



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY INTERNATIONAL

## Volunteer background check policy and procedures: Frequently asked questions

**Thank you for choosing to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity to work together toward a world where everyone has a decent place to live. This document is intended to help you understand more about our background check policy as relates to engaging in certain volunteer roles.**

### **Q: Why does Habitat for Humanity International require background checks for certain volunteer roles?**

A: Habitat for Humanity upholds the highest standards of respect for the human rights of all people and is committed to supporting a safe, ethical environment. As part of that commitment, we have developed policies that reflect our values of ethical behavior and protects the safety of our staff, volunteers, homeowners and their families, and the communities in which we work. One way to help ensure your safety and everyone around you, is to include background checks as a part of the screening process.

Consistent with many others in the nongovernmental organization sector, Habitat now requires certain volunteer roles – described below – to clear a background check before serving.

### **Q: Who is subject to background checks?**

A: Habitat's background screen policy was adopted as of June 1, 2019, for certain volunteer roles. This means that (1) trip team leaders, (2) Care-A-Vanners, (3) Disaster Corps volunteers and (4) AmeriCorps host site managers who engage with Habitat on or after June 1, 2019, must all complete background checks prior to serving.

### **Q: Who conducts the screening and who has access to the information related to my background check?**

A: The background checks are conducted securely online through a consumer reporting agency called [Asurint](#) that is accredited by the [National Association of Professional Background Screeners](#). Asurint handles all personal information submitted by volunteers in accordance with its [Privacy Policy](#). You may find [Asurint's FAQs](#) helpful in addressing the information submission process.

Your personal information, including background check results, will not be used by Habitat for other purposes, nor will such information be shared with any other entities. In addition, your information will be stored securely and handled and retained according to Habitat's Data Retention and Privacy Policies.

Specifically, Habitat retains your background screen only for as long as necessary to fulfill the purposes for which we collected it, including for the purposes of satisfying any legal, accounting or reporting requirements. If your screen meets Habitat policy and you accept the volunteer position, your background screen and application will ordinarily be retained only for three years or upon your notification to Habitat that you no longer wish to be considered for a volunteer position, whichever comes first. If your screen does not meet Habitat's requirements, your background screen will be



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removed from Habitat system's after you have exercised your right to review, explain and/or dispute the adverse information or you have indicated that you do not wish to do so.

### **Q: What does the background check cover?**

A: The background check includes the following screens for U.S. residents:

1. National criminal check
2. National sex offender public registry
3. All searches required under the U.S. Patriot Act – including, without limitation, U.S. Department of Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control [OFAC](#).

### **Q: Is this background check going to look at my credit?**

A: No; credit checks are not part of what is included in these volunteer background checks.

### **Q: Who pays for the background check?**

A: Habitat, through its respective volunteer programs, covers the cost of the volunteer background checks.

### **Q: What personal information will I need to provide?**

A: Once you navigate to Asurint's secure website using the link in the email from your program, you will be asked to consent to electronically signing your background check authorization.

Then, you will need to provide your full legal name, date of birth, social security number, phone number, email and address history.

### **Q: When I went to the Asurint website, it asked me for my email address. Which one should I use?**

A: Please use the email address that Habitat sent the initial background check request to.

### **Q: After I entered my personal details in the Asurint website, it brought me to an "Upload Documentation" screen. Do I need to upload something?**

A: No; you must only enter the required information that the system requests. This does not include uploading any documents, so you can just click "next" from that screen to proceed.

### **Q: Will I be notified of the result of the background check?**

A: If your background check result meets Habitat policy, you will not be notified directly. Instead, your program lead will continue guiding you through the process to engage in the applied-for capacity. If the background check report returns certain adverse records that may cause Habitat to question your suitability to engage in the applied-for program, Habitat will notify you about the finding and give you the opportunity to dispute the report or provide additional information. If you choose not to dispute the accuracy of the report or do not provide additional information that sufficiently meets Habitat policy requirements, Habitat will notify you that you have been denied the opportunity to engage in the applied-for capacity.

### **Q: What if I refuse to undergo a background check?**

A: If you wish to engage in a role for which Habitat requires a background check and you do not clear the background check before the program deadline – up to six weeks in advance of the trip/build/assignment, depending on the program – you will not be allowed to serve in that position. It



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may also impact your ability to volunteer in certain other positions within Habitat, as governed by Habitat's background check policy.

### **Q: What if I do not pass the background check?**

A: As required by federal law, Habitat will provide an opportunity for the individual to review, explain and/or dispute the adverse information in a background check prior to making its decision to disallow engagement in the applied-for capacity. If you ultimately do not pass the background check, Habitat will notify you and proceed to identify a new volunteer for the respective position. It may also impact your ability to volunteer in certain other positions within Habitat, as governed by Habitat's background check policy.

### **Q: I received an FCRA 613 email from Asurint. What is that?**

A: Asurint will notify you if they are reporting any adverse information to Habitat that came back on your background check. This does **not** mean that Habitat has made a decision about whether you will be allowed to volunteer. Instead, this is a notice required by federal law alerting you that there was adverse information on your report.

### **Q: Can I get a copy of my background check results?**

A: Yes; if you ever need a copy of your background check, you are more than welcome to one. You can request a copy by contacting Asurint directly by phone at 800-906-1674, email at [support@asurint.com](mailto:support@asurint.com) or via the website at <https://www.asurint.com/candidates>.

### **Q: Will this background check ever expire?**

A: The background check is valid for three years. Volunteers who wish to re-engage after that period must be re-checked to ensure that the volunteer continues to meet Habitat's standards. This time period requirement is part of Habitat's commitment to ensuring the volunteers' safety and that of everyone around them.

### **Q: What is the background check process for new volunteers?**

A: The background check is the first step in the process of approving a volunteer to participate in the respective program. Once a volunteer's background check has been evaluated and cleared, they can progress in the standard process to become an approved volunteer with the respective program.

### **Q: What if I have already cleared a background check from a different company or employer?**

A: Getting your background checked via Asurint is a secure, easy and efficient process that shouldn't take more than a few minutes of your time to initiate.

However, if your employer or other third party with a valid reason for running a background screen on you has run a background screen that you believe would meet Habitat requirements, please inform your program lead. They will send a document for your company/employer to complete regarding your background screen, including questions about when it was run and whether certain results were found. You will then send that back to Habitat, who will determine if the background screen meets Habitat policy.

### **Q: Do non-U.S. citizens need to be background checked?**

A: Yes; all volunteers who fall into this category of volunteers will be screened. However, at the current time, screenings for non-U.S. citizens are conducted via a different process.



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**Q: What does Habitat tell its affiliates about the background checks on the volunteers they are hosting?**

A: Habitat informs affiliates and national organizations that if a volunteer applies to be a trip team leader, Care-A-Vanner or Disaster Corps volunteer, then that individual must complete a background screen that passes Habitat policy and supports Habitat's commitment to ethical behavior and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. If a volunteer refuses a background screen or does not pass, then they will not be allowed to serve in the applied-for position.