



Thank you for your interest in the Professional Background Screening Association (“PBSA”) Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program (“BSAAP”). The Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program advances professionalism in the employment screening profession through the promotion of best practices, awareness of legal compliance, and development of standards that protect consumers. The BSAAP Accreditation Standard was developed with broad input from your peers in the background screening community.

The attached application form will guide you in providing the needed documentation and other evidence to demonstrate that your agency conforms to the BSAAP Accreditation Standard. Before applying for accreditation, you should carefully review the BSAAP Accreditation Standard and the corresponding conformity measures. Copies of the Standard and the measures are available on the PBSA website at [www.thepbsa.org](http://www.thepbsa.org).

Throughout the accreditation process, please feel free to contact the PBSA office at 919.459.2082 or [accreditation@thepbsa.org](mailto:accreditation@thepbsa.org) with any questions regarding the accreditation process.



## **Application Packet**

### **Included in this packet:**

- Overview of Accreditation Process
- Instructions for Submission
- Application
- Accredited Agency Code of Conduct
- Glossary of Terms

## Overview of Accreditation Process

The following steps are part of the BSCC accreditation process:

1. The agency desiring to be accredited should obtain and review the Standard and measures. A current version of the Standard and measures are available at [www.thepbsa.org](http://www.thepbsa.org).
2. The agency determines if they are eligible to apply for accreditation. The eligibility requirements are as follows:
  - The agency must have been providing services under the BSAAP Standard for at least one (1) year in order to establish documented compliance with the BSAAP Standard.
  - The agency must agree to comply both with the BSAAP Accredited Agency Code of Conduct and, once accredited, with the BSAAP Standard.
  - The agency must currently and regularly be engaged in the business of providing employment screening services directly to qualified end-users, such as employers, or businesses.
  - The agency must agree to be subject to and to comply with these BSAAP Policies and Procedures and all other policies adopted by the Council, including without limitation policies regarding the use of the Council's accreditation logo.
  - The Agency must not have failed to adequately respond to any unresolved PBSA/NAPBS or BSCC complaints or grievances of any kind.
3. The agency is encouraged to attend PBSA accreditation training sessions as they are available and/or review the training documentation available online in order to fully prepare for their application.
4. The agency should conduct a readiness review prior to submitting their application. Agencies should not submit their applications until they believe they are in conformity with all of the clauses and measures, and can document conformity in an acceptable fashion.
5. The agency should complete and submit the Letter of Intent to Apply for Accreditation Form on the PBSA website or in hard copy to PBSA staff at least six (6) months prior to submitting their application materials.
6. Agencies should then submit the completed application with the required fee to BSCC headquarters. Upon processing of application and payment, agencies will be sent instructions for submitting electronic supporting documentation.
7. BSCC staff/consultants will review application materials to determine whether the application is complete, and the application fee has been paid. Staff will also confirm the agency's conformance with all current eligibility requirements.
8. Applicants with complete applications will then have a period of six months from the date of notification of acceptance of the application in order to complete the self-evaluation process. Extensions may be granted in this time frame for acceptable cause. Applicants must then submit all required documentation in support of their conformity with the Standard.
9. The Auditor will conduct a thorough desk review of the application and self-evaluation materials submitted. There may be requests for clarification of materials provided or some additional

information regarding conformity with specific clauses. This review may include, but is not limited to the following documentation:

- Required policies and procedures
- Copies of cover pages of required documentation
- Job descriptions and resumes
- Required evidence of use of the BSAAP Standard
- Security Plans
- Sample Conformity documents
- Client & Vendor Agreements
- Training Materials
- Client Education Materials
- Proof of Insurance

10. After the Auditor has reviewed all submitted materials, a mutually agreed upon date will be determined for the site visit within a reasonable time period.
11. The Auditor will conduct a one (1) - to two (2) - day onsite inspection at the Applicant agency's primary operating center and up to one (1) additional location determined at the discretion of the auditor and PBSA staff, if other location(s) are providing services under the Standard\*. The Auditor will validate conformity with the BSAAP Standard and Audit Criteria and verify the accuracy of materials submitted as part of the self-evaluation process. This review is designed to reinforce the processes in place and ensure the agency's conformity is not just on paper but integrated into the everyday workflow for the agency. Based on the clause to be reviewed, the auditor may ask to see work in progress in order to verify conformity.

