UW College of Education Background Check Processes and Policy

Students in the College of Education Teacher Education Program, as part of their educational course work, complete observations and field experiences in PK-12 schools, early childhood sites, and other sites where education students work with children (e.g., tutoring, after school programs). Therefore, all students must have a background check to be accepted into the teacher education program and before enrolling in the first teacher education/early childhood education course that requires any type of field experience. This also applies to students who are not enrolling in the program but who are taking teacher education/early childhood education courses through the College of Education (on campus or outreach) that involve field experiences.

There are two background checks that are conducted throughout the teacher education program. The first is required on entry and the second is required by the state for obtaining a Wyoming Substitute Teacher Permit, which must be in place before enrolling in the EDST 3000 course (usually junior year). If a student has 65 college credit hours on his/her transcript before enrolling in a field experience course, that student can apply directly to the Wyoming Professional Standards Teaching Board for a Wyoming Substitute Teacher Permit (information below). Upon providing a copy of the permit to the Office of Teacher Education, it will be valid for all field experiences, including residency, as long as it is current. Students not having 65 transcripted credits upon enrolling (cannot include credit currently working on) will need to do the following background checks through the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation and Department of Family Services.

Background Check Processes

Substitute Teaching Permit

The Wyoming Substitute Permit Process: If you have enough credits for the Wyoming Substitute Permit application [65 college credits already identified on your college transcript(s)], go to the Wyoming Professional Teaching Standards Boards (PTSB) website where it describes the classroom teaching substitute permit process. http://ptsb.state.wy.us/ApplicationsFees/tabid/94/Default.aspx This process can take six weeks or more, so be sure to get the application in early.

If you do not meet the credit requirement to obtain a substitute teaching permit, then complete the following two components of the required background check:

1) Central Registry—Department of Family Services

Complete the Central Registry Authorization of Release form (available in the Office of Teacher Education, McWhinnie Hall room 100). Mail this form with a personal check or money order, payable to the State of Wyoming in the amount of $10.00 to:

Department of Family Services
Early Childhood Division
130 Hobbs Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82009
2) Criminal Background Check—Department of Criminal Investigations

Complete the NCPA/VCA Waiver and Release Form; have this notarized; and submit this form to the Office of Teacher Education. The form and a Notary are available in the Office of Teacher Education (OTE) McWhinnie Hall room 100. A photo ID is required.

Obtain your fingerprints through a law enforcement agency using the cards provided (cards are available in the Office of Teacher Education, McWhinnie Hall room 100).

Please note that the University of Wyoming Police Department (located on the corner of 15th & Flint) will ONLY process fingerprint cards on the following days:

Tuesday &
Wednesday 11:30 am
to 12:30 pm 4:30 pm
to 5:30 pm

The UW Police Department will perform this service for a $5 per card fee. Other law enforcement agencies may also charge a fee for this service.

Payments for the fingerprint cards need to be made payable to DCI, or Office of Attorney General in the amount of $28.00. Payment must be in the form of a money order or a check made out on a business account. No personal checks or cash accepted.

Fingerprint cards with payment should be sent to:

Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation
Tim Olsen
208 South College Drive
Cheyenne, WY 82002
**Background Check Policy**

Students who have been convicted of a felony or criminal offense for which the penalty authorized by law includes imprisonment in a state penal institution for more than one (1) year and any substantiation of abuse including physical, sexual or verbal identified on the central registry by the State or in another state will not be allowed into the Teacher Education/Early Childhood programs or courses. “Felony” includes an offense committed in another jurisdiction which, if committed in this state, would constitute a felony as defined in this paragraph. “Convicted” or “conviction” means an unvacated determination of guilty by any court having legal jurisdiction of the offense and from which no appeal is pending. Pleas of guilty and nolo contendere shall be deemed convictions for the purposes of this section. Dispositions pursuant to W.S. 7-13-301 or 35-7-1037 (first offender treatment programs) shall not be convictions for purposes of this section.

Students convicted of a felony while in the Teacher Education/Early Childhood programs will be dropped from the program/courses: A certified copy of a judgment and sentence or other court order establishing conviction of a felony shall be conclusive proof of the felony conviction.

Examples of felonies

Abduction; Arson; Assault; Battery (felony); Burglary (felony); Breaking and Entering (felony); Child Pornography; Embezzlement; Forgery/counterfeiting (felony); Poison; Robbery; Pickpocket (felony); Extortion; Maiming; Perjury; Impersonation of a Police Officer; Theft or Larceny (felony); Kidnapping; Controlled/Dangerous Substances (felony); Prostitution/Child Prostitution; Cruelty (felony); Murder; Sex Offenses

Students who have been convicted of one or more of the following crimes will require review by a review committee (and possibly additional investigation) before being admitted to the Teacher Education program and/or allowed to continue in College of Education courses:

Any Battery (misdemeanor); Breaking and Entering (misdemeanor); Burglary (misdemeanor); Larceny (misdemeanor), Credit Card Fraud (Misdemeanor); Criminal Trespass (misdemeanor); Interference with Peace/Police Office (misdemeanor); Driving Under the Influence – Subsequent Violations; Forgery/Counterfeiting (misdemeanor); Handgun Violations (misdemeanor); Harassment; Controlled/Dangerous Substances (misdemeanor); Cruelty (misdemeanor); Hate Crimes; Hazing; Obscene Matters; Welfare/Food Stamp Offenses; Bribery; Receiving Stolen Goods; Open Warrants/Fugitive From Justice; Pending Cases Awaiting Court Dates; Bond Forfeiture; Deferred Probation; Suspended Imposition of Sentences; Pretrial Intervention (in process or not completed); Pretrial Diversion (in process or not completed); Diversion (in process or not completed); Probation Violations; Stricken With Leave to Reinstate; First Offender Programs/Youthful Offender (in progress or not completed) * Where applicable according to state law
The review process for students who were convicted of any of the above crimes will operate as follows:

1. In accordance with this policy, the Associate Dean will determine, in consultation with the UW Office of General Counsel, that a review is necessary.
2. The review committee will be made up of the department heads of the Educational Studies Department, the Elementary and Early Childhood Education Department, and the Secondary Education Department, as well as the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs.
3. The student will be notified that the review committee will meet to discuss concerns related to this policy and will be told that he/she will be notified of the outcome.
4. The student will be given an option to submit a statement or explanation for committee review.
5. The Associate Dean will provide review committee members with applicable information, including, but not limited to, copies of the student’s background check, statement or explanation (if provided), and the Background Check Review Policy.
6. The Associate Dean will set a time for the committee members to meet and discuss the above documents.
7. The review committee will make a decision on whether the student should be admitted to and or/continue in teacher education program/courses.
8. The decision of the review committee will be documented in writing and a written copy of the decision of the committee will be provided by the Associate Dean to the student.

When a student is enrolled in any clinical experience or anticipates commencing a clinical experience within 30 days, any criminal misconduct charge a student receives after the background check is completed must be reported immediately to the Office of Teacher Education. When the student is not enrolled in any clinical experience, the charge must be reported as soon as possible but no later than five working days after the incident. Failure to do so may result in the discharge of the student from Wyoming Teacher Education Program.

W.S. 21-2-802

Record Storage and Destruction

The Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs will review all CHRI (Criminal History Record Information). A determination of suitability for the Wyoming Teacher Education Program, based on college policy described above, will be made. CHRI for those meeting the criteria for program admission will be destroyed after recording the affirmative CHRI decision. CHRI for those not admitted to the program due to the policy-based review will be maintained in a secure location for 6 months and then will be destroyed.

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