



## Tips for Candidates Completing Background Checks for Columbia University

Columbia University is committed to assisting you as you complete the background check process. Here are some tips to help you and let you know what to expect.

*Under the New York City law called The Fair Chance Act, background checks must be run in two steps. This requirement applies to ALL private employers in New York City, including Columbia University.*

### PART ONE:

#### Step 1: Employment and Education Verification (The Pre-Offer Background Check)

In the first step, we will verify what you told us about your education and employment on your resume. We work with a company called Truescreen to do this.

You will receive an invitation email from **applicationstation@truescreen.com**. Follow the instructions in the email and provide the following information:

- **Full Legal Name** (e.g., maiden name and all aliases)
- **Email Address**
- **Phone Number** (with area code)
- **Date of Birth**
- **Social Security Number** (Please double-check for accuracy; incorrect entries will significantly delay the process.)
- **Address History** (past 7 years)

Please note: In the event the candidate doesn't have a SSN, they can select a different country on the application and enter the ID from that country. See below "Other Country ID."

Please select and enter at least one government identification number:\*

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	U.S. SSN *	<input type="text" value="555-55-5555"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Canadian SIN	<input type="text" value="e.g. 111-234-890"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Country ID	<input type="text" value="Select Country"/> <input type="text" value="Enter ID"/>

### Employment Verification:

- You must provide contact information for your employers for the past 7 years.
- The employment information you provide on your Truescreen form must match the information you provided when you applied online as well as on your resume. If there are discrepancies, this will cause significant delays.
- If there are gaps in your employment, you should offer an explanation (e.g., “attended school full-time,” “COVID-19 shutdown,” etc.).
- Please do not list employment lasting less than six months, volunteer roles, or unpaid positions.
- If Truescreen cannot verify your experience, you **will need to provide documentation supporting the start and end dates of your previous positions. Failure to provide this information in a timely manner will significantly delay the verification process.**

### Supporting Documents:

- **Tax Documents:** You may be asked to supply W-2s, 1099s, or pay stubs if Truescreen is unable to verify your previous employment.
  - **In each case where Truescreen is unable to verify employment, you will need to supply COPIES OF YOUR W2s or 1099s for each year you held that position. WAGE AND SALARY INFORMATION MUST BE REDACTED. You SHOULD NOT upload tax returns.**
  - You may download free copies of your IRS WAGE AND INCOME transcripts by going to the **IRS Get Transcript** website (<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript>). If you have never created an IRS account, you will need to create one, and then select the WAGE and INCOME TRANSCRIPT option. This process takes less than five minutes.
  - This information is also available for free if you wish to visit an IRS office in person.

**If you have questions about obtaining information from the IRS, we are happy to assist you.**

**Self-Employment Documents:** If you were self-employed during the last seven years, you must provide 1099s for each year of self-employment. If you cannot supply 1099s, you will be asked for additional documentation (tax returns, client name, license, etc.) to verify your self-employment.



### Education Verification:

Our vendor, Truescreen, will attempt to verify only the highest degree you received. For example, if you received a high school diploma and then completed some college coursework but did not graduate, you should only include your high school information. Our vendor will not verify education where you did not graduate or receive a degree or diploma.

If Truescreen cannot verify your high school, college, or university diplomas or degrees, you must either:

- Request an **official transcript** from your college, university or high school. The transcript must show the graduation date and the degree /diploma received.
  - If the highest level of education you completed was high school, and you went to school in New York, you can request an official transcript from the Department of Education. To contact New York State's Department of Education for a copy of a high school transcript, please visit the [DOE site](#).
- OR
- You can also provide a photograph of your **diploma or degree which should be sent to hracs-bc@columbia.edu**.

### For GED recipients:

If you received a GED in New York, you can visit the New York State Education Department to request a copy of your GED certificate. Please go to: [HSE, GED and TASC Documentation | New York State Archives](#).