An agency with multiple locations must verify conformity in all locations as the BSAAP accreditation process does not provide for partial or process-based accreditation. It is the agency's responsibility to bring together into one (1) location all applicable employees, process demonstrations, etc. which the Auditor will need in order to complete the audit.

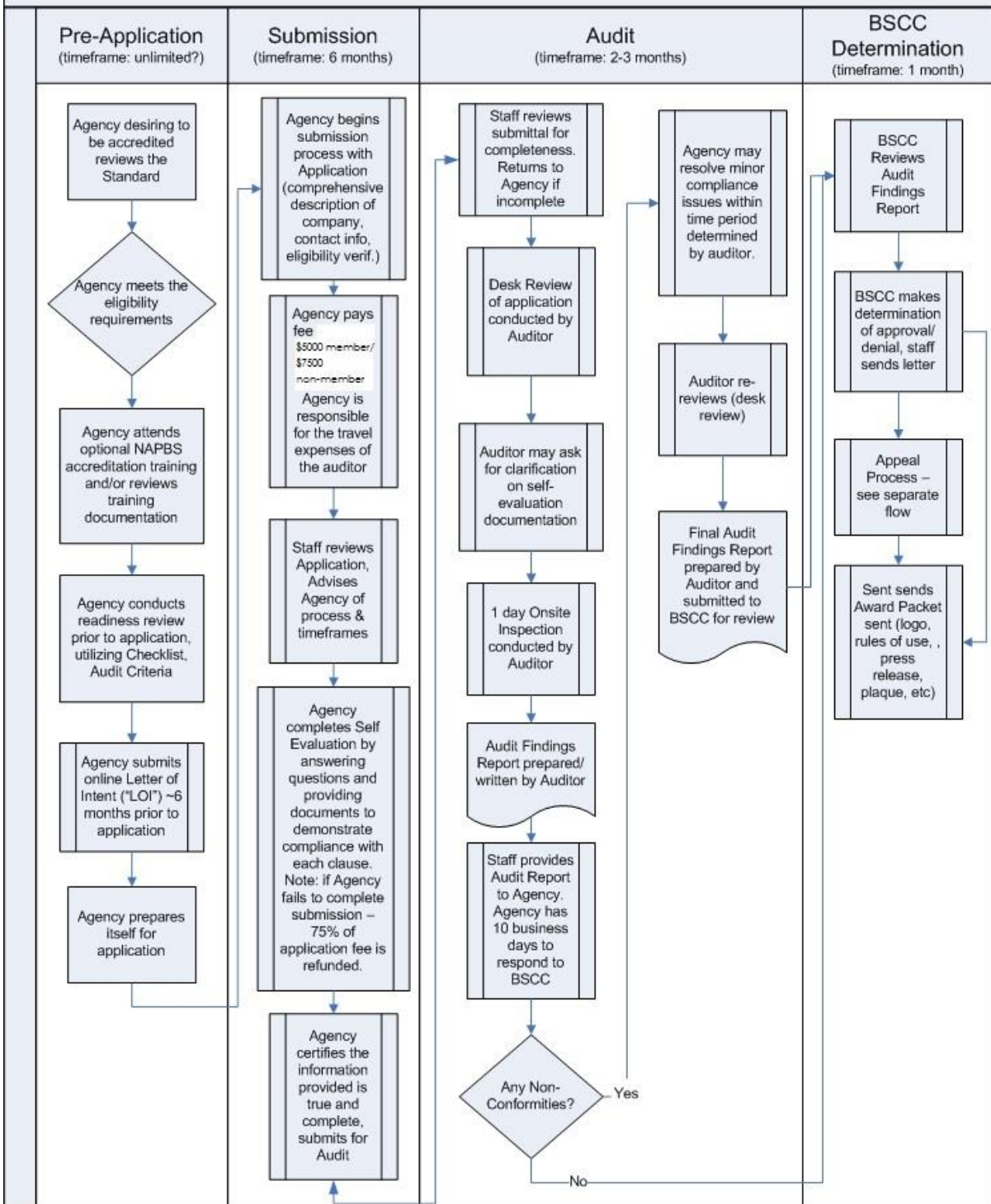
\*NOTE: Audit locations may include U.S. locations and outside U.S. locations providing services under the Standard. In extenuating circumstances auditor and PBSA Staff may determine that additional site audits are necessary.

