

What is the danger of utilizing a “low cost” database background check to screen volunteers?

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There has been an increasing need to conduct background screening within organizations that utilize adult volunteers to work with our children, the elderly or the disabled.

Sports organizations, churches, schools and many others rely on adults that may have serious criminal histories on their record and would be considered “high risk” volunteers. The problems usually occur when these same organizations are tasked with selecting the “right” background screening program. With limited budgets and a need for quick results, these organizations are often the target of **unscrupulous** background screening companies who claim to offer a “low cost” and often times an instant background check.



Some of these same companies claim that they have a database of criminal records that are from all 50 states in the US.

This statement may be true, but what they **do not** tell you is that the data is only partial information from a particular state, outdated, or does not contain the crimes that are of most concern to you. Even if they share the database sources with you, the fact is no database should replace the county court house search where this applicant or volunteer has resided. The county court house will be the origin of the criminal case and will have the most up to date information available.



The Compelling Difference

The more reputable and trustworthy background screening companies conduct local county court searches based on address history, which is still the most reliable and due diligent search available.

This search is the employment industry standard and has been court tested for decades. If the background screening company is legitimate, they will provide the court house search within the screening program offered. Reputable companies, following industry standards, will add the national database as the **supplemental** tool and not as a **standalone** search in the screening program. This allows for a shotgun approach that expands the search and if something is found in the database it is then verified at the county court house level to ensure the accuracy of the information. **Most all of the crimes that we uncover (60-70%) are located in the county level search by physically searching court house records.**



The Study

A) In order to determine the direct impact of running a “database only” background check compared to the more comprehensive that includes:

1. Social Security Verification
2. Address Search
3. County Court House
4. National Database Search

We conducted an analysis of one client which is a prominent “National Youth Sports Group” that conducts tens of thousands of background checks every year. Their members are located throughout the United States and consequently all 50 states are represented in this analysis.

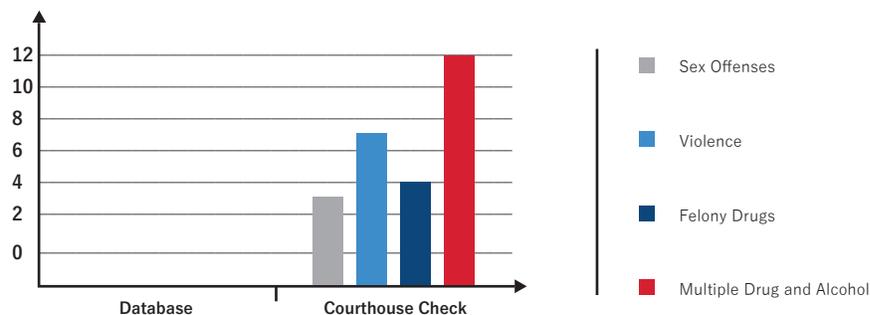
B) Utilizing the “National Youth Sports Group” 2015 - 2016 background screening results, SSCI analyzed each and every **disqualified** applicant to determine if the crime would have been captured using the “database only” approach, without any county court house search.



Alarming Findings

Of the 56 Disqualified individuals throughout 2015 - 2016 screening period, we were able to determine that **23 individuals** or **41%** of the disqualified applicants would have **slipped through the cracks** if we had relied **solely on the database search**.

The graph below illustrates the types of crimes that were found during courthouse search but NOT on the database search.



These are just a few of the actual crimes that were missed using only the national database search:

2002 Felony – Attempted Manslaughter

2012 Felony – Criminal Attempt Rape of a Child

2012 Felony – Communicate with Minor for Immoral Purpose

2010 Misdemeanor – Public Indecency

The **41%** that would be missed are based on the policy that disqualifies a coach who has been found guilty of **Sex offenses, Violence, Felony Drugs, multiple drugs and alcohol offenses or crimes against children**.

Conclusion



The fact is that most organizations want to do the “right thing” and check the risk potential of their adult volunteers.

What many organizations **do not know** is that there are companies that will take advantage of this need, by offering substandard “national background checks” at what looks to be a very attractive low cost.



The risks are high and by utilizing a national database as the only source of criminal record checks, the organization is missing just below 50% of the serious criminal records.

This leaves your organization and more importantly, **the child at great risk!** The idea that an adult who has been convicted of sex crimes, violence or other egregious acts has slipped through the cracks because of a deficient screening process is unacceptable.



In order to meet standards that have been well established and court tested, the organization must insure that the background screening vendor conducts due diligent court house searches as part of each applicant screening.

Make the right choice...

