



CREDENTIALCHECK[®]

EXAMINER

Background Checks & Drug Testing

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Welcome

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An Industry First: National Association Of Professional Background Screeners Launches Formal Accreditation Program

Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program Rolls Out in Conjunction with Annual Conference April 19-22, 2009

MORRISVILLE, NC, APRIL 19, 2009 – The National Association of Professional Background Screeners (NAPBS®) today officially launches the Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program (BSAAP) the first ever industry-specific accreditation program, in conjunction with the 2009 NAPBS Annual Conference, April 19-22, 2009 in St. Louis, MO.

Governed by a strict and thorough set of professional standards, the BSAAP will become a widely recognized seal of approval that brings national recognition to background screening-affiliated organizations known for their commitment to excellence, accountability, high professional standards, and continued institutional improvement.

“BSAAP is the industry’s primary vehicle for quality assurance, self-regulation and public accountability,” said Tracy Seabrook, CAE, executive director of NAPBS. “Developed and sustained by background screening professionals, BSAAP reflects, reinforces, and promotes best practices, institutional ethics, and the highest standards of background screening operations.”

Millions of consumer reports are requested each year by U.S. employers, organizations and governmental agencies to assist with critical business decisions. Although consumer reporting is currently regulated at both the federal and state level, NAPBS believes there is also a strong need for a cohesive industry standard, and has therefore created the BSAAP. To become accredited, consumer reporting agencies must pass a rigorous onsite audit of all policies and procedures as they relate to six critical areas: consumer protection, legal compliance, client education, product standards, service standards and general business practices.

NAPBS has formed a Background Screening Credentialing Council to ensure firms seeking accreditator meet or exceed a measurable standard of competence in these areas. Five sub-committees have been formed under the Council to provide direction in critical areas of accreditation, including standards governance, policies and procedures, marketing and finance. NAPBS members will have access to BSAAP training sessions during the conference, along with access to the accreditation standard and the Best Practice Committee’s accreditation checklist on the NAPBS website at www.napbs.org.

About NAPBS

The National Association of Professional Background Screeners (NAPBS) is the leading national resource for issues related to the rapidly expanding background screening industry. Founded in 2003 as a nonprofit trade association, the NAPBS promotes ethical business practices and fosters awareness of privacy rights and consumer protection issues. It is the foremost leader in the movement toward establishing generally accepted and reliable standards for background screening professionals and organizations. Now representing 729 member companies in the US and internationally, NAPBS is active in public affairs and presents a unified voice for the industry in the development of national, state, and local regulation. It advances industry objectives by providing a national infrastructure, organizational support, strong branding, and a forum for an open exchange of ideas. It also sponsors research on front-burner issues relevant to the industry; for example, consumer disputes and screening for terrorists. The NAPBS has also unveiled an accreditation program for NAPBS members, exhibited at conferences of human resources professionals and other related industries.

Benoit Seeks Background Checks to Weed Out Frauds

Bill targets workers who provide state-subsidized aid to elderly, others

RIVERSIDE — A Coachella Valley lawmaker introduced legislation Tuesday that would require individuals who provide services to the elderly and disabled under state-subsidized programs to undergo background checks to screen out potential fraudsters.

Sen. John J. Benoit, R-Bermuda Dunes, said SB 246 would mandate that any independent contractor working in the state's In-Home Supportive Services program agree to a background investigation and fingerprint registration.

IHSS is a state-supported program — administered through county Adult Protective Services offices — which extends assistance to low-income elderly residents, most of whom are on Medi-Cal, as well as the disabled.

IHSS caregivers visit patients in private homes, hotels, hospitals or health clinics, providing help with meal preparation, housekeeping, grocery shopping, bathing and grooming, medication dispensation and other domestic services, according to the California Department of Social Services.

Benoit said greater safeguards should be in place to prevent exploitation of the system.