12. The Auditor will prepare an initial Audit Findings Report which will be made available to the agency within 2 weeks of the conclusion of the site visit. For Opportunity for Improvement(s) OFI(s), the agency has ten (10) business days to respond to the Auditor with any additional information or documentation which addresses any concerns raised by the Auditor. For any non-conformity(s), the agency shall have ten (10) business days to respond to and affirm its intent to continue with accreditation. Following review and consideration of any additional information provided by the agency, the Auditor will prepare a final Audit Findings Report.
13. The BSCC reviews the audit findings and will render a decision regarding the application and this decision will be forwarded by mail to the agency. An official written letter or electronic communication shall be sent to the agency within 10 business days of the conclusion of the Council meeting where the decision was rendered. No verbal response information will be

provided by BSCC or staff regarding Council accreditation decisions.

14. Accredited agencies will be provided with a plaque suitable for framing, an approved press release for media distribution, and graphics/art work with the BSCC logo including an explanation of the right to use of the mark(s).
15. If accreditation is denied, the applicant agency has the right to appeal.

# Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program (BSAAP) – 04/15/09



## Instructions for Completing the Self-Evaluation

Applicants should follow the instructions below in submitting their BSAAP self-evaluation documentation.

- All applicants should review the BSAAP Accreditation Standard and guidelines prior to completing their self-evaluation. The current official BSAAP Accreditation Standard can be found in the PBSA website at [www.thepbsa.org](http://www.thepbsa.org).
- Applications must be submitted in the English language.
- Applicants are expected to upload an electronic copy of supporting self-evaluation documentation to BSCC, upon processing of hardcopy application and payment. Instructions for the upload process will be sent once application and payment is received.
- Applicant response information will be uploaded for each particular clause. The clause number should be indicated in the file name for easy reference.
- Applicants are encouraged to provide thorough and clear responses to questions. If referencing a document, highlight or refer to the portion of the document illustrating conformity with the specific clause. No additional points or benefits are provided for multiple documents (such as brochures/flyers/newsletters etc.) when a single sample could adequately provide evidence of meeting the clause.
- Clearly mark all attachments and follow the order of the clause to facilitate a proper review of your submission. All attachments should be identified in the electronic file name. Attachments should be uploaded individually for each clause it supports as addressed in the Standard.
- If an attachment demonstrates conformity with multiple clauses, it must be uploaded for each clause that it is applicable.
- Applicant material is presented to BSCC members in a “blind” fashion allowing the BSCC to render decisions and seek inquiry from the auditor without consideration of the particular applicant. Further, all BSCC members have signed statements agreeing to keep all information reviewed by the BSCC confidential. Also, accreditation application information will be securely maintained and staff or volunteers that are not working on the accreditation program will not have access to the application materials. Additionally, in most cases the entire application would only be reviewed by staff, auditor and BSCC legal counsel. However, data submitted by applicants may be used in an aggregate form for statistical or research purposes.
- Applicants should delete personal identifier information from any sample letters, contracts or agreements.
- All documents submitted to BSCC become property of BSCC and should be marked as *Proprietary and Confidential* by the agency if appropriate. The agency has the right to redact any proprietary information it deems necessary from all documentation. However, the redaction of information should not be of such magnitude to alter PBSA’s ability to utilize the documentation to properly review and assess the agencies preparedness for accreditation. Documents which are overly redacted and deemed unusable by the auditor and/or the BSCC may be required to be resubmitted and/or alternate documents may be required.

