



# Hiring and Background Checks

When we hire Census Bureau staff, we are mindful of two critical objectives. Most importantly, we want to protect the public's safety and trust. Secondly, we want to give every applicant who is fit to serve a fair opportunity to do so. This decade, we have worked with legal experts, law enforcement officials, and advocacy leaders to make sure our hiring process for the 2020 Census meets both objectives.

## Every applicant selected for a job goes through an independent background check.

- Applicants for temporary census positions apply online and are selected based on their answers to assessment questions and how well they meet the [job requirements](#).
- Once selected for a position and made a tentative job offer, applicants must get their fingerprints taken for an FBI fingerprint check. This check looks for arrest records.
- Office staff (clerks, recruiting assistants, office operations supervisors) will also go through a background investigation with the Office of Personnel Management. OPM's background investigation verifies education, employment history, residence, etc.

## We worked with legal experts, law enforcement officials, and advocacy groups to design a process for resolving issues identified in applicants' background checks. The process is designed to be fair to the applicant and to protect the public.

- Depending on the results of the fingerprint check, we may ask selectees to provide additional information.
- We will notify the selectee if they need to provide more information and will give them 30 days to respond. We will also send them

reminders throughout the process and notify them once a final determination is made.

- To respond, the selectee will need to provide a final court disposition and an explanation of the circumstances.
- The background check process is timed to allow applicants enough time to resolve any issues before moving on to the next step of the hiring process, such as participating in required job training.

## The results of the background investigation determine whether the applicant will continue in the hiring process.

- If an applicant ultimately passes the pre-employment checks, they continue through the hiring process and are viewed and treated as any other employee. Census Bureau hiring officials and supervisors do not see the results of the fingerprint check.
- If the applicant does not pass the background investigation, the selectee will be notified that they are no longer eligible for the position.

## **For applicants:**

*If you suspect your background check may identify an arrest record, you can prepare now.*

- Be available to schedule your fingerprint appointment as soon as you are tentatively offered a position. This will allow the maximum time to resolve any issues before job training begins.
  - Selectees will be able to schedule their appointments online. (A telephone number will also be available.)
  - Sites will be available at more than 500 locations across the country, including at 200 Office Depot locations.
- Find and review your court documentation. Be prepared to explain what caused any arrest.
- If convicted, it may also be helpful to have information about any rehabilitation programs you may have completed readily available.

**For more information about 2020 Census jobs, please visit [2020census.gov/jobs](https://2020census.gov/jobs).**