



Date: December 1, 2025

College of Education, Health & Human Sciences

Criminal Background Check and Fingerprinting Requirement for Admission to the Educator Preparation Program

Policy Statement:

Prior to being admitted to the University of Tennessee-Knoxville Educator Preparation Program, all prospective students are required to undergo a comprehensive criminal background check and fingerprinting procedure conducted by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) at least four weeks prior to the application deadline. This process entails both fingerprinting and the completion of necessary documentation. The College of Education, Health and Human Sciences (CEHHS) Office of Professional Licensure (OPL) is available to support students throughout the entirety of this process.

The College of Education, Health and Human Sciences provides for the privacy of background check information. Background information is generally not shared outside of OPL unless the prospective student provides OPL permission to disclose information or in situations where OPL receives a subpoena, court order or as otherwise required by law.

Purpose:

In compliance with Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) 49-5-5610 any student seeking admission to an approved teacher preparation program must undergo a criminal background check and fingerprinting by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI). The purpose of this policy is to outline the process and requirements for completing the criminal background check and fingerprinting procedures as an admission requirement to the educator preparation program. The criminal background check will include all convictions and conviction-equivalent adjudications and statuses.

The criminal background check includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- **Social Security Number Search** - A search of credit report header data to help confirm the applicant's identifying information such as name, aliases, address(es), and Social Security Number and to determine areas of prior residence.
- **County Criminal Records Searches** - A direct search of county courthouse records for any felony or misdemeanor criminal background information.
- **Statewide Criminal Records Search** - A search conducted through statewide criminal records repositories and/or court systems for any felony or misdemeanor criminal background information.

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- **Federal Criminal Records Search** - A direct search of federal courthouse records for any felony or misdemeanor criminal background information.
- **National Criminal Database Search** - A multi-jurisdiction private database search covering more than 194 million criminal records collected from across the country. While the database does not contain information from all states, it supplements county, statewide and federal criminal searches. To ensure compliance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), relevant data is verified directly through the source of information to ensure that records reported are current and up to date.
- **National Sexual Offender Database Search** - A search of a national private database which contains sex offender data collected from across the country.

Procedures:

To ensure the successful completion of the background check for the Educator Preparation Program application, please follow all the steps outlined below. Failure to meet the background check requirements within the specified timeframe may lead to delays in the admission process. Prospective students are strongly encouraged to adhere to all procedures and timelines to prevent any disruptions in their academic journey. For any inquiries or concerns regarding the criminal background and fingerprinting procedure, please contact the [Office of Professional Licensure](#) at beateacher@utk.edu or 865-974-5203.

Criminal Background and Fingerprinting Procedure:

- A. Complete the Background Check Authorization Form available through the UTK Office of Professional Licensure (OPL). The form requires the applicant to provide current and permanent address information. [Click here for the Form link.](#)
- B. Upload the TBI VECHS Waiver document as instructed in the Background Check Authorization Form. Instructions for this PDF at [TBI VECHS Waiver](#).

Please note: You will not be able to submit the Authorization Form without uploading the VECHS Waiver. Instructions are in the link above (TBI VECHS Waiver). Please list your Current Address and your Permanent Address. We understand that the information may be duplicated.

Out-of-state applicants and those who are not admitted or currently enrolled at the University of Tennessee, please contact the Office of Professional Licensure at beateacher@utk.edu or 865-974-5203 for directions specific to your state to complete the background check.

- A **CURRENT** Address is where you currently live (Ex: UT campus residence hall, apartment, or home in the state of TN while attending the University of Tennessee).
 - A **PERMANENT** Address is where you can be reached all the time. (Ex: Address listed on your driver's license, passport, etc.)
- C. Agree to release all investigative records to the UTK Office of Professional Licensure (OPL).



- D. Upon submission of the Background Check Authorization form and uploaded TBI VECHS Waiver, instructions for the fingerprint process will be emailed to the applicant. Complete the fingerprint process as directed.

For further details, refer to Appendix A (Tennessee residents) for instructions on Tennessee applicant processing services related to fingerprinting, or Appendix B (all other states) for an overview of the Tennessee Non-resident processing instructions using the universal enrollment platform.

Submission and Clearance:

Applicants should ensure they meet the minimum requirements for admission to the Educator Preparation Program before initiating the background check process and paying associated fees. Applicants are responsible for any costs (approximately \$37.15) associated with completing the background check.

The applicant's background check application is considered complete only after Office of Professional Licensure clearance from the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation via the Tennessee Applicant Processing Services (TAPS). **Applicants must complete the background clearance process at least four weeks prior to the application deadline.** Failure to obtain clearance before the application deadline will result in a delay in consideration of admission to the program.