- Incomplete or incorrectly prepared supporting documentation may be required to be resubmitted when properly completed, or it may result in delays of your review.
- “Not Applicable” or “N/A” responses are not acceptable. Applicants must specify why they believe a particular clause is not applicable to their agency.
- Accreditation staff, consultants, or volunteers may ask for additional information during the course of the review process.
- If any reference materials are in an electronic format or included on your web site, please submit a copy of this information with your submission.
- Applicants will be informed of the BSAAP decision on their submission within one (1) month of the completion of the BSCC review.
- Applicants that are aggrieved by the BSAAP decision on their submission may appeal the decision. Please contact BSAAP staff for the detailed requirements on this process.

**Please submit a hardcopy of the application and payment to:**

Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program  
PBSA  
110 Horizon Drive, Ste. 210  
Raleigh, NC 27615

Upon processing of the application and payment, detailed instructions for uploading the supporting self-evaluation documentation will be sent from PBSA staff.

For questions regarding your application or the application process, please contact [accreditation@thepbsa.org](mailto:accreditation@thepbsa.org) or call 919.459.2082.

**Disclaimer**

Submission of your BSAAP accreditation application and supporting documentation does not constitute any accreditation status or guarantee accreditation of your agency. Applicants that are awarded BSAAP Accreditation will be provided with specific information regarding the appropriate references to their accreditation status in written materials.

**Until actual accreditation is achieved and the Accredited Agency is notified in writing, no verbal or other form of communication will be given to anyone regarding the status of an applicant.**



# Accreditation Application

Instructions: Please provide all of the information requested by mail or fax to PBSA at the address indicated. Incomplete applications will be returned. Your full payment must accompany this application. All applications must be submitted in English language. All fields must be completed. Upon processing of this application and payment, detailed instructions for uploading the required attachments will be sent by PBSA staff.

Please place a check next to the appropriate box. If submitting application for an interim surveillance audit, [download the ISA application](#).

Initial Application

Renewal Application

## Applicant Company Location and Contact Information:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Applying for Accreditation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Company's Designated Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Representative's Business Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Web site: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Is your company currently or has it previously been a member of PBSA/NAPBS?  
 Yes  No

If yes, please list dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Date that company submitted the Letter of Intent to Apply for Accreditation through PBSA/NAPBS:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Profile:**

Is Applicant:  Sole Proprietorship  Partnership  Corporation  Other:

Federal Tax ID Number (Social Security Number if Sole Proprietorship): \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the nature of your business: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please describe the type of business you do by percentage:

\_\_\_\_\_ % \_\_\_\_\_ % \_\_\_\_\_ %

\_\_\_\_\_ % \_\_\_\_\_ % \_\_\_\_\_ %

In what other business/professional organizations does the applicant company hold current membership(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the applicant company a subsidiary of or controlled by any other company or entity?  Yes  No

If yes, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Company was started: \_\_\_\_\_

If operating under a "doing business as name," please list the name and filing date of that name: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the name of your company's CEO (or Chief Staff Officer/Office Holder): \_\_\_\_\_

Do you outsource verification services?  Yes  No

If yes, U.S. Verifications?  Yes  No Outside U.S. Verifications?  Yes  No

If yes, list vendor name and percentage of overall verifications service outsourced to each vendor:

% U.S. Verifications	% Outside U.S. Verifications

Do you outsource criminal checks?  Yes  No

If yes, U.S. Criminal checks?  Yes  No Outside U.S. Criminal Checks?  Yes  No

If yes, list vendor name and percentage of overall criminal checks outsourced to each vendor:

% U.S. Criminal Checks	% Outside U.S. Criminal Checks

How many offices do you operate out of? \_\_\_\_\_

List locations for all operations:

<b>Location</b> (City, State)	<b>List Type of Work Performed and Percentage it Represents of that Work</b> (i.e., verifications, criminal, HR, compliance, IT, sales, finance, management, security, etc.)
<b>EXAMPLE:</b> Walnut Grove/MN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verifications - 100%</li> <li>• Criminal - 25%</li> <li>• I/T Security - 100%</li> </ul>
Mayberry/NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HR - 100%</li> <li>• Compliance - 100%</li> <li>• Sales - 100%</li> <li>• Finance - 100%</li> <li>• Criminal - 75%</li> </ul>

<b>Location</b> (City, State)	<b>List Type of Work Performed and Percentage it Represents of that Work</b> (i.e., verifications, criminal, HR, compliance, IT, sales, finance, management, security, etc.)

