

University of Illinois Policy for Consideration of Criminal History in Undergraduate Admissions

PURPOSE

The University of Illinois is committed to being a welcoming and supportive institution of higher education that encourages access for all qualified students, including applicants who may have a criminal background. However, the university also exercises due diligence to maintain safe environments for our students, faculty, and staff. Reviewing past conduct, including criminal histories, is one of the many measures the university takes to help secure its campus communities. The purpose of this Policy is to create appropriate consistencies for the consideration of criminal history information in undergraduate admissions.

SCOPE

This policy applies to undergraduate admission practices at all three universities.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Applicants for admission to all University of Illinois undergraduate programs shall not be asked and shall not be required to provide criminal history information unless a conditional offer of admission has first been extended.

PROCESS

Each university shall include language in its Notice of Admission advising applicants that admission is contingent upon meeting certain requirements, including a successful criminal history review.

Each university shall include in its Intent to Enroll (ITE) process, a requirement that applicants disclose both: 1) if they have ever been convicted of a criminal offense and 2) if they have criminal offenses pending. Each university shall also provide information about the purpose of the criminal history review and possible outcomes. The explanation will include the following information:

- The purpose of the criminal history review as set forth in this Policy;
- The potential outcomes of the criminal history review;
- Notice that certain support services may be available to support admitted students to encourage success at the university; and
- Notice that failure to provide information, disclose pertinent information, giving false information, or providing falsified documents may result in rescission of the offer of admission or disciplinary action.

EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

If an applicant responds positively to the existence of a criminal history or pending criminal matters, the file will be referred for review to a committee at each university that represents varied interests of the university. Committee membership may include representatives from Student Affairs, Police/Public Safety, Academic Affairs, and other units that will contribute to the review process. Each university is responsible for training committee members.

The committee may require submission of relevant materials to aid in evaluating the matter. The committee will evaluate the following:

- Whether the person can be expected to conform his/her conduct to behavior expectations of the university, with or without conditions (e.g., mandated support services);
- Whether the conduct is compatible with the intended program of study; and
- Whether admitting the person adversely impacts the safety and security of the campus community.

The committee will engage in an individualized assessment to ensure full consideration is given to mitigating and aggravating circumstances, as well as rehabilitative efforts. Factors considered will include:

- The nature, severity, and circumstances of the conduct;
- Any pattern of repeated behavior;
- The recency of the conduct;
- Any evidence of acceptance of responsibility/honesty;
- The age of the person at the time of offense;
- The level of compliance with the sentence or sanction and the successful completion of the same;
- The opportunity for and evidence of rehabilitation (work, treatment, school, community service); and
- The compatibility with a degree program where seeking enrollment (i.e., licensing requirements).

The committee will make a recommendation to the designated admissions official for appropriate action. The recommendation will include a brief explanation for the recommendation. The official may request to meet with the committee for clarification and/or additional information prior to deciding the outcome.

The applicant will be notified in writing of the outcome, which may be:

- The applicant has successfully completed the criminal history review;
- The applicant must comply with certain conditions (which will be enumerated) as a result of the criminal history review; or
- The conditional admission has been rescinded as a result of an unsatisfactory criminal history review.

APPEAL

If a conditional admission is rescinded due to the criminal history review, an opportunity to appeal shall be provided by each university. The appeal outcome shall be communicated in writing and shall be final.

REPORTING AND RECORDKEEPING

Each university will retain aggregate numbers based on this policy.

RESOURCES

Each university admission office will post clear information regarding this policy on its website, including FAQs. Each admission office will also have a trained official as a point-of-contact for applicant questions.