Applicants with previous and/or pending criminal charges must disclose them to the Office of Professional Licensure at beateacher@utk.edu or 865-974-5203 immediately. Applicants admitted to the program must provide updates on pending charges to the Office of Professional Licensure at beateacher@utk.edu or 865-974-5203 until the final disposition of the charges. Pending charges may impact admission and/or licensure eligibility.

Non-compliance with this policy may result in denial of admission to the Educator Preparation Program. Violations of professional and/or ethical standards may result in disciplinary action as per university policies.

For questions regarding minimum requirements or the fingerprint process, applicants should contact the Office of Professional Licensure at beateacher@utk.edu or 865-974-5203.

Decision for Admission:

If an individual's background information reveals any charges, a disposition for each charge is required. The TBI defines a disposition as **the final determination made by the court for a criminal charge or charges**. Examples include Guilty, Not Guilty, Dismissed, and Diversion. While the most common dispositions are court determinations (e.g., guilty plea and placed on probation, acquitted, etc.), a disposition can also indicate that law enforcement chose not to refer a criminal charge for prosecution or that the prosecutor amended or declined to prosecute a criminal charge. Individuals with charges that are pending or have not yet been adjudicated will also be required to meet with the Associate Dean of Professional Educator Preparation Programs of the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences



(Dr. David Cihak, dcihak@utk.edu) to review the background and available information to determine the subsequent steps regarding admission.

Admissions to the Educator Preparation Program will be denied if an applicant had a past conviction that would trigger automatic revocation of a professional educator license, as outlined in the Rules of the State Board of Education 0520-02-03-.09 (3) & (4).

Rejection and Reprinting Opportunity:

If an applicant's fingerprint background check is rejected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), OPL will notify the applicant and facilitate a reprint at no additional charge to the applicant. Several reasons could cause a rejection, such as poor print quality or inability to classify the prints.

Failure to undergo reprinting within 60 days from the original printing may result in additional costs and delays for the applicant.

Continuous Enrollment and Self-Disclosure Obligation:

A new background check is required every five (5) years at a minimum for continuously enrolled students. If a student has a break in enrollment of twelve (12) consecutive months or more, a new background check will be required.

Students who are cited or charged with any criminal offense must promptly disclose the incident to Office of Professional Licensure at beateacher@utk.edu or 865-974-5203. This disclosure must occur within 72 hours from the time of the incident or release from jail/custody. Please report by contacting Office of Professional Licensure at beateacher@utk.edu or 865-974-5203.

Following such an event, students are required to meet with the Associate Dean of Professional Educator Preparation Programs (Dr. David Cihak, dcihak@utk.edu). The purpose of this meeting will be to learn more about the situation and determine subsequent steps and possible licensure impact. In the case that a student is engaged in any clinical experience at the time of the citation or charge, they may not attend their clinical placement until after a meeting with the Associate Dean. Please note that applicants' and students' adherence to this policy is essential for maintaining professional standards within our educational programs.

Request for Copy of Background Check Results:

Applicants can request a copy of their background results, along with consumer rights information. The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) promotes the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of consumer reporting agencies. **You have the right to know what is in your file.** You may request and obtain all the information about you from the files of a consumer reporting agency (your "file disclosure").

For more information, including information about additional rights, go to

www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore or write to: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, 1700 G Street

N.W., Washington, DC 20552. To request a copy of your local report, contact Office of Professional Licensure at beateacher@utk.edu or 865-974-5203.

Supports, Assistance, and Other Resources:

For support and assistance, students may contact the University's Counseling Center at <https://studentlife.utk.edu/counselingcenter/>, after hours you can call 974-HELP. The University's Student Code of Conduct and professionalism guidelines can be found on the Student Life website. Graduate or professional programs may also enforce separate academic actions for violations of professional and ethical standards.

For Further Information:

For inquiries regarding this policy or procedure, please contact the Office of Professional Licensure at BeATeacher@utk.edu or 865-974-5203.

- [Professionalism](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)

Review and Feedback:

This Policy, and associated procedures, for Criminal Background Check and Fingerprinting will be periodically reviewed for effectiveness and compliance with applicable law.

Best Practices for Background Checks & Fingerprinting

1. Follow Official Instructions

- Always use the official fingerprinting service (e.g., **IdentoGO**) for scheduling and status checks.
- Ensure you have the correct **ORI number** and reason for fingerprinting before scheduling.