Please list any locations where staff are doing operations work in a home office.

\_\_\_\_\_

## Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program Accreditation Application (Continued)

***We agree with and are bound to the following:*** (please initial each item and sign on the bottom):

- \_\_\_\_\_ I certify that I have read, understand and accept the BSAAP Code of Conduct for Accredited Agencies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand and agree to the schedule of fees as outlined below in this application.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I certify that our company is in full compliance with all terms of the Fair Credit Reporting Act.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I certify that our company has no unresolved complaints or grievances filed with PBSA/NAPBS, BSCC or any complaints or grievances against PBSA/NAPBS or the BSCC.
- \_\_\_\_\_ If a PBSA member, I certify that our PBSA membership has never been revoked for any reason.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The application criteria are fair and objective and the person(s) authorized to make this application is/are in complete agreement with them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand the BSAAP Accreditation Standard, which makes clear what documentation, facilities and equipment I will be required to have available and immediately accessible to the auditor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Any failure to make accessible for inspection all documentation, facilities, and equipment on the date, time and location identified, (method to be determined by BSAAP) may result in failure to be accredited, forfeiture of the application fee, additional fees for the failures, re-auditing or other expenses, and/or require that we reapply if we want to pursue this Accreditation. Also, failure to meet the criteria for the type(s) indicated on this application may be considered a failure of the audit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Should the company choose not to complete the application process after submission of the application fee, yet prior to any Auditor Assessment, 75% of the fee is refundable. Fees are not refundable for withdrawals of applications after the commencement of work by the Auditor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The audit and any Accreditation achieved as a result are applicable to the location listed on this application as well as any and all other physical locations which the company uses to operate all or any parts of its business function.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Company may not apply any accreditation achieved through this audit for any other non-CRA related operations or locations owned by the company.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In the event of multiple operation centers, the auditor, with the assistance of PBSA Staff, will determine whether to audit at a single or multiple locations. The applicant is responsible for coordinating and locating all personnel and material needed to conduct a "site visit/s" at the location/s of any on-site audit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that our firm must reapply for accreditation on a basis of every five (5) years prior to the expiration of the current accreditation as well as complete the interim maintenance surveillances process in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. If we choose not to reapply and/or not to submit to this required audit, we will lose our accreditation. Loss of accreditation will not affect PBSA membership.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I will hold PBSA, its agents, directors, BSCC, staff and/or Auditor harmless from any claim of damage or loss as a result of our firm's failure to achieve accreditation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand and agree that the specification and fees for accreditation are subject to change at the discretion of the BSCC.
- \_\_\_\_\_ All of our domestic employees are eligible to work in the U.S. and we have all necessary documentation to confirm this fact.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that random Unannounced Audits are part of the BSAAP. I agree to allow access to an Accreditation Auditor for purposes of conducting such Unannounced Audits.
- \_\_\_\_\_ We will not prosecute the Auditor for trespassing or any crime resulting from verifying the accreditation criteria or testing access control of our files or offices.
- \_\_\_\_\_ At any time during the application, audit process or after accreditation, I acknowledge that BSCC, its agents and/or the accreditation Auditor may investigate or require additional information or documentation from our company in order to verify information on this application or the accreditation criteria.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the Auditor does NOT approve or deny our accreditation. The Auditor's findings will be submitted to the BSCC for the determination of accreditation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have 30 days (as determined by the postmark) to submit to the BSCC Appeal Panel in writing any protest of the results of the audit. Appeals are to be submitted to PBSA at the address below. I understand that the dispute should clearly state the perceived reason of the failure to achieve certification and why the finding is incorrect. I understand that the BSCC Panel, within a reasonable amount of time, will make a ruling upon the dispute. I will accept the ruling of the BSCC Appeal Panel as final and I will seek no further remedy, legal or otherwise, except to reapply for accreditation at my discretion and expense.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand and agree that our company, including all of its employees and agents will refrain from any false or misleading claims, suggestions or references regarding, PBSA, including but not limited to such claims used in advertising produced in advance and/or in anticipation of accreditation at some future date.
- \_\_\_\_\_ If at any time during our audit process our accreditation information or procedures change, we must notify BSCC in writing within 30 days of the status change; such as changes in ownership, location move, or any information provided within this application.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree that if the accreditation for which this company is seeking is granted through PBSA and if we then elect to discontinue any or all accreditation operations or endorsements, we must notify PBSA in writing within 30 days of said status change.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I hereby agree to indemnify and hold auditor, as well as its employees, officers, directors, contractors, agents and similar persons, harmless from and against any damage or expense relating to bodily injury or death of any person or damage to property incurred while auditor is performing its Services on company premises to the extent injury or damage is directly caused by the acts or omissions of company, its personnel or agents, and company will reimburse auditor for all expenses (including attorneys' fees and costs) as incurred by auditor in connection with any such claim.
- \_\_\_\_\_ This application is truthful and accurately represents the daily operating procedures of our company. I understand that if any of our company representatives willfully deceive PBSA or an accreditation Auditor, my company could be immediately removed from PBSA and/or our accreditation revoked.

