



## Tips for Conducting a Quality Background Check

### 1. Provide as Much Info as Possible

When filling out the subject's information, it is important to provide as much information as possible. In addition to providing the subject's **date of birth** and **social security number**, including a **middle initial** or a **middle name** can be extremely helpful in returning accurate results in a timely manner.

### 2. Find Where the Subject Has Lived

If an applicant has a criminal history in a certain county, chances are they are not going to tell you they have lived in that area. Running a **social security trace** allows you to find the known addresses associated with their SSN, usually going back 7 years. This gives you a starting point, without having to simply rely on the information they have provided.

### 3. Conduct a Thorough Search

Once you have received the addresses from the social security trace, run a **county criminal courthouse search** in all of the known counties where the individual has resided. This type of search is one of the best ways to receive in-depth and current information. (Note: Some states do not allow county criminal searches. If this is the case, you can run a thorough **statewide criminal search** instead.)

### 4. Enhance Your Efforts

Instant database searches provide quick and affordable results, however there is no guarantee that a database search will completely cover all criminal records within a state. While **national** and **statewide instant database searches** should not be used (in and of themselves) to make a hiring decision, they can be very useful when used in conjunction with county or statewide criminal courthouse searches. Most database searches allow you to access additional pools of information such as the DOC, AOC, and sex offender registries.

### 5. Research Aliases

It is important to note that if you are running a search on Jane Smith, and she committed a felony before she was married (while she was still Jane Doe), the felony information would most likely not be reported under her married name. Thus, it is important to run searches on all known aliases, including **maiden names**. Aliases can often be found in the results of the social security trace.

### 6. Dig Even Deeper

For more sensitive positions, such as internal staff, professional/technical employees, healthcare workers, and positions involving handling money, it is recommended to conduct the following searches in addition to the searches previously mentioned: **employment, education and license verification**, as well as a **credit/bankruptcy check**.

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