

# Reviewing your background screening reports

This tool will help you identify inaccurate or incomplete information about your criminal history on your background screening report.

Since background screening reports are used by employers and include information from criminal records, it's important to make sure that your criminal records and background screening reports are accurate and up-to-date.

## What to do

- **Go through the checklist** while reviewing your background screening report.
- **Check off the boxes** next to any errors you find on your report.
- **Highlight the information you think may or may not be correct** on your report as you compare it with the checklist.

## A step further

The information in your background screening reports is pulled from your criminal records, so it's important that your criminal records are also accurate and up-to-date. You may need to seek help from legal aid, expungement clinics, or other organizations that provide assistance on this topic. Visit <https://cleanslateclearinghouse.org/states/> for help finding assistance with criminal records issues in your state.

To access a dynamic and fillable version of this tool, visit <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/consumer-tools/educator-tools/your-money-your-goals/companion-guides/>



# Find errors by **Reviewing your background screening reports**

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Highlight the information you think might not be correct on your background screening report as you compare it with this checklist.  
If you find errors, file a dispute with the background screening company.

## Possible errors in criminal history on a background screening report

- The record or report does not include correct identifying information.

*Check if any of following are incorrect:*

- Full name
- Social Security information
- Addresses
- Case or docket numbers

If you do not have your case or docket number, you may need to seek assistance from your attorney or Legal Aid or obtain your records from the court.

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- The report includes information you believe to be expunged or sealed.

Expunged or sealed records are those that have been removed from public view. States have different laws on expungement and you should check the laws of your state to determine if they may apply to your records or seek assistance from an attorney or other organization. See next page for links to legal assistance sites.

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- The report includes incomplete records.
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- The report lists single charges multiple times.
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- The report includes information that has been or should have been expunged, cleared or not reported under state or federal law.
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- The report includes arrests or other negative information that occurred more than seven years ago (except for convictions, which can stay on permanently in most states).

Some states may limit further the types or time frame for criminal history information.

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## Possible errors in criminal history on a background screening report

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The report misclassifies misdemeanors as felonies.

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The report includes a charge, arrest or conviction that is not yours - you were not charged or convicted of such an offense.

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Get help from your attorney, legal aid, a pro bono (volunteer) or other attorney, or organization to check and correct your record. For a list of legal aid offices visit <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/ask-cfpb/how-do-i-find-an-attorney-in-my-state-en-1549/> For a list of state-by-state legal assistance related to criminal records, visit <https://cleanslateclearinghouse.org/find-a-lawyer/>.

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