



## **CORI POLICY**

Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks are part of a general background check for all forms of employment, volunteer work, and licensing purposes. The following practices and procedures will be followed.

### **I. Conducting CORI Screening**

These checks will only be conducted as authorized by the DCJIS and MGL c. 6, §. 172, and only after a CORI Acknowledgement Form has been completed. If a new CORI is to be made on a subject within a year of his/her signing of the CORI Acknowledgement Form, the subject shall be given seventy-two (72) hours' notice that a new CORI check will be conducted.

### **II. Access to CORI**

All CORI obtained from the DCJIS is confidential, and access to the information must be limited to those individuals who have a "need to know." This may include, but not be limited to, human resources personnel, hiring managers, staff submitting the CORI Request, and staff charged with processing job applications. Fitchburg State University must maintain and keep a current list of each individual authorized to have access to, or view, CORI. This list must be updated every six (6) months and is subject to inspection upon request by the DCJIS at any time.

### **III. CORI Training**

An informed review of a criminal record requires training. Accordingly, all personnel authorized to review or access CORI at Fitchburg State University will review, and will be thoroughly familiar with, the educational and relevant training materials regarding CORI laws and regulations made available by the DCJIS.

Additionally, all personnel at Fitchburg State University who are authorized to conduct criminal history background checks and/or review CORI information will review, and be thoroughly familiar with, the educational and relevant training materials regarding CORI laws and regulations made available by the DCJIS.

### **IV. Use of Criminal History in Background Screenings**

CORI used for employment purposes shall only be accessed for applicants who are otherwise qualified for the position for which they have applied.

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

**V. Verifying a Subject's Identity**

If a criminal record is received from the DCJIS, the information is to be closely compared with the information on the CORI Acknowledgement Form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant to ensure the record belongs to the applicant.

If the information in the CORI record provided does not exactly match the identification information provided by the applicant, a determination is to be made by an individual authorized to make such determinations based on a comparison of the CORI record and documents provided by the applicant.

**VI. Inquiring About Criminal History**

In connection with any decision regarding employment, volunteer opportunities, or professional licensing, the subject shall be provided with a copy of the criminal history record, whether obtained from the DCJIS or from any other source, prior to questioning the subject about his or her criminal history. The source(s) of the criminal history record is also to be disclosed to the subject.

**VII. Determining Suitability**

If a determination is made, based on the information as provided in section V of this policy, that the criminal record belongs to the subject, and the subject does not dispute the record's accuracy, then the determination of suitability for the position or license will be made. Unless otherwise provided by law, factors considered in determining suitability may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. Relevance of the record 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; and
- i. Any other relevant information, including information submitted by the candidate or requested by the organization

The applicant is to be notified of the decision and the bases for it in a timely manner.

**VIII. Adverse Decisions Based on CORI**

If an authorized official is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of a criminal history background check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The subject shall be

provided with a copy of the Fitchburg State University CORI policy and a copy of the criminal history. The source(s) of the criminal history will also be revealed. The subject will then be provided with an opportunity to dispute the accuracy of the CORI record. Subjects shall also be provided a copy of the DCJIS' *Information Concerning the Process for Correcting a Criminal Record*.

**IX. Secondary Dissemination Logs**

All CORI obtained from the DCJIS is confidential and can only be disseminated as authorized by law and regulation. A central secondary dissemination log shall be used to record any dissemination of CORI outside this organization, including dissemination at the request of the subject.

For information on CORI, please visit the DCJIS web site at <http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/dcjis/>. You may also contact the Fitchburg State University Human Resources and Payroll Services Office by telephone at 978-665-3172 or by email at [humanresources@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:humanresources@fitchburgstate.edu).