

CORI Policy

Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Policy

This policy is applicable to the criminal history screening of prospective staff, faculty, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers and interns and, in certain circumstances, current employees, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers and interns and faculty and/or staff members who escort students on overnight trips, including travel courses.

Where Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks are part of a general background check for employment or volunteer work, the following practices and procedures will generally be followed:

I. Conducting CORI Screening

CORI checks will only be conducted as authorized by the Massachusetts Department of Criminal Justice Information Systems (DCJIS). All applicants for whom a CORI check is to be conducted will be notified that a CORI check will be conducted and will be required to complete a CORI Acknowledgment Form. If requested, the applicant will be provided with a copy of Massachusetts College of Art and Design's (MassArt's) CORI policy.

II. Access to CORI

All CORI obtained by DCJIS is confidential, and access to the information by individuals at MassArt is limited to those who have a "need to know." This may include, but not be limited to, hiring managers, human resources and public safety staff. MassArt will maintain a list of each individual authorized to have access to or view CORI. This list will be updated every six (6) months.

III. CORI Training

An informed review of a criminal record requires adequate training. Accordingly, all personnel authorized to review CORI in the decision-making process will be thoroughly familiar with the educational materials and relevant training regarding CORI laws and regulations made available by DCJIS as well as MassArt's CORI Policy.

IV. Use of CORI for Background Screening

CORI used for employment purposes shall only be accessed for applicants who are otherwise qualified for the position for which they have applied. In most cases, MassArt's practice is to obtain CORI checks only for finalists for positions.

Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, determinations of suitability based on CORI checks will be made consistent with this policy and any applicable law or regulations.

V. Verifying an Applicant's Identity

If a criminal record is received from DCJIS, the authorized individual will closely compare the record provided by DCJIS with the information on the CORI request form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant, to ensure the record relates to the applicant.

If the information in the CORI record provided does not exactly match the identification information provided by the applicant a determination will be made by the Executive Director of Human Resources based on a comparison of the CORI record and the documents provided by the applicant.

VI. Questioning a Subject About Their Criminal History

Prior to questioning an applicant or employee about his or her criminal history, MassArt, or its authorized consumer reporting agency, will provide that individual with a copy of the criminal history record, whether obtained from the DCJIS or any other source.

The source/s of the criminal history record will also be disclosed to the applicant.

VII. Determining Suitability

If MassArt reasonably believes the record belongs to the applicant and is accurate, based on the information as provided in section V of this policy, then the determination of suitability for the position will be made. Unless otherwise provided by law, factors considered in determining suitability may include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Relevance of the crime to the position sought;
- b. The nature of the work to be performed;
- c. Time since the conviction;
- d. Age of the candidate at the time of the offense;
- e. Seriousness and specific circumstances of the offense;

- f. The number of offenses;
- g. Whether the applicant has pending charges;
- h. Any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof;
- i. Any other relevant information, including termination submitted by the candidate or requested by the hiring authority.

MassArt will notify the applicant of the decision and the basis of the decision in a timely manner.

VIII. Adverse Decisions Based on CORI

If MassArt is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of the CORI check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The applicant shall be provided with a copy of the criminal record and MassArt's CORI policy, advised of the part(s) of the record that make the individual unsuitable for the position, and given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the CORI record. The applicant will be provided a copy of DCJIS' Information Concerning the Process for Correcting a Criminal Record.

IX. Secondary Dissemination Log

All CORI obtained from DCJIS is confidential and can only be disseminated as authorized by law and regulation. MassArt maintains a central secondary dissemination log to record any dissemination of CORI outside of MassArt, including dissemination at the request of the applicant.

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