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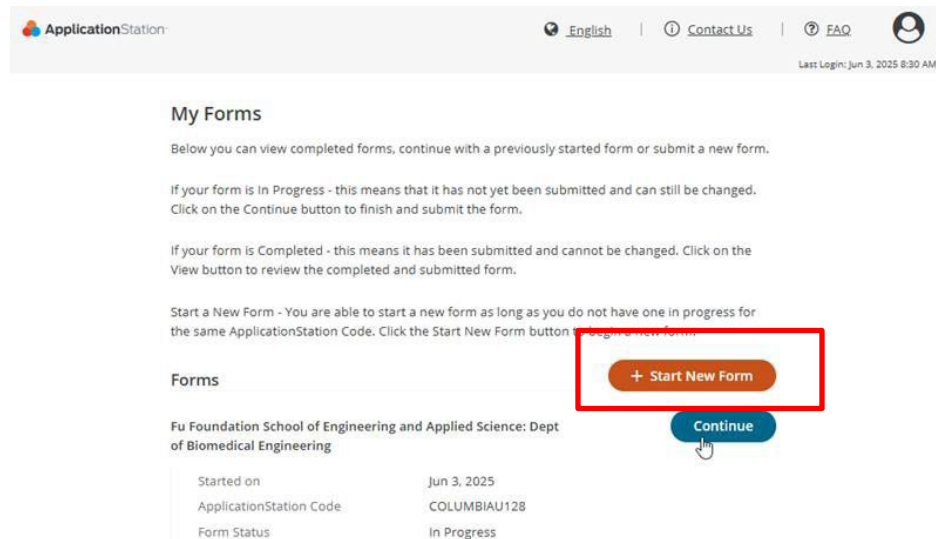
## PART TWO:

### Step 2: Criminal Background Check Verification (The Post-Offer Background Check)

- After your Step 1 Pre-Offer Education and Employment Check is **cleared** by our Background Check Team, the hiring department may make you a conditional offer of employment. Once you have signed your conditional offer, we will initiate the second part of the Background Check:
- **Step 2: The Criminal Background Check.**

When the Post-Offer Criminal Check is initiated, you will receive a **NEW** invitation from Truescreen which will come from [applicationstation@truescreen.com](mailto:applicationstation@truescreen.com). This invitation looks similar to the one you received for the Step 1 Education and Employment Background Check, but it has a **NEW** case number. You must respond to this **NEW** invitation before Truescreen can proceed.

When you select the link in the email for the Post-Offer, it will read: "Below you can view completed forms, continue with a previously started form or submit a new form." In order to proceed with Step 2, select the button "**Start New Form**" as depicted in the screenshot below:



ApplicationStation

English | Contact Us | FAQ

Last Login: Jun 3, 2025 8:30 AM

### My Forms

Below you can view completed forms, continue with a previously started form or submit a new form.

If your form is In Progress - this means that it has not yet been submitted and can still be changed. Click on the Continue button to finish and submit the form.

If your form is Completed - this means it has been submitted and cannot be changed. Click on the View button to review the completed and submitted form.

Start a New Form - You are able to start a new form as long as you do not have one in progress for the same ApplicationStation Code. Click the Start New Form button to begin a new form.

#### Forms

Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science: Dept of Biomedical Engineering

Started on	Jun 3, 2025
ApplicationStation Code	COLUMBIAU128
Form Status	In Progress

**+ Start New Form**

**Continue**



- Columbia University expects all employees to maintain the highest standards of honesty and ethical conduct, and we urge all candidates to disclose any criminal convictions when asked about their history. You **should not** tell us about sealed convictions, however.
- If you have a criminal conviction in your history, the Central Background Check Team may reach out to discuss this with you.

#### **Drug Screening (if applicable):**

In some cases, we may ask a candidate to undergo a drug screening, depending on what role they are being considered for.

- Candidates will receive a link to schedule a test at Labcorp or Quest. The test **must be completed within 3 days** of your receiving the invitation from Truescreen, or you will no longer be considered for the role.

#### **Protection of Minors (POM) Background Checks – Applies to persons who will be working with minors.**

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- If you have a criminal conviction in your history, the Central Background Check Team may reach out to discuss this with you.

#### **Our Team is Here to Help**

If you have any questions or need assistance with the process, feel free to reach out to

The Columbia University HR service Center at

**Phone:** 212-851-2888

#### **Office Hours:**

- Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
  - Thursday: 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
  - Friday: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Or submit a ticket at: <https://humanresources.columbia.edu/askhr>

For any **technical** difficulties completing the background check, please reach out to Truescreen on the portal where you can select the “Contact Us” link and connect to Truescreen via phone or live chat (See Below).

## Personal Information

Please provide the following information.

Legal First Name\*

John

Legal Middle Name

Q

Legal Last Name\*

Public

Legal Suffix

Select One

## Contact Us



### Phone

#### Technical Issues

To contact one of our support representatives, please dial: 1-833-802-6381

#### OHS Support

For assistance with a drug screen, physical or other health screening, call OHS at 1-800-799-0965

#### International Support

For non-US callers, please call +12158766000 for



### Online Chat

Use chat to contact our operators instantly

[Open chat](#)



All sites referenced in this document may be found using the following QR codes:

High School Equivalency (HSE), General Educational Development (GED), and Test Assessing Secondary completion (TASC) Documentation Site



Department of Education (DOE) Site



Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Site



New York Fair Chance Act Information