## Fee Schedule

1. An application fee of \$ 5,000 for PBSA Members or \$ 7,500 for a non-PBSA Member is required for Accreditation. Fee assumes a “desk review” process and one (1) day of onsite review per audit location. Applicant will be responsible for the travel expenses of the auditor during the onsite review. Should the onsite auditor take more than one (1) day or require audit at more than one (1) location, the agency will be responsible for additional fees for both audit and travel. This application fee covers the first three (3) years of Accreditation.
2. Thereafter, an Interim Surveillance Audit will take place during year three (3) of Accreditation, accredited agencies will pay a non-refundable \$ 2,000 PBSA Member / \$3,000 non-PBSA Member Interim Surveillance Audit fee. This fee assumes a desk review process prior to the completion of year three (3) of Accreditation. In the event the auditor or PBSA staff determines that an on-site audit is required during the three (3) year Interim Surveillance Audit due to changes within the agency, agency will be responsible for additional audit/travel fees.
3. All accredited agencies will have to renew their Accreditation during year five (5) of the process. The renewal fee will be \$ 5,000 PBSA Member / \$ 7,500 non-PBSA Member. The renewal application will be the same process as the initial Accreditation Application and review. Fee refunds are applicable in the same situations as original application fees.
4. It should be noted that these fees do not include the costs that any individual agency might incur in modifying its services or programs to comply with Accreditation requirements.
5. Should an agency initiate an appeal, due to the costs associated with the appeal, the non-refundable fee is \$1,000.
6. No fees are charged for unannounced visits to an accredited agency.
7. Agencies should be aware that fees are subject to change based upon a periodic review and update of the Accreditation Fee Schedule.

**NOTE:** Should any fees specified within this application be inconsistent with the current BSAAP Accreditation Fee Schedule, then the current BSAAP Fee Schedule will be the correct standard and reference. BSCC reserves the right to change the Fee Schedule at any time and without notice.

**Required Attachment – Please attach a copy of the following:**

1. Copy of Letter of Intent to Apply for Accreditation through BSAAP.

**Certifications: Has the Applicant Company, individual or any of its principals:**

1. Been convicted by a court or general court martial or have any criminal charge now pending?  
 Yes  No
2. Had a professional membership, license, registration or certification denied, suspended or revoked or censured or disciplined by any professional body or organization?  Yes  No
3. Been debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, or declared ineligible for the award of any contract by any federal, state or other governmental agency?  Yes  No
4. Have within the last 7 years been convicted of any crime, had a civil judgment for fraud, misrepresentation, unfair competition or similar tort entered against any of them or being presently indicted, or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by any governmental agency?  
 Yes  No

If you have answered YES to any of the above and believe circumstances exist which warrant special consideration by BSCC, such circumstances may be explained in a written attachment to this application. The BSCC and/or PBSA will review responses and any submitted documentation in consideration of the nature and gravity of the offense, time that has passed since the offense occurred, nature of accreditation and evidence of rehabilitation.

