



*This article presents general guidelines for Georgia nonprofit organizations as of the date written and should not be construed as legal advice. Always consult an attorney to address your particular situation.*

## **BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR NONPROFITS**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

- 1. What information do you need to get from applicants in order to run a background check?** First, you will need a signed information release and consent form (whatever service you choose will likely provide these for you). To run the actual report, the required information usually includes the person's full name (first, middle and last), date of birth (DOB), former addresses, Driver's License number, and Social Security number (or some combination thereof). You may also choose to obtain the person's fingerprints for the report.
- 2. Fingerprints or Social Security Numbers: Which should you use?** Although many services perform searches to see if SSNs have been reported as stolen, obtaining fingerprints is the best way to make sure a person is who he claims to be. Unlike a SSN, fingerprints cannot be faked or stolen if the fingerprinting process is done in person. However, fingerprints only supply arrest records. For information about a person's conviction for a crime, county records (which are kept by SSN and date of birth) are necessary.
- 3. How many years does a background check by a commercial service cover?** Most agency searches go back seven years, but some may search further.
- 4. How long does it take to get a report?** Report times vary from instant results to a few days depending on the information requested and the service used.
- 5. What information does a search by a commercial agency typically include?** Criminal checks will likely include felony and misdemeanor records, sex-offender records, inmate records, and arrest information for a single state or for multi-states (usually at an increased fee). According to your needs, you can also likely obtain driving records and credit reports, and some agencies even perform drug tests.

For more information, see our [Background Checks Webcast](#) (with accompanying slides) and our article on [Background Screening for Employees and Volunteers](#).

Attached are some sources for background check services, both government and private. These names are provided for information only and are not endorsed by Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta in any way. Fees are as reported to and understood by us in March 2023.

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## **GOVERNMENT SOURCES**

### **Georgia Felon Search**

[www.felonsearch.ga.gov](http://www.felonsearch.ga.gov)

Cost: \$15 per search

Time to receive results: instant

What you get: Georgia felony convictions

What you need: Full name, DOB, sex, and consent of the individual

### **National Sexual Offender Public Website**

[www.nsopw.gov](http://www.nsopw.gov)

Cost: Free

Time to receive results: Instant

What you get: Photo, sex-related convictions for all 50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and participating federally-recognized Indian tribes

What you need: Full name and consent of the individual

### **Georgia Sexual Offender Registry**

[https://state.sor.gbi.ga.gov/Sort\\_Public/](https://state.sor.gbi.ga.gov/Sort_Public/)

Cost: Free

Time to receive results: Instant

What you get: Georgia sex-related convictions since July 1, 1996, convictions prior to July 1, 1996 with release or probation dates after July 1, 1996, and convictions in other states but person now resides in Georgia

What you need: Full name and consent of the individual (In addition, you may enter other search terms, including address and gender.)

### **Georgia Driving Records**

<https://dds.georgia.gov/georgia-licenseid/general-license-topics/how-do-i-mvr-driving-history>

Cost:

- \$6 for a 3-year record
- \$8 for a 7-year record
- \$8 for a lifetime record

Time to receive results: Unclear. Results are mailed.

What you get: Georgia driving history record (MVR)

What you need: Can submit request online at [https://dds.drives.ga.gov/\\_/](https://dds.drives.ga.gov/_/) or via mail by filling out and submitting the following form:

[https://dds.georgia.gov/sites/dds.georgia.gov/files/related\\_files/document/dds-18.pdf](https://dds.georgia.gov/sites/dds.georgia.gov/files/related_files/document/dds-18.pdf) requires the full name, address, and consent of the individual whose MVR is requested)

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## **Atlanta Police Department**

<https://www.atlantapd.org/services/criminal-background-checks-and-fingerprinting>

Cost: \$10

Time to receive results: Unclear. Results are mailed.

What you get: Arrest and conviction records from the City of Atlanta

What you need: Notarized consent form (signed by the individual) and a copy of the individual's ID

## **Georgia Crime Information Center** <http://gbi.georgia.gov/obtaining-criminal-history-record-information>

[http://gbi.georgia.gov/sites/gbi.georgia.gov/files/related\\_files/document/GCICFees.pdf](http://gbi.georgia.gov/sites/gbi.georgia.gov/files/related_files/document/GCICFees.pdf)

Cost:

- For an Employee
  - GA Check, via GAPS: \$36.00
  - GA Check & FBI Search, via GAPS: \$49.25
- For a Volunteer
  - GA Check, via GAPS: \$34.00
  - GA Check & FBI Search, via GAPS: \$45.25

Time to receive results: Georgia criminal history record should be available to retrieve from the GAPS website within 24 to 48 hours after the applicant is fingerprinted and the transaction submitted to GCIC for processing.

What you get:

- Georgia Search: identification data (name, date of birth, social security number, sex, race, height, weight, etc.), arrest data (including arresting agency, date of arrest and charges), final judicial disposition data submitted by a court, prosecutor or other criminal justice agency and custodial information, if the offender was incarcerated in a Georgia correctional facility
- Georgia and FBI Search: Includes a Georgia Check and an FBI criminal records search (must have fingerprints to obtain this)

What you need: GAPS account (obtain here: <https://www.aps.gemalto.com/ga/index.htm>), as well as consent or fingerprint of the individual. The Georgia Crime InformationCenter does not conduct name-based criminal history record checks.

