

3-Year Interim Surveillance Audit Application for Accredited Organizations



Thank you for your interest in the Professional Background Screening Association (“PBSA”) Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program (“BSAAP”). The BSAAP 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 (“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 **currently accredited agency continues to conform to the Standard**. Before applying for your accreditation interim surveillance audit, you should carefully review the Standard and the corresponding conformity measures (“Measures”). Copies of the Standard and the Measures are available on the PBSA website at www.thepbsa.org.

Throughout the accreditation process, please feel free to contact the PBSA office at 919.459.2082 or accreditation@thepbsa.org with any questions regarding the accreditation process.



Background Screening Agency Accreditation Program

3-Year Interim Surveillance Audit For Accredited Organizations Application Packet

Included in this packet:

- Overview of Interim Surveillance Audit Process
- Instructions for Submission of Interim Surveillance Audit Information
- Interim Surveillance Audit Application
- Accredited Agency Code of Conduct
- Glossary of Terms

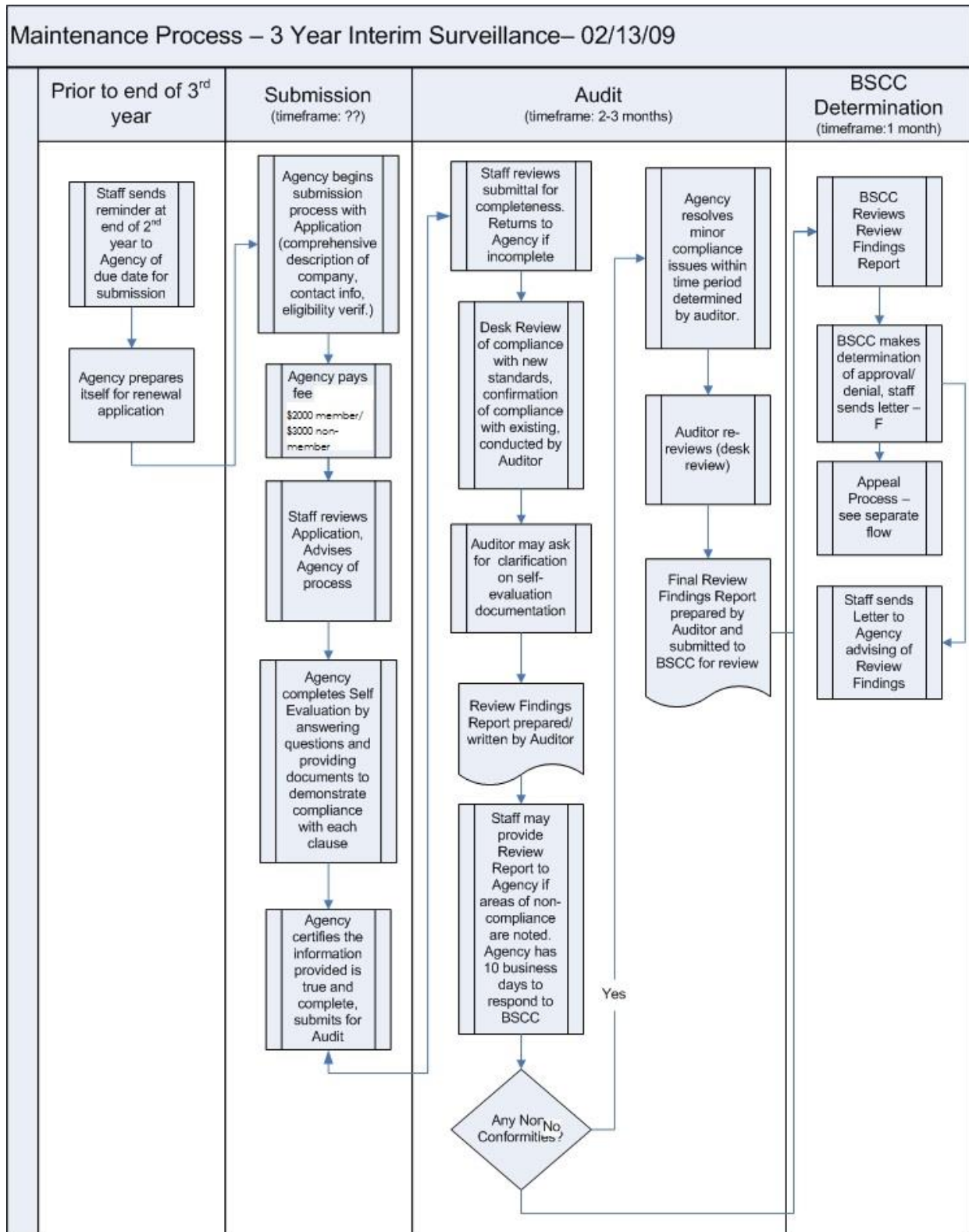
The following steps are part of the BSCC 3-Year Interim Surveillance Audit Application and Audit Process:

