

# SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

## Criminal Background Check Policy

### PURPOSE:

The Southern Illinois University School of Medicine (SIU SOM) is committed to provide the public with well-trained physicians who possess the traits of high moral character and standards. The purpose of this policy is to help ensure a safe environment for patients, employees, fellow students, visitors and the general public as well as to protect property by conducting criminal background checks on all matriculants.

### SCOPE:

- 1) This policy applies to all applicants receiving offers of acceptance from the SIU SOM on the effective date shown on the acceptance letter.
- 2) Authorization: Illinois law authorizes the SIU SOM Admissions Office to conduct criminal background checks on accepted medical students who plan to matriculate to SIU SOM, based on the expected patient population, which may include children or vulnerable adults.

### POLICY:

- 1) The SIU SOM requires a criminal background check as part of the acceptance process for all incoming medical students.
- 2) Background checks will be performed only after the applicant has received an offer of acceptance.
- 3) Matriculation is contingent upon satisfactory results of a criminal background check.
- 4) Criminal background information released to the SIU SOM will be used only for purposes of assisting in making acceptance decisions and/or clinical rotations at affiliated hospitals.
- 5) If a background check identifies issues, which may preclude acceptance, the case will be referred to the Dean with counsel from the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the General Counsel's Office.

### PROCEDURE:

- 1) Application: The supplemental application includes an inquiry about convictions. The supplemental application will be shared with the Admissions Committee. Applicants, who refuse to complete this section or do not answer truthfully and completely, will have their offers of acceptance reviewed.
- 2) Waiver/Consent: The acceptance letter to the SIU SOM will include a consent form for a Criminal Background Investigation. Refusal to provide adequate/correct information or to provide consent for investigation will result in withdrawal of offer of acceptance.

3) Inquiry:

- a) The SIU SOM Admissions Office will initiate the background check through an external company, as part of the routine procedure for medical students prior to matriculation.
- b) A copy of the informed consent form will be faxed to the company authorized to perform the background check.
- c) The authorized company will be instructed to provide results to authorized individuals only.

4) Convictions:

- a) The existence of a conviction does not automatically disqualify an individual from eligibility for acceptance. Relevant considerations may include, but are not limited to: the date, nature and number of convictions; the relationship the conviction bears to the duties and responsibilities of the medical student; and successful efforts toward rehabilitation. Any decision to reject or accept an applicant with a conviction is solely at the discretion of the SIU SOM.

**RESULTS:**

- 1) Confidentiality: Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that results of criminal background checks are kept as confidential as possible with limited number of persons authorized to review results.
- 2) Access to Results: The Associate Dean for Student Affairs will review all criminal background checks. If adverse information deemed to be relevant to the applicant's acceptance as a medical student is contained in the background check, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs will notify the applicant in writing.
- 3) Information Available Through Background Checks: The criminal background check will include a record of all arrests and convictions. In almost every case, only conviction information will be considered.
- 4) Ability of Applicant to Review Information: The applicant may review the criminal background check received by the University by contacting the Associate Dean for Student Affairs in writing.
- 5) Right to Respond to Adverse Report: The applicant will be asked to review any adverse information and to provide a written response to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. When appropriate, the applicant may be asked to meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs in person to answer questions.
- 6) Right to Change and/or Terminate Policy: Reasonable efforts will be made to keep applicants informed of any changes in the policy. However, the SIU SOM reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to amend, replace, and/or terminate this policy at any time.