"IHSS care providers have a duty to care for the most vulnerable Californians, seniors and the disabled," Benoit said.

Loose oversight of this program endangers these care recipients and opens the door to widespread fraud.

"Losing precious state funds to fraud is unacceptable, especially in a time when the government is increasing taxes and cutting services," he added.

According to Benoit's office, there have been a number of cases in which individuals used fake Social Security cards to create fictitious welfare recipients, enabling the fraudsters to file claims to cover the cost of services never rendered.

"You could make up that there's some 70-year-old person under such-and-such Social Security number who doesn't really exist and to whom you're providing services," said Kyle Packham, a legislative analyst for Benoit.

In July, 21 people were charged with welfare fraud in Los Angeles County for alleged abuse of the IHSS system via the theft of more than \$2 million in state funds, Benoit noted.

The senator said that under his bill, an IHSS care provider would be fingerprinted and undergo a criminal background check by the California Department of Justice before registering with the county in which the person intends to work.

Source: mydesert.com

Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act: What Employers Need to Know

Have you heard about Lilly Ledbetter and the Ledbetter Act in the news? Here is a straightforward explanation of how this Act affects you as an employer.

The Ledbetter Case

In 2007, the United States Supreme Court ruled on the case of Ledbetter v. Goodyear. Ms. Ledbetter, a 20-year employee of Goodyear, claimed that, in her early years at Goodyear, her supervisors discriminated against her by unfairly evaluating her performance less favorably than her male counterparts, resulting in lower salary increases. She believed that those discriminatory evaluations affected every paycheck she received throughout her tenure with Goodyear. As such, she argued the right to bring a claim of discrimination based on each paycheck she received that was less as a result of the evaluations, even though they were years after the last discriminatory evaluation had been conducted. The Supreme Court disagreed, saying that Ms. Ledbetter needed to have brought her discrimination claim within 180 days of the actual discriminatory decisions, i.e., when the evaluations happened. She could not bring a claim based on the effects of the prior decisions.

The Ledbetter Act

President Obama signed into law the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009, overturning this Supreme Court decision. The law now permits an employee to bring a claim for discrimination 180 days from not only a discriminatory compensation decision, but also any effects of that decision. Even if the discriminatory action (i.e., an evaluation) happened 20 years ago, an employee can bring a claim based on a current paycheck reflecting a lesser salary than male counter-parts, which the employee can argue is the result of the 20-year old decision.

What can you do? Evaluate and Document, Document, Document

"Don't discriminate" is the easy answer. Unfortunately, we all know that it is impossible to control the whims of every supervisor, even with the best training and policies. Not discriminating is definitely a first step, however, what this Act really requires is good documentation. Too often employers find themselves in court defending a long-term employee's claim with no documentation to show why certain decisions were made.

It is vitally important to document employee evaluations and decisions that affect their compensation and to keep this documentation in the employee's personnel file. Having detailed documentation to demonstrate why an employee was evaluated a certain way or to explain why certain compensation decisions were made provides some institutional memory and proof that can help avoid or defend against claims that may come years after the decision was made. You can also evaluate how your employees are being compensated. Examine each position. Are there large salary discrepancies from one person to the next? Is there some reasonable explanation for that discrepancy, e.g., seniority, experience, skill level, or geographic area? A good negotiator can end up with a significantly greater salary than an equally experienced and qualified counter-part. That is the beginning of a discrimination claim. As much as possible, you want to avoid discrepancies and, when they are discovered, make some effort to correct them. There is no guarantee that you will never face a discrimination claim under this Act, but by evaluating how employees are compensated and documenting compensation decisions, you can go a long way toward preventing claims and putting yourself in the best position to defend against any you face.

