Criminal Background Check and Drug Screening

Off-campus clinical training sites occasionally require that School of Medicine students placed at their sites for clinical rotations undergo and pass a background check and, in some cases, drug screen. The School does not require students to undergo drug screens for admission, and while all students are required to undergo a criminal background check through the VA Medical Center at the start of their third year, these criminal background checks through the VA may not satisfy the standards set by individual clinical training sites. If a clinical site requires a drug screen or criminal background check as a condition of placement, students are expected to confirm with the site the type of check or screen that is required, complete the necessary checks or screens, and provide the results to the site. Students may be asked by the site to pay the cost of the background check and drug screen. Students may also have to complete more than one criminal background check and drug screen during the course of their program, depending on the number of sites in which they are placed and the requirements of each site.

If a clinical training site has indicated that a criminal background check through the VA Medical Center is acceptable, the VA can update the criminal background checks performed at the start of students' third year. Students requesting an updated VA background check for purposes of a clinical placement should contact Sandra Smith, HR Assistant in the VA Medical Center (410-642-2411 ext. 6687 or Sandra.Smith4@va.gov). To complete the process, students must also submit a completed fingerprint request sheet and schedule a fingerprinting appointment at the VA Medical Center. The VA will report the date of the updated check to the School who can then inform the clinical training site whether the VA reported completion of a criminal background check on a student. The School does not receive or review the results of any student's background check completed through the VA. In addition, Campus Student Health may be able to provide a drug screen that satisfies the requirements set by a particular clinical training site. In any case, it is the student's responsibility to confirm with the site what is required and to engage the appropriate services to complete the criminal background checks and drug screens necessary for placement at the clinical site. There is no guarantee that a clinical training site will accept a background check completed through the VA or a drug screen completed by Campus Student Health.