2. Mailing Fingerprint Cards by Certified Mail

- Use **certified mail with tracking** to ensure delivery and maintain proof.
- Include all required documentation (e.g., completed fingerprint card, payment if applicable).
- Keep a copy of the tracking number and receipt for your records.

3. Checking Status Online

- Students can check the status of their fingerprinting through **IdentoGO's official website** using their **UEID (Universal Enrollment ID)**.
- Monitor status updates regularly and contact support if delays occur.

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✓ Do's Before Fingerprinting

- **Bring Valid Identification:** Government-issued photo ID (driver's license, passport).
- **Arrive Early:** Give yourself time for check-in and verification.
- **Wear Comfortable Clothing:** Avoid lotions or oils on hands as they can affect prints.
- **Confirm Appointment Details:** Double-check location, time, and required documents.

✗ Don'ts Before Fingerprinting

- **Do Not Apply Hand Cream or Oils:** These can smudge prints.
- **Avoid Cuts or Bandages on Fingers:** Reschedule if you have injuries that affect prints.
- **Don't Forget Required Documents:** Missing ID or paperwork can delay the process.
- **Do Not Miss Your Appointment:** No-shows may require rescheduling and extra fees.

Appendix A: Tennessee Applicant Processing Services Instructions for Fingerprinting

- ❓ Go to www.identogo.com, and choose "Get Fingerprinted."
- ❓ Select "Tennessee" under Select a Fingerprinting Service by State, click Go.
- ❓ Scroll down and Select "Digital Fingerprinting"
- ❓ Select "Schedule New Appointment"
- ❓ Click "Don't Know Service Code"
- ❓ Under Agency Name, scroll down and select: *Non-DCS Child Care/Adoption Providers* – click Go.
- ❓ Under Applicant Type, scroll down and select: *Child-Related Worker (Private)* – click Go.
- ❓ In the ORI Number Field, type: *TNCC47076* – click Go.
 - o In the popup – *You have selected to be fingerprinted for COLLEGE OF EDUC., HEALTH & HUMAN SCIENCES-UTK, is this correct?* - Click Yes.
- ❓ Click either, *I do NOT agree/I AGREE* to the terms of the Fingerprint-Based Criminal History Record Request Authorization & Notification Form – click Go.
- ❓ Enter your zip code for the nearest printing location – click Go.

- ❑ Scroll through and click SCHEDULE to schedule your appointment location, day and time.
- ❑ Complete Applicant Information and click Submit.
- ❑ Confirm that all information is correct and click Go.
- ❑ The cost of fingerprinting is \$37.15 and you must pay onsite, at the appointment. Choose the payment option and click Go. Online payments are not accepted.
- ❑ Print confirmation page and take approved identification documents with you to your appointment. Approved document options are identified in your confirmation.

Your photograph will be taken during the fingerprinting process. Please dress appropriately.

COVID- 19 Precautionary Measures

- ❑ Do not enter the enrollment center if you have symptoms, are awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test, or have been advised to self-quarantine
- ❑ If you are exhibiting symptoms, have a cold, or suspect you have the flu, we ask that you reschedule and fingerprint at a later date
- ❑ Please have identification documents and payment in your hand



Appendix B: Non-resident Tennessee processing Instructions - universal enrollment platform overview



Universal Enrollment Platform Overview Tennessee Non-Resident Processing Instructions

Cardscan processing is available for those applicants residing outside of Tennessee or who are physically unable to visit an IdentoGo location. In order to complete the process, applicants must complete the following steps.

1. An Applicant should obtain a set of fingerprints from a local law enforcement agency or other entity that provides fingerprinting services. These fingerprints may be either traditional ink rolled fingerprints on a FBI (FD-258) fingerprint card or LiveScan fingerprints printed to a FBI (FD-258) fingerprint card.

Please provide the following information to the technician capturing the fingerprints

- **Capturing Four-Finger Slaps:**
 - Fingers must be placed vertically, straight up-and-down, when capturing the four-finger slaps as depicted to the right:
- **Capturing Individual Fingers:**
 - Each finger and thumb will need to be rolled completely from one side of the fingernail to the other side of the fingernail.
- **Submitting Fingerprint Cards:**
 - Fingerprints may be submitted on standard FD-258 FBI applicant cards.
 - The fingerprint card must be completely filled-out in legible print. The following information must be included or the Fingerprint Card will not be processed:
 - ✓ Full name
 - ✓ Date of birth
 - ✓ Social Security Number
 - ✓ Home address
 - ✓ Sex
 - ✓ Height
 - ✓ Weight
 - ✓ Hair color
 - ✓ Eye color
 - ✓ Place of birth (state or country only)



2. Pre-enroll for cardscan submission at <https://identogo.com/locations/tennessee>. All processing fees will be collected during the pre-enrollment process. A pre-enrollment confirmation page will be provided once registration is complete.
3. Print and sign the completed pre-enrollment confirmation page, which includes the barcode printed on the top right of the page. Mail the signed pre-enrollment confirmation page and the completed fingerprint card to the mailing address provided by your agency or during the pre-enrollment process. For further instructions, each applicant should contact their employer or agency contacts for those details.