Source: hrresource.com, article by Elizabeth L. Riles March 13, 2009

Firms Encouraged To Invest In Graduates

Companies must continue to invest in graduate recruitment programs throughout the downturn to secure long-term talent, the Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR) has said. As firms look to make cost savings and the value of graduate recruitment schemes increasingly come under fire, the AGR has urged businesses to recognize the importance of graduates' contribution to the workplace. This includes money brought in to the business through sales or project work by graduates, the fresh ideas and current marketplace knowledge they bring and the opportunities for knowledge transfer from senior to junior staff. Carl Gilleard, chief executive of the AGR, says, "Talent development has always been important to business and it would be a disaster if firms decided to drop their graduate and placement schemes to save money in the short term. HR directors know how beneficial it is to recruit graduates and it is important that this is recognized at board level."

Source: People Management Online

Cost Effective Strategies for Retaining Your Top Employees

Even given today's economic uncertainty, creating a reward system that attracts and retains talented employees is important for the success of any organization. While you may not be able to afford to offer your employees regular pay increases, there are some other simple and cost effective ways to reward your workers.

To help keep your best workers around, consider implementing some of the initiatives found below:

1. Find out what your employees want. Pay isn't always most important. For many employees what is most important at work is the satisfaction that comes from a job well done, being recognized and

appreciated for one's efforts, and having the flexibility to balance work with personal obligations. Get a feel for what your employees want before implementing a new reward system. All that may be necessary are some simple changes, such as putting more effort into recognizing your employees or providing your workers with the autonomy that they desire.

2. Extra time off. Providing extra time off is a simple way to offer a desired benefit without cutting into your bottom line. The extra time off is a win-win; it provides employees with an opportunity to catch up on personal business or just get some much needed R&R. And when your employees return, they'll come back with a renewed commitment to their work and a feeling of rejuvenation.

3. Bonuses for meeting targets. Offering employees a bonus for reaching certain sales targets is a simple motivator to ensure an employee's hard work is rewarded. With the revenue made from reaching company sales goals, you can afford to share the reward with the employees who made it happen - and who will likely make it happen again.

4. Flexible schedules. Most employees desire a work schedule that easily enables them to balance work with their personal life. To meet these demands, consider offering options such as telecommuting, flextime, job sharing, and shift swapping when appropriate. Employers that fail to offer their employees the flexibility to leave work early to care for a sick child or to attend a parent-teacher conference are not likely to keep quality employees around for very long.

5. Increased responsibilities. Most employees are interested in performing work that is challenging, whereas work that is repetitive or requires little thought often results in disengagement. Increase job responsibilities and you will likely see an increase in dedication and commitment.

6. Make advancement opportunities known. Employees that work toward a personal goal such as career growth are motivated to work hard. So, let your employees know they're doing well, inform them of advancement opportunities, and work with them to help them reach their career goals.

7. Just say "thank you." It's the thought that counts. So if you can't afford a pay increase this year, think of other creative ways to show your employees that they're appreciated. Simple forms of recognition, such as praise, thank you notes, and "employee of the month" awards can go a long way in keeping your employees happy.

8. Tie rewards to performance. When rewards are tied to job performance, employees are more likely to put forth the effort and produce quality results. On the contrary, when employees come to expect pay increases or other rewards "just because," their performance is likely to remain marginal. It's important to reward employee performance soon after a job well done so that the employee makes the connection between their hard work and the reward received.

Given the circumstances of the current economy, pay increases may not be on the top of your company's to-do list. But to be effective, employee rewards don't have to dip into your company's budget. Alternatives to pay increases, such as a formal employee recognition program, an extra day off, or even a simple "thank you" go a long way in showing employees that they're appreciated - and that may be all that's needed to keep your top performers around.

Source: hrresource.com, article by Michael J. Pires February 26, 2009

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Thank you! We'll see you next month!

Credential Check has been providing background checks and drug testing since 1984. What separates us from other screening companies is our commitment to 100% Client Satisfaction, our use of technology and the flexibility we have in providing solutions to our clients' unique requirements while ensuring strict compliance with federal, state and local regulations.



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