

Background Check Procedures

LexisNexis Background Checks: Increased Efficiencies and Cost Savings

The Iowa Association of County Extension Councils (IACEC) is pleased to announce that we have contracted with LexisNexis* to provide background check services for county extension and outreach programs. We believe that this service will greatly improve the inefficiencies in the required background checks that councils are responsible for while also providing a cost savings compared to our current system of checks.

Services Covered

IACEC has negotiated a rate of \$23.78 per background check. This includes all aliases, "also known as" former names, as well as up to 10 addresses for the one single fee per individual. The background check includes all of these databases:

- Social Security Number Verification
- Motor Vehicle Check (Driving Record)
- Felony and Misdemeanor
- National Criminal Record File
- Sex Offender – state and federal
- Child Abuse Registry

LexisNexis also checks local court houses for background information. And, if necessary, they will use runners to physically go to local court houses for background check information.

A significant benefit is the national and comprehensive component of this service. Not only is the background checked against national records, but also note that up to 10 prior postal addresses may be checked per individual, which is another way to uncover past problems.

Cost Savings and Efficiencies

Using the LexisNexis background check service will increase the efficiencies of our staff by saving time completing the background. Plus we are getting a much more comprehensive background check. Therefore, the cost of \$23.78 is more than offset with the increased staff efficiencies and labor savings. This is a sound business decision.

Currently, counties are paying \$15 "per name" for only an Iowa Department of Criminal Investigation (DCI) background check. Searching someone's maiden name or previous married names requires counties to pay an additional \$15 per name. So an Iowa DCI background check for both the married name and maiden name is currently an out-of-the-pocket-fee to the county of \$30.

However, an even bigger savings will be in our staff time costs. With today's process, county staff members are completing multiple forms in order to have background checks performed. Recently we invited county staff from four counties (Boone, Johnson, Polk and Washington) to attend a pilot group kickoff meeting with LexisNexis. The frustration and duplication of the current procedures were shared. These county staff indicated that they now spend

at minimum one hour per individual when processing background checks, which can escalate to three hours or more if multiple names, are checked and paperwork delays incur. Utilizing LexisNexis's web based services they will only spend 15-20 minutes per name. The savings in staff time alone will offset the entire \$23.78 fee.

Another benefit is the improved turnaround time. County staff has commented that the current turnaround time for getting back results is between 2-4 weeks. Using the LexisNexis services, the results are typically back within 48 hours!

Periodic Checks

It is becoming more common for businesses and organizations to re-run background checks on existing employees/volunteers every few years. Some county Extension councils are re-running background checks every year for existing employees/volunteers. The MOU Committee's recommendation is to do so every three years. With the LexisNexis program, you can create an automatic notification (e.g. one year, two years, three years etc.) where an email reminder will be sent alerting staff to re-run the background check on those existing employees/volunteers when the time interval is up.

Pilot Counties and Implementation Plan

The four pilot counties will be trained and begin using the LexisNexis process in April. This pilot group will also assist in developing procedures and best practices that will be shared with all counties. Once these counties are comfortable with the process we will create training and rollout schedule for all counties. Procedures will include addressing employee, 4-H volunteers, Master Gardener volunteers and other identified volunteer groups. The goal is to go live with this process in all counties prior to July 1 2013. Please contact Terry Maloy at maloy@iastate.edu or 641.226.1541 if you have any questions.

** LexisNexis is a leading global provider of web based background check services. They serve customers in more than 100 countries with 15,000 employees worldwide. Their web based program provides an extensive collection of background check risk solutions for organizations such as law enforcement & government agencies, non-profits, financial services firms, collection agencies, insurance and health care providers, real estate agencies, and others.*