

C.O.R.I. CHECK POLICY

In keeping with M.G.L. c.71, §38R, it is the policy of the Agawam Public Schools to perform Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks on current and prospective employees, volunteers, school transportation providers, subcontractors providing services to pupils in the Agawam Public Schools, and others who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. This includes subcontractors or laborers commissioned to do work on school grounds who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. CORI checks must be complete prior to individuals beginning to perform their duties, and must be obtained from the Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB) – the state agency authorized to provide CORI to certified agencies – at least every three (3) years during an individual’s term of employment or service with the Agawam Public Schools.

When CORI checks are part of a general background check for employment or volunteer work, the following practices and procedures will generally be followed:

- I. CORI checks will only be conducted as authorized by the Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB). All applicants will be notified that a CORI check will be conducted. If requested, the applicant will be provided with a copy of this CORI policy.
- II. An informed review of a criminal record requires adequate training. Accordingly, all personnel authorized to review CORI in the decision-making process will be thoroughly familiar with the educational materials made available by CHSB.
- III. Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, determinations of suitability based on CORI checks will be made consistent with this policy, any applicable law or regulations, and the best interest of the Agawam Public Schools and its students, employees, and staff.
- IV. If a criminal record is received from CHSB, the authorized individual will closely compare the record provided by CHSB with the information on the CORI request form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant, to ensure the record relates to the applicant.
- V. If the Agawam Public Schools is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of the CORI check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The applicant shall be provided with a copy of the criminal record and the organization’s CORI policy, advised of the part(s) of the record that make the individual unsuitable for the position or license, and given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the CORI record.
- VI. Applicants challenging the accuracy of the policy shall be provided a copy of CHSB’s *Information Concerning the Process in Correcting a Criminal Record*. If the CORI record provided does not exactly match the identification information provided by the applicant, the Agawam Public Schools will make a determination based on a comparison of the CORI record and documents provided by the applicant. The Agawam Public Schools may contact CHSB and request a detailed search consistent with CHSB policy.

VII. If the Agawam Public Schools reasonably believes the record belongs to the applicant and is accurate, based on the information as provided in section IV on this policy, then the determination of suitability for the position will be made. Unless otherwise provided by law, factors considered in determining suitability may include, but are not limited to the following:

- a) Relevance of the crime to the position sought;
- b) The nature of the work to be performed;
- c) Time since the conviction;
- d) Age of the candidate at the time of the offense;
- e) Seriousness and specific circumstances of the offense;
- f) The number of offenses;
- g) Whether the applicant has pending charges;
- h) Any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof, and
- i) Any other relevant information, including information submitted by the candidate or requested by the Agawam Public Schools.

VIII. The Agawam Public Schools will notify the applicant in a timely manner of the decision and the basis for the decision.