**Signature:**

I certify that all information provided herein is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that any misrepresentation of information included on this form or in this process is grounds for revocation of Accreditation if awarded. I authorize verification of this information, and release all concerned from any liability in connection therewith. I hereby apply for Accreditation through BSAAP and agree to abide by the BSAAP Accredited Agency Code of Conduct.

Full Name of Applicant Company or Individual: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name of Person Authorized to make application: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Person Authorized to make application: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail the completed application with required attachments and dues payment to:**

**PBSA, 110 Horizon Drive, Ste. 210, Raleigh, NC 27615**

Contact the PBSA office by phone at 919.459.2082 or email [accreditation@thepbsa.org](mailto:accreditation@thepbsa.org).

# **Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program**

## **Accredited Agency Code of Conduct**

**The Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program (“BSAAP”) Accredited Agency Code of Conduct was adopted by the Background Screening Credentialing Council in February 2009.**

### **Preamble**

PBSA is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt trade association formed to promote, develop, educate, and otherwise further the Employment and Tenant Screening industry. The Background Screening Agency Accreditation program advances professionalism in the employment screening industry through the promotion of best practices, awareness of legal compliance, and development of standards that protect consumers.

The business and affairs of the accreditation program are managed under the direction of the Background Screening Credentialing Council (the “BSCC”). The Background Screening Credentialing Council has been created to ensure firms seeking accreditation meet or exceed a measurable standard of competence in the areas of integrity, security, consumer privacy and legal compliance. The BSAAP Accredited Agency Code of Conduct (the “Accredited Agency Code”) serves as a code of conduct for employees of Accredited Agencies of the BSAAP.

Violations of the Accredited Agency Code may result in sanctions imposed under the policies and procedures as defined by the BSCC. The principles and requirements that comprise the Accredited Agency Code are based upon, and are designed to ensure full conformity by BSAAP Accredited Agency’s and their Employees (“Employees”) with the Accredited Agency Code. At the same time, the Accredited Agency Code and enforcement procedures are not designed to supplant courts of law in the resolution of disputes within the Employment Screening industry. Moreover, the checks and balances built into the Accredited Agency Code and procedures are designed to strike the proper balance between ensuring full conformity with an Agency’s obligations and ensuring the integrity and efficacy of the Accredited Agency Code on the one hand, and protecting Agencies, through the use of reasonable due process, against patently false, malicious or groundless accusations that could result in significant business or personal harm if not properly handled.



## Accredited Agency Code of Conduct

### CODE

**1. All Accredited Agencies and their Employees shall perform professional duties in accordance with the law, the highest moral principles and the BSAAP Accreditation Standard.**

### EXPLANATION

Individuals shall:

- 1.1 Uphold the law of the land in which the services are rendered and perform all duties in an honorable manner.
- 1.2 Not knowingly become associated in responsibility for work with colleagues who do not conform to the law and these ethical standards.
- 1.3 Be just and respect the rights of others in performing professional responsibilities.

### CODE

**2. All Accredited Agencies and their Employees shall observe the precepts of truthfulness, honesty and integrity.**

### EXPLANATION

Individuals shall:

- 2.1 Disclose all relevant information to those having the right to know.
- 2.2 Define "right to know" as a legally enforceable claim or demand by a person for disclosure of information. Such a right shall not depend upon any person having prior knowledge of the existence of the information to be disclosed.
- 2.3 Not knowingly release misleading information nor encourage or otherwise participate in the release of such information.
- 2.4 Not participate in a practice of filing knowingly false or frivolous complaints or accusations against other Agencies, which if found to be the case, may result in the loss of Accredited status.

