work history:

Requirements of clinical facilities for each program set the base cost for the on-line package. There are currently two categories:

- A. For the **Medical Assistant, Medical Laboratory Technology, Phlebotomy, Respiratory Care and Paramedic** programs, the starting cost of the package is **\$87.75**.
- B. For the **Nursing Education, Advanced Standing Nursing Education, Physical Therapist Assistant and Radiology Technology** programs, the starting cost of the package is **\$114**, due to additional required registry checks.

Residence and Work History

For students who have lived or worked in any state (since the age of 18) other than Illinois or Missouri, an additional fee of **\$13 per state** will be added to the base cost.

5. Assistance and More Information

For assistance with any of these processes or to request more information, contact the Coordinators' Assistant at (618) 235-2700, ext. 5355.