

# Background Screening Vendor Checklist

Properly selecting the right background screening partner is not an easy undertaking. Certain values employers should be factoring during this decision should be compliance, innovation, and customer / applicant experience. Here is a checklist of items employers should consider when selecting a qualified CRA (Consumer Reporting Agency):

## 1. Innovative Technology (circle)

### a. Online Software Portal with robust login configurations? Y or N

- i. Has in place an online software platform where clients can securely login, order reports, review pending reports, and print or view completed reports 24/7.

### b. Able to integrate with Employer Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)? Y or N

- i. Being able to link both the employers ATS to the background screening vendors online portal for seamless transition of application information.

### c. Paperless or electronic applicant consent? Y or N

- i. Directly send the applicant an email with a web link that allows them to securely enter their pertinent information, such as their name, ssn, dob, all employment & education details, while also providing applicant disclosure and all federal and state notices electronically.

### d. Deliver consumer reports and disclosures instantly? Y or N

- i. Send consumer reports such as consumer copies, adverse action letters, and custom disclosures directly to applicants electronically. Know you're staying compliant and secure while giving applicants the easiest access possible.

### e. Responsive on any device (mobile phone, laptop, and desktop)? Y or N

- i. Online portal is able to be accessed from any device:
  1. Desktop
  2. Laptop
  3. Tablet
  4. Smartphone

### f. Secure Cloud Storage Hosting? Y or N

- i. Platform is fully secured using the most up to date security standards and has received the top security certifications that can be obtained by a cloud services application, including but not limited to: PCI-DSS, SSAE 16, E13PA, and SOC 2 compliance.*

**g. Data Encryption / Multi-Factor Authentication? Y or N**

- i. Software requires every user, client, and applicant to prove their identity beyond that of just a password and username, providing an extra layer of protection. Every transaction and communication is automatically encrypted and performed in a secure environment that safeguards against any potential threat.*

**h. Custom Data Reports (Accuracy and Turnaround Time)? Y or N**

- i. Platform has the capabilities of generating a series of reports including completion and pass rate reports, turnaround time reports for individual searches, status and productivity reports all from one dashboard.*

**2. Compliance (circle)**

**a. Accredited (not just a member) by the National Association of Professional Background Screeners (NAPBS)? Y or N**

- i. This accreditation program through NAPBS is called the Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program (BSAAP), which has strict rules and regulations that promote professional standards of specified requirements and measurements. This accreditation is considered the “Gold Standard” when it comes to bringing national recognition to employment background screening organizations.*

**b. Has a Quality Management System (i.e. ISO 9001:2015) Quality Assurance? Y or N**

- i. This standard is “based on a number of quality management principles including a strong customer focus, the motivation and implication of top management, the process approach and continual improvement. Using ISO 9001:2015 helps ensure that customers get consistent, good quality products and services, which in turn brings many business benefits.*

**c. Updates clients on new laws affecting employment background checks? Y or N**

*i. Keeping clients aware of new laws and regulations affecting employment background checks at all levels and industries (city, state, and federal) in “real time” via compliance alerts (email, text, newsletters, and webinars).*

**d. Provides monthly newsletter discussing new laws and best practices? Y or N**

*i. Subscribe to monthly newsletter, to understand the latest background screening industry news and receive deals, specials, and promotional offers that will keep you ahead of your competition and save thousands of dollars from improper employment screening that can lead to litigation.*

**e. Conducts educational interactive webinars? Y or N**

*i. Hosts informative, educational webinars addressing the latest trends and legal issues affecting background checks for clients. Quarterly series of webinars are designed to help clients make smart decisions and save money in the long run.*

**f. Comply with international standards regarding background checks? Y or N**

*i. Complies with the EU-U.S. Privacy Shield Framework as set forth by the U.S. Department of Commerce regarding the collection, use, and retention of personal information transferred from the European Union to the United States.*

**g. Current Compliance Audits (i.e. PCI and E13PA)? Y or N**

*i. We maintain PCI-DSS and E13PA compliance certifications and subscribe to QUALYS for continuous monitoring for system security and compliance. Audit Report confirms that the vendor meets the high standards set by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) for confidentiality, privacy, and security in protecting consumer data used in background checks.*

**h. Understanding vendor’s public records reporting requirements? Y or N**

*i. Is the vendor reporting anything and everything on the applicant no matter how long it has been since the crime occurred and whether they were convicted of the crime*

