

Peabody College Background Clearance Policy

(Revised 6/21)

The purpose of Tennessee's background check laws is to prevent persons with certain criminal infractions from having direct contact with children under the age of 18 and/or vulnerable adults. Peabody will conduct background checks in compliance with state law and Peabody policy expands this criminal background coverage to anyone involved with Peabody related activities at any location, on or off campus, including but not limited to persons employed, volunteering, interning, contracting, or enrolled in academic programs at Peabody. This includes any student whose home school is Peabody and any student who takes classes or conducts research that brings them into contact with children and/or vulnerable adults (e.g., practica, research labs). This demonstrates our commitment to protecting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults; and thereby helps maintain our access to research, practicum, and internship sites.

Tennessee law requires local boards of education, charter schools, and licensed child care programs to complete pre-employment background checks via fingerprint sample (and have an updated background check at least every 5 years of continued employment thereafter) for individuals teaching or holding any other position with proximity to school children or children in a licensed child care program. Students entering teacher degree programs are included in this statute, as are contracted individuals and persons directly interacting with school/licensed childcare children under a corporate contract with a school, local board of education or childcare program. Peabody operates a number of such licensed, degree, and/or contracted programs.

The following persons are required to complete a Criminal History Background check. The type of check (fingerprint or non-fingerprint) is determined by the type of affiliation (e.g. employee, student) with Peabody and the interaction, or lack thereof, with children and/or vulnerable adults:

- All Peabody faculty members, including adjunct and adjoint faculty
- All Peabody staff members
- All graduate and professional students earning a Peabody degree
 - This includes special certifications, licensure hours, and/or endorsements
- All undergraduate students, including but not limited to, those enrolled in Peabody degree programs or taking classes that brings them in contact with children or vulnerable adults; students participating in grant funded programs; or participants in camps, tutoring, research, volunteer, or other activities that bring them in contact with children and/or vulnerable adults
- All postdoctoral scholars, including research fellows and postdoctoral trainees
- Others including but not limited to those participating in Peabody programs or Peabody related activities, volunteers, contractors, intern/observers, visiting scholars/fellows/students, mentors, and consultants

VALID CLEARANCE

- Clearance is valid when the criminal history report from TBI/FBI or CastleBranch (the non-fingerprint test vendor used by Vanderbilt) and the internal forms required by Peabody have been completed, reviewed, and approved by the Background Clearance Office (BCO) committee. These forms are currently part of an Oracle Learn course.
- Should findings be reported by TBI, the BCO committee will review the findings on a case by case basis and determine whether clearance will be granted.

- The background check will remain in good standing for four years as long as there is continuous enrollment/employment.
- The Protection of Minors Program (PoM) and Peabody College require a four year re-check on all previously cleared personnel.
 - Students who are not participating in programs or classes that are registered with Vanderbilt's PoM are exempt from this requirement.
 - You will be notified by PoM, BCO, or your department administrator when a re-check is due.
 - Follow the instructions in the notice to arrange for your re-check.
 - The four year re-check will be conducted by a vendor under contract with Vanderbilt and/or the current state approved vendor.

VIOLATIONS AFTER CLEARANCE

Should any arrest for criminal activity occur after clearance is granted, Peabody personnel should notify the BCO within 72 hours of the arrest. (bco@vanderbilt.edu).

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Failure to comply may result in:

- Students:
 - Hold placed on future registration/class enrollment
 - Hold placed on financial support
 - Cancellation of enrollment
- Staff:
 - Disciplinary action under the Vanderbilt Progressive Discipline policy
- Faculty:
 - Disciplinary action under the Vanderbilt Faculty Manual
- All:
 - Other consequences as deemed appropriate and necessary by Peabody and Vanderbilt administration, up to and including termination of employment, disenrollment, etc.

For **faculty and staff** background clearance procedures please contact your Department Administrator.

For **student** background clearance procedures please visit the Peabody background clearance website (<https://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/admin-offices/bco/index.php>)