

## Background Checks

Due to growing nationwide concerns regarding the suitability of today's healthcare professionals, many hospitals, healthcare systems, clinics, and physician offices require disclosure of an individual's criminal history. In addition, many state statutes also require disclosure of an individual's criminal history in order to apply for certain health professional certificates, registrations, and licenses.

The existence of a criminal history may subject an individual to denial of an initial application for a license to practice in a clinical setting or result in the revocation or suspension of an existing license. In response to this growing trend, Austin College requires all PA students to submit to a criminal background check. It is the policy of the College that **all accepted PA students must submit to a criminal background check prior to matriculation**. In addition, students who remain enrolled must submit to a criminal background check as needed to remain eligible to participate in clinical rotations.

The results of background checks are reviewed by the PA Program Director to determine whether there is a record of misdemeanor and/or felony conviction(s). A record of criminal activity will not automatically disqualify a student from enrollment or continued enrollment. The College will consider such factors as (but not limited to) the nature of the crime, the age of the individual at the time the crime was committed, length of time since the criminal activity, any fines, sanctions or convictions, the nature of the PA program and the relatedness of the conviction, and whether the College will be able to provide appropriate professional clinical training to the student.

If the nature of a student's results suggests that their criminal history may negatively impact the student's ability to progress successfully through the program, the PA Program Director will present the results to the PA Student Progression Committee (SPC), keeping the student's identity confidential. It is the SPC that will determine if the student will be allowed to matriculate into the program or be denied admission. This decision can be appealed, in writing, to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) within seven (7) days after notification of the SPC's decision by the PA program to the student. The VPAA's decision is final and cannot be appealed.

Students who are permitted to matriculate with a positive criminal background check are required to sign a waiver stating their understanding of the possible negative impact of their background check on their education and post-graduate licensure.

Failure to disclose criminal activity or material misrepresentation of information by an incoming student is deemed to be falsification of the application and may result in denial of admission, matriculation and/or dismissal from the PA program. Failure to disclose criminal activity or material misrepresentation of information by an enrolled student is deemed to be a violation of the PA Program Academic Student Code of Conduct and may result in dismissal from the program. Incoming and enrolled students must disclose any criminal activity, including misdemeanor or felony charges/convictions to the PA Program Director.

All fees associated with background checks are the responsibility of the student.