### CODE

**3. All Accredited Agencies and their Employees shall be faithful, competent and diligent in discharging professional responsibilities.**

### EXPLANATION

Individuals shall:

- 3.1 Be deemed faithful when fair and steadfast in adherence to promises and commitments.
- 3.2 Be deemed diligent when employing best efforts in an assignment.
- 3.3 Not act in matters involving conflicts of interest without appropriate disclosure and approval.

- 3.4. Represent services or products fairly and truthfully.
- 3.5. Be deemed competent, possess and apply the skills and knowledge required for the task.
- 3.6 Not accept a task beyond the Agency's competence nor shall competence be claimed when not possessed.

#### **CODE**

#### **4. All Accredited Agencies and their Employees shall safeguard confidential information and exercise due care to prevent its improper disclosure.**

#### **EXPLANATION**

Individuals shall:

- 4.1 Exercise "due diligence" when handling, transmitting or otherwise disclosing confidential consumer information to any party.
- 4.2 Properly mask or otherwise similarly protect the confidentiality of all personally identifiable information contained in any disclosure.
- 4.3 Dispose of confidential information appropriately and securely as mandated by law.

#### **CODE**

#### **5. All Accredited Agencies and their Employees shall avoid injuring the professional reputation or practice of colleagues, clients or employers. However, nothing in this code limits an Agency from engaging in fair, competitive business practices.**

#### **EXPLANATION**

Individuals shall:

- 5.1. Accept that "due care" requires the professional must not knowingly reveal confidential information, or use a confidence to the disadvantage of the principal or to the advantage of the Agency or a third person, unless the principal consents after full disclosure of all the facts. This confidentiality continues after the business relationship between the Agency and his principal has terminated.
- 5.2. Individuals are not bound by confidential disclosures made of acts or omissions, which constitute a violation of the law unless they have agreed to do so.
- 5.3. Understand confidential disclosures made by principals are not recognized by Law as privileged in a legal proceeding. Individuals may be required to testify in a legal proceeding to the information received in confidence from a principal over the objection of that principal's counsel.
- 5.4. Not disclose confidential information regarding any consumer, Agency's products, services, trade secrets or any other information for personal gain without appropriate authorization.
- 5.5 Not comment falsely and with malice concerning a colleague's competence, performance or professional capabilities.

## Glossary of Terms

**Accreditation:** A conformity assessment process where an organization or agency uses experts in a particular field of interest or discipline to define or recognize standards of acceptable operation/performance for organizations/entities and measure conformity with them.

**Agency or Agencies:** The entity seeking or having received accreditation from BSCC.

**Agency Code:** BSAAP Accredited Agency Code of Conduct by which all accredited entities must abide.

**Board:** PBSA Board of Directors

**BSAAP:** Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program

**BSCC:** Background Screening Credentialing Council. The governing body for the accreditation program.

**Clause:** Each component of the Standard describing criteria with which to conform in order to achieve accreditation.

**Council:** BSCC or Background Screening Credentialing Council. The governing body for the accreditation program.

**Letter of Intent:** Letter to be submitted by an agency as the first step and indication of their intent to apply for accreditation.

**Measures:** The criteria used to determine conformity with a clause.

**Outsourced:** Products and/or services in their final form that are purchased from and prepared by an outside supplier, rather than those products and services being prepared by members of the CRA's own organization. Example: an employment verification completed in its entirety by an outside supplier and then provided to the CRA for inclusion in a background report is "outsourced." Information provided by a field researcher that will be reviewed and potentially modified by the CRA before inclusion in a background report is not "outsourced"; it is rather information provided by a data furnisher.

**Operations:** Any location that performs functions that would be required to comply with the Fair Credit Reporting Act and Data Protection regulations as listed in the Accreditation Standards.

**Self – Evaluation:** The process in which an agency submits information and documentation in support of their demonstration of conformity with accreditation standards.

**Staff:** PBSA Staff, currently IMI Association Executives Inc.

**Standard:** BSAAP Accreditation Standard

**Surveillance:** As it relates to accreditation, the process of monitoring and review of an accredited agency for ongoing conformity with the accreditation Standard.