

USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck

School of Social Work

BACKGROUND CHECK AND DISCLOSURE POLICY

Certain agencies require that students in the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work at the University of Southern California obtain and pass a background check, health screening/vaccinations, drug test and/or fingerprinting in order to participate in practicum placements (The Practicum Education courses). Students may be required to undergo a background check before beginning a practicum placement as part of the master's program in the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work.

The Practicum Department has identified agencies committed to social justice and anti-oppressive work that welcome all students (i.e. have experienced the criminal legal system). If you are placed at an agency that does not host students with a criminal legal history and your criminal record changes while enrolled in the MSW program, please inform your practicum placement team/practicum liaison so they can provide options. Placement options will inform the timing of placement and graduation.

The following are some examples of the areas of inquiry that may be reviewed in the background check requested by USC's partners, although some agencies may require a more comprehensive background check:

- Seven-year criminal court history
- Address verification
- Sex offense database search
- Two names verification (current legal and one other name (AKA))
- Three county check of records
- Search of the Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General database of excluded persons.
- Social security number verification

The fees required to obtain a background check and any additional tests are the sole responsibility of the student.

Students must authorize release of the results of the background check to the practicum placement agency. If there is any information in the background check report that an agency determines disqualifies the student from participating, then the student will be responsible for obtaining the necessary documents to correct/discuss the information. If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of the agency, then the student may be placed elsewhere. Successful practicum placement and completion of hours and learning outcomes are required for completion of the degree. Again, the Practicum Department has identified agencies that welcome students who have experienced the criminal legal system.

If you need guidance on how to communicate your lived experience as a strength during the interview, please reach out to your assigned placement coordinator/specialist.

Please note:

[National Association of Social Worker](#) (NASW) [Rehabilitation & Inclusion Council](#) is a group of professional and student Social Workers dedicated to promoting fair and impartial opportunities for rehabilitated individuals with previous criminal histories. Please email the council via RICouncil@naswca.org for further information.

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USC SDPSSW Unchained Scholars caucus is composed of formerly incarcerated MSW, DSW and Ph.D students working with ally members to dismantle the barriers faced by people impacted by the criminal punishment system. Please visit the website via this link:

<https://dworakpeck.usc.edu/student-life/student-organization/student-caucuses-and-interest-groups>

Special Circumstances Regarding Clearances

If you have any circumstances that may impede you from being placed in an agency, including anything that might come through on a security clearance check or your record has been expunged but may still appear on a Department of Justice report, please notate it on your placement form. Any information not disclosed at this time of application for placement may result in barriers that could affect the timing of placement and/or to remain in your placement.

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received and understand the background check information and terms presented above.

Signature

Date