**i. Infrastructure is constantly scanned, and access is audited and recorded 24/7? Y or N**

*i. A third-party PCI SSC Approved Scanning Vendor (ASV) conducts external and internal network vulnerability scans at least quarterly and after significant changes to our networking*

*environments. Penetration testing is also conducted at least annually and after significant changes.*

### **3. Employer / Applicant Experience (circle)**

**a. US Based Account Representatives? Y or N**

*i. All customer service representatives are physically located in the United States allowing for easy communication and transparency when conducting employment background checks*

**b. 24 hour live support? Y or N**

*i. Live customer support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. No auto attendants or voicemails.*

**c. Does the vendor provide onboarding resources for technology and compliance? Y or N**

*i. Client orientation that consists of online tutorial training explaining background checks and compliance. With a knowledge based test at the conclusion. Visual guide with step by step instructions on how to order a background check.*

**d. Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) advanced and basic certified research analysts (issued by NAPBS)? Y or N**

*i. The FCRA Basic Certificate Program provides participants with a core understanding of foundational information core to the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA). The FCRA Advanced Certificate Program is intended for background screening professionals looking to demonstrate a commitment to compliance within their organization. The content and exam focus on complex and cutting-edge Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) compliance issues.*

**e. Dedicated account support and back up representatives? Y or N**

*i. Specific point of contact that will handle all customer service issues with the specific client account. Assigned once the account is set up, also provides a backup contact in the event the dedicated account rep is not in the office.*

**f. Easy, user friendly online portal experience for both employers and applicants? Y or N**

i. *Implement a secure and robust password protected online platform for clients to place orders, monitor pending reports, and view completed results 24 hours a day. Also, provide a secure gateway for applicants to provide their own information further streamlining the background screening experience.*

**g. Certifications that measure customer satisfaction and on-time delivery of reports? Y or N**

i. *Provide a framework for establishing and reviewing quality objectives that is not only communicated and understood within the organization, but also is made available to other interested parties as well. Our framework is periodically reviewed for continuing suitability.*

*Employers Choice Screening ensures that employees of the organization are aware of:*

1. *The quality policy*
2. *Relevant quality objectives*
3. *Their contribution to the effectiveness of the quality management system, including the benefits of improved performance*

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

1. **ATS (Applicant Tracking System)** - An applicant tracking system is all about being able to track and manage candidates in one organized database.
2. **CRA (Consumer Reporting Agency)** - means any person which, for monetary fees, dues, or on a cooperative nonprofit basis, regularly engages in whole or in part in the practice of assembling or evaluating consumer credit information or other information on consumers for the purpose of furnishing consumer reports to third parties, and which uses any means or facility of interstate commerce for the purpose of preparing or furnishing consumer reports.
3. **EI3PA** - Experian's Independent 3rd Party Assessment (EI3PA) is an annual assessment of a Third Party's ability to protect Experian provided data. EI3PA requires an evaluation of a Third Party's information security program and controls by an independent assessor, based on requirements provided by Experian.
4. **FCRA (Fair Credit Reporting Act)** - is U.S. Federal Government legislation enacted to promote the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of consumer information contained in the files of consumer reporting agencies.

5. **ISO 9001:2015 (International Organization of Standardization)** - The ISO 9001:2015 certification establishes the criteria for a quality management system. This standard is “based on a number of quality management principles including a strong customer focus, the motivation and implication of top management, the process approach and continual improvement. Using ISO 9001:2015 helps ensure that customers get consistent, good quality products and services, which in turn brings many business benefits
  
6. **NAPBS (National Association of Professional Background Screeners)** - the National Association of Professional Background Screeners (NAPBS) was established to represent the interest of companies offering employment and tenant background screening services. In order to promote industry standards and best practices when providing employment background checks
  
7. **PCI** - The Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) is a set of security standards designed to ensure that ALL companies that accept, process, store or transmit credit card information maintain a secure environment.
  
8. **Privacy Shield** - comply with data protection requirements when transferring personal data from the European Union and Switzerland to the United States in support of transatlantic commerce. The Privacy Shield program, which is administered by the International Trade Administration (ITA) within the U.S. Department of Commerce, enables U.S.-based organizations to join one or both of the Privacy Shield Frameworks in order to benefit from the adequacy determinations.