Background Check Policy

Criminal background checks are mandatory to enhance the health and safety of patients, students, faculty, and staff in the academic and clinical environments, to adhere to applicable healthcare regulations. All incoming students to the Northeastern State University Physician Assistant Studies Program must register and pay for their criminal background check prior to the start of classes. Once a student has been offered a position within the PA program and they have submitted their deposit and matriculation information, they will obtain their criminal background check. The offer of admission is conditional upon results and review of the background check. Information on how to access the PAS program sanctioned criminal background check vendor site will be provided to the student during the spring, prior to their matriculation into the Program.

The criminal background check is a mandatory component of the Program. If the student does not submit for the background check and it is not completed by deadline, their seat in the program will be relinquished and offered to another student. Once completed, the criminal background check report is issued directly to the student, a designated NSU-PAS administrator and stored electronically with the NSU approved background check vendor. The NSU-PAS Program administration reviews all PA student background checks.

Final acceptance into the program is contingent upon successful criminal background check and clearance. The University and PA program retain the right to decline a student’s admittance or continuance in the Program for criminal activity found in any background check that may preclude training, certification and/or licensing of the student. Following the initial background check(s), students will be asked to provide certification relating to any convictions, guilty pleas, or no contest pleas to any criminal offense, other than traffic violations annually. While enrolled, repeat background checks will be conducted if requested by a clinical facility. If the student does not submit for the background check in a timely manner, the student will not be permitted to attend the clinical rotation and will be administratively withdrawn from the NSU-PAS Program.

Students should be aware that based on certain criminal convictions clinical affiliates may not accept a student for a clinical assignment or may rescind a previous acceptance.  In such an event, and depending on the circumstances, the student may be unable to complete a required clinical experience and consequently the PA Program curriculum requirements.  Students who are unable to complete the NSU-PAS Program curriculum requirements are subject to dismissal from the PA Program.

Students should be aware that a prior criminal background could restrict the ability to obtain professional state licensure. Acceptance into the NSU-PAS program and successful completion does not imply or guarantee that a student will be able to obtain such licensure upon graduation.

Prospective students who are concerned about a criminal conviction are urged to contact the relevant state and/or federal agencies to inquire whether their criminal record may adversely affect the issuance of the credentials needed to practice as a physician assistant. 