Last updated: 11/2023

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***NOTE - Cards received without completed and signed form will not be processed and will be returned for completion and re-submission.**

Please review the following pages for more detailed instructions regarding the Universal Enrollment Platform Pre-Enrollment process.

Directions for Pre-enrollment and Payment – Required for ALL Fingerprint Cards

1. Visit <https://identogo.com/locations/tennessee>. Select "Digital Fingerprinting".

The screenshot shows the Identogo Tennessee website. At the top is the Identogo logo and navigation links: Services, Solutions, Locations, News, Partners. The main heading is "Tennessee". Below it is a paragraph about supporting the state of Tennessee. Another paragraph describes the live scan fingerprinting services. An "Important Notice regarding ePay Options" states that credit card payments must be made on-site. A section for "Enrollment Services" lists five options: Digital Fingerprinting, TSA PreV6, HAZMAT, TWIC, and FBI History Check. Each option has a brief description of the service.

Identogo Services Solutions Locations News Partners

Tennessee

Supporting the state of Tennessee, Identogo Centers are operated by IDEMIA, the global leader in trusted identities. Today, the company partners with many federal, state and local government agencies as well as businesses covering a variety of industries that count on us for the secure capture and transmission of applicants' fingerprints. We proudly serve millions of customers each year in our nationwide network of locations.

Identogo Centers provide convenient, professional environments for live scan (electronic) fingerprinting services, which are delivered by trained Enrollment Agents. Identogo is the preeminent live scan fingerprinting provider for the state of Tennessee and is a certified FBI Channeling Agent.

Important Notice regarding ePay Options

Please be advised that effective April 15, 2019 we will no longer be accepting credit card payments online when scheduling appointments. All credit card payments must be made on-site at the time of the fingerprinting session.

Applicants, Employers, or Facilities wishing to provide a credit card in advance and not on-site should contact our Billing Department and complete paperwork to establish a NCAC account. [Click here for more information about NCAC accounts](#)

Enrollment Services

Select an Option Below to Get Started

Digital Fingerprinting

Fingerprinting for state and federal agency or employment requirements. Schedule a New Appointment, Change an Existing Appointment or Check your status.

TSA PreV6

An expedited security screening program connecting travelers departing from the United States with smarter security and a better air travel experience.

HAZMAT

A threat assessment for any driver seeking to obtain, renew and transfer a hazardous materials endorsement on a state-issued commercial driver's license.

TWIC

A threat assessment for the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program which includes workers who possess secure areas of the nation's maritime facilities and vessels.

FBI History Check

As an approved FBI Channeler, Identogo Centers can securely capture and transmit your individual information to the FBI and safely allow you to access your federal background check results. **NOTE:** This information is for personal use only, NOT for employment or licensing submission.

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2. The next screen is where you are going to select that you would like to submit a fingerprint card for processing.

For Licensing, Certification or Employment requirements in Tennessee

Important! You must finish the registration process to be fingerprinted. You will receive an email or a confirmation number when registration is complete.

<p>For New Appointments</p> <p>To schedule a new appointment, click the green button below. We will ask you for the information needed to schedule and process your background check.</p> <p>Schedule a New Appointment</p>	<p>To Mail In Your Fingerprint Card</p> <p>To register to send your prints through the mail, click the button below. You will be asked to mail your fingerprint cards to IdentoGO after payment is made. Only out of state residents or individuals physically unable to be digitally printed are able to use this option.</p> <p>Register for Fingerprint Card Processing Service</p>	<p>To Look Up or Change an Existing Appointment</p> <p>To look up, reschedule or cancel your appointment, please choose one of the below methods to locate your record.</p> <p>Registration ID (REGID) UID Email Address</p>	<p>For Fingerprint Rejection Notices</p> <p>To schedule your retake appointment, we need to look up your registration. Please choose one of the below methods to locate your record.</p> <p>Transaction Control Referral (TCR) Email Address UID</p>	<p>Check the Status of your Service</p> <p>To check the status of your fingerprint background check, please choose one of the methods below to locate your record.</p> <p>Registration ID (REGID) Transaction Control Referral (TCR) Email Address UID</p>
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3. You will need to confirm that you are wanting to proceed with submitting a fingerprint card for processing. Click 'Yes' to proceed to the next page.