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## **PRIVATE SOURCES**

Some companies provide discounts for nonprofit organizations. If available, the prices below include that discount. The prices listed are for basic background checks only. Many companies provide other services, such as drug testing and credit checks, for an additional charge.

### **IntelliCorp**

[https://www.intellicorp.net/marketing/ScreeningServices\\_BackgroundChecks.aspx](https://www.intellicorp.net/marketing/ScreeningServices_BackgroundChecks.aspx)

Cost:

Time to receive report: 3-5 business days

What you get:

- Standard (SSN Verification w/address history, Government sanctions search, Validated criminal database, Validated nationwide sex offenders, Validated Department of Corrections, Unlimited single counties - 7 year address history)
- Enhanced (all Standard checks, plus Federal criminal records and Employment verification for 1 employer)
- Premium (all Enhanced checks, plus Unlimited single counties - unlimited address history, Arrest records, Employment verification for 2 employers, Education verification, Professional reference verification)

What you need:

- 1) Open an account with Intellicorp, which will require proof of valid business documentation
- 2) In order to run a search: Full name, DOB, SSN, current address of residence, and consent of the individual

### **Orange Tree Screening**

<https://www.orangetreescreening.com/>

Cost: Several packages available ranging from \$16.27 to \$126.39

Time to receive report: 1-3 business days

What you get (most popular search packages):

- Base search includes: Social Security Number trace, National Criminal Records search, National Sex Offender search, County/Statewide Criminal search (note that county searches not available for Georgia)
- Essential search includes: Social Security Number trace, National Criminal Records search, National Sex Offender search, County/Statewide Criminal search (note that county searches not available for Georgia), Education Verification, Employment Verification.
- Classic search includes: Social Security Number trace, National Criminal Records search, National Sex Offender search, County/Statewide Criminal search (note that

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county searches not available for Georgia), Education Verification, Employment Verification, Federal Criminal (convictions on Federal-level criminal cases), Global Watch (Global Terrorist Watch service searches for individuals on a proprietary database of more than 60 national and international watch lists), Employment Credit (consumer credit report), Media Search (information returned from a name search on US-based public websites), Motor Vehicle Records Regulated (commercial license validation), Professional Reference, Social Media Search.

What you need: Contract with Orange Tree Screening (see website to sign up)

### **Sterling**

<https://www.sterlingcheck.com>

Cost:

- \$29.95 for Basic Check
- \$59.95 for Preferred Check
- \$79.95 for Pro Check

Time to receive results: Unknown

What you get:

- Basic Check: social security number trace, single county criminal record search, multi-state instant criminal check with verification, DOJ national sex offender public website search
- Preferred Check: all Basic Check searches, plus federal criminal district search, OFAC terrorist watch list
- Pro Check: all Preferred Check searches, plus 7-year federal district criminal record search, locator select with verification

### **GoodHire**

<https://www.goodhire.com>

Details:

1. Individual can run own background check and send results
  - \$19.99 for Starter search: nationwide criminal databases, sex offender registries (instant results)
  - \$29.99 for Basic search: all Starter searches plus domestic watch list and social security number trace (instant results)
  - \$59.99 for Standard search: all Basic searches plus 3 county criminal court searches based on (results in 1-3 business days)
2. Business can create an account
  - \$29.99 for Basic+ search: SSN trace, sex offender registry search, global watchlist records, national criminal records
  - \$54.99 for Essential search: all Basic+ searches plus unlimited county criminal search
  - \$79.99 for Professional search: all Essential searches plus education verification, employment verification (current)

### **First Advantage**

<https://www.fadv.com/solutions/employment-background-checks.aspx>

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Cost:

- \$175 Set-Up Fee (includes an on-site business consultation)
  - \$9 for a County Search
  - \$7.50 for a National Criminal Registry File Search (NCRF Search)
  - \$2.75 for a Social Security Number (SSN) Verification
  - \$6 for a Georgia Sex Offender Registry Search
  - \$7.80 for a Georgia Sex Offender “Plus” Search
  - \$32 Package: Includes County Search, NCRF Search, and SSN Verification
    - In addition, under this package, if alias names are detected, they are also plugged into a County Search and an NCRF Search
  - \$44 Package: Includes County Search, NCRF Search, SSN Verification, and a National Sex Offender Registry Search
    - In addition, under this package, if alias names are detected, they are also plugged into a County Search and an NCRF Search
  - Note: a Motor Vehicle Check and/or a Credit Check can be added to any of the above options for an additional fee

What you get:

- County Search: Searches for arrest and conviction records
- NCRF Search: Checks for felonies, misdemeanors, & sex offender registry across the U.S.
- Social Security Verification: Confirms SSN and previous addresses
- Georgia Sex Offender Registry Search: Checks whether or not the individual is a registered sex offender in the state of Georgia
- Georgia Sex Offender “Plus” Search: If the individual’s SSN Verification produces an alias name, this Search will run that alias through a Georgia Sex Offender Search, as well.

What you need: Signed release form, SSN, and full name of the individual

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