- 3a. Service Code: Select "Don't know your Service Code"
- 3b. Under Agency Name, scroll down and select: Non-DCS Child Care/Adoption Providers – click Go.
- 3c. Under Applicant Type, scroll down and select: Child-Related Worker (Private) – click Go.

Please note, due to COVID-19 we are taking the precautionary measure to quarantine all incoming mail for 1 day before we begin our Card Scan Processing steps.

To submit Fingerprint Cards for a Tennessee state background check please complete the following steps:

1. **Complete the online registration process.** This ensures we have your individual information and allows us to submit your fingerprints for the required background check without delays.
2. **Pay for Service.** At the end of the online registration, you will be directed to the ePayment site to complete payment. **Please Note:** Fingerprint cards without payment will not be processed.
3. **Mail in your completed fingerprint cards to be processed.** Mailing address will be on your registration completed form.

By continuing this registration process, you are affirming that you are either:

- An out of state resident, or
- Physically unable to be digitally fingerprinted.

No Yes

- 3d. In ORI Number Field, type: TNCC47076 – click Go.
- o In the popup – You have selected to be fingerprinted for COLLEGE OF EDUC.,HEALTH&HUMAN SCIENCES-UTK, is this correct? - Click Yes.
- 3e. Click either I do NOT agree/I AGREE to the terms of the Fingerprint-Based Criminal History Record Request Authorization & Notification Form – click Go.

4. The next few screens will collect essential information such as name, date of birth, address, etc. You will need to complete all required information.
5. Pay for your service using an Authorization Code, Credit Card or e-check. If the Service is Auto-Billed to your Agency, payment will not be required.

Tennessee **Payment Collection**

Your total is \$35.15. Please choose a payment method below.

Important Notice regarding e-pay Options:

Please be advised that effective April 15, 2020, we will no longer be accepting credit card payments online when scheduling appointments. All credit card payments must be made in person at the time of the fingerprinting session. Applicants, Employers, or facilities wishing to provide a credit card as a source of payment should contact our Billing Department and complete paperwork to establish a NCAE account. Click here for more information about NCAE accounts.

Pay Online Now

☐ ACH Bill

☐ Credit Card

☐ Billing Account

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6. Once you have submitted your payment, you will be directed to the final registration page. You will need to complete sections 2 and 3 and submit this page along with your fingerprint card for processing. An example of the final screen is shown below.

IdentoGO

Tennessee

Step 1 (of 4) - REVIEW INFORMATION

Date	Sample Date
Reg ID	Applicant's Reg ID
Service	Service Scheduled for
Total Due	Total Amount Due
Payment Method	Method used to pay for card scan processing



RegID: SAMPLEVALUE

If your payment has not been made through US bank e-pay, your fingerprint card will not be processed. * - Idento will no longer accept mailed in payments for cardscan.

Step 2 (of 4) - SIGN WAIVER

IMPORTANT-READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING

Fingerprint-Based Criminal History Record Request Authorization and Notification Form

By signing this authorization, I hereby acknowledge that I consent to the collection and retention of my fingerprints as part of the application/employment/licensing process.

I acknowledge and understand that my fingerprints will be searched against the fingerprint databases maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purpose of assessing and reviewing state and national criminal history that may pertain to me directly, pursuant to 28 CFR, Sections 16.30-16.34.

I acknowledge that I have been notified of the procedures to challenge the accuracy or completeness of my record, set forth in Title 28 CFR 16.34. I am aware that a copy of these procedures may be downloaded from FBI.gov.

I AGREE and affirm that I have read and fully understand the above and consent to this background check and to the results being released to the Qualified Entity with which I am or am seeking to be employed or to serve as a volunteer. My signature indicates agreement with the terms and conditions of the background investigation.

X

Signature

Date

Step 3 (of 4) - PROVIDE APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Applicant Name (Last, First, Middle)

Applicant Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)

Phone Number

Email or Phone 2

Step 4 (of 4) - MAIL DOCUMENTS

Please mail the following documents to the address provided below:

1. This printed and signed document. Unsigned forms will not be processed and will be returned for signature.
2. Completed fingerprint card

NOTE:

Your social security number is required and must be included on the fingerprint cards. Failure to provide social security number will result in cards being returned to you unprocessed. If you do not have a social security number, please reach out to your requesting agency for further instructions.

Prints Inc.
IdentoGO TN Card Scan Operations
100 Salem Ct.
Tallahassee, FL 32301

If you have any questions, please call 855-226-2937.

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