1. The agency desiring to maintain accredited status should obtain and review a current copy of the Standard and Measures at www.thepbsa.org. Maintenance of accredited status requires that accredited agencies provide evidence of conformity with any new or changed sections or clauses of the Standard since the date of initial accreditation.
2. The agency determines if it is eligible to maintain its accredited status. The maintenance requirements are as follows:
 - a. The accredited agency must verify continuing compliance with the BSAAP Accredited Agency Code of Conduct.
 - b. The accredited agency must not have any unresolved PBSA/NAPBS or BSCC complaints or grievances of any kind. This includes complaints of violation of the PBSA Code of Conduct and/or the BSAAP Accredited Agency Code of Conduct.
 - c. The accredited agency must be able to meet all current eligibility requirements for achieving initial accreditation.
3. The accredited agency should conduct a readiness review of its continued accredited status prior to submission of the surveillance information. Agencies should submit their surveillance materials once they believe they are in compliance with all of the current clauses, Measures, and interpretations of the Standard. In any event, the three (3)-Year Interim Surveillance Audit Application and Materials should be submitted at least six (6) months prior to, and must be submitted at least sixty (60) days prior to the three (3)-year anniversary of the date an agency's accreditation was granted.
4. Accredited agencies should then submit their completed surveillance application along with the required fees to PBSA headquarters. Upon processing of application and payment, agencies will be sent instructions for submitting electronic supporting documentation.
5. BSCC staff will review surveillance application materials to determine whether the surveillance materials are complete and whether the application fees have been paid. Staff will also confirm the accredited agency's continuing conformance with all current accreditation eligibility requirements.
6. The BSCC auditor will conduct a thorough desk review of all surveillance materials submitted. The auditor may request clarification of materials provided or additional information regarding conformity with specific clauses of the Standard. The review may include, but is not limited to, the following documentation:
 - a. Evidence of continuing conformity with all clauses of the Standard. If no changes have been made in an agency's policy/procedure or implementation, the accredited agency may simply make this notation with the applicable clause/Standard.

- b. New evidence of conformity with any new sections, clauses, Measures or interpretations of the Standard implemented since the initial date of accreditation.
 - c. Evidence of corrective action taken on suggested opportunities for improvement (OFI) since the date of initial accreditation.
 - d. Changes in the ownership, structure or operation of the accredited agency. Involvement of the agency in any legal action related to accreditation standards or the Accredited Agency Code of Conduct.
 - e. Evidence of any changes in the overall quality of the operation of the accredited agency.
 - f. Evidence of outsourcing any new services (services not outsourced in the initial application) covered by accreditation standards
7. After the desk audit has been conducted, the auditor will work with the BSCC Chair to determine whether a site visit is needed to make a continuing accreditation decision.
 8. After working with the agency to resolve any minor compliance issues, the auditor will prepare an Interim Surveillance Audit report which will be made available to the accredited agency within three (3) weeks of the submission of the surveillance materials to the auditor.
 9. The BSCC will review the auditor’s findings and render a decision regarding the maintenance of accredited status. This decision will be sent in writing to the accredited agency within ten (10) business days of the conclusion of the Council meeting in which the decision was rendered. No verbal response information will be provided by BSCC, staff, or the auditor regarding BSCC decisions on maintenance of accreditation.
 10. If maintenance of accredited status is denied and the agency’s accreditation is revoked, the agency has the right to appeal. However, accreditation will be suspended during the appeal process. Accredited agencies that lose their accredited status must remove all accreditation logos from all marketing materials and mediums, cease using any references or statements suggesting that their organization is accredited, and cease referring altogether to their BSAAP accredited status in all future communication with stakeholders.

Note: Accredited agencies automatically maintain their accredited status throughout this process until the point, if any, at which the BSCC renders a written decision denying maintenance of accredited status and revoking accreditation.

No notice or press release is prepared for decisions regarding continued maintenance of accreditation; however, the BSCC will remove the names of agencies that do not maintain accredited status from the PBSA website and other official listings of accredited agencies.



Instructions for Completing 3-Year Interim Surveillance Audit Evaluation

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

- All applicants should review the current Standard and guidelines prior to completing their self-evaluation. The current official Standard can be found in the PBSA website at www.thepbsa.org
- Applications must be submitted in the English language.
- Applicants are expected to use the checklist to substantiate continued adherence to the clauses of the Standard. For any changes in the accredited firm's operations and adherence to the Standard, specify with a header the Standard section and clause with respect to which operations have been altered. Submit an electronic copy describing changes. Instructions for the upload process will be sent once the application and payment is received.
- If an applicant is submitting documentation to substantiate changes, personal identifier information should be deleted from any sample letters, contracts or agreements.
- All documents submitted to BSCC become property of BSCC but may 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 submitted; however, the redaction of information should not be of such magnitude to hinder the BSCC's ability to utilize the documentation to properly review and assess the agency's 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 re-submitted in a properly completed form, which may result in delay of the review.
- If any reference materials are in an electronic format or included on an applicant's web site, the applicant should also submit an electronic file of that information. Instructions for the upload process will be sent once the application and payment is received
- All BSCC members have signed statements agreeing to keep all information reviewed as part of the accreditation process confidential. Also, accreditation application information will be kept under lock and key, 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 will only be reviewed by staff, consultants and individual BSCC members rather than the entire BSCC. However, data submitted by applicants may be used in aggregated form for statistical or research purposes.
- Accreditation staff, consultants, or volunteers may ask for additional information during the course of the review process.
- Applicants that are aggrieved by the BSAAP decision on their surveillance submission may appeal the decision and should 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 a surveillance application or the surveillance application process, please contact accreditation@thepbsa.org or call 919.459.2082.

Disclaimer

Submission of BSAAP interim surveillance audit materials and supporting documentation does not constitute a guarantee of continued accreditation of an agency. Applicants that are awarded BSAAP continued accredited status will be notified of such in writing and will be provided with specific information in writing regarding the appropriate references to their accredited status in written materials.

Until actual continued accredited status is achieved and the accredited agency is so notified in writing, no verbal or other form of communication will be given to anyone regarding the continuing accredited status of the applicant.

3-Year Interim Surveillance Audit Accreditation Application

Original Accreditation Date: _____

3-Year Submission Date: _____

Today's Date: _____

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 and required attachments must accompany this application. All applications must be submitted in English language. All fields must be completed.

Applicant Company Location and Contact Information:

Company Applying for 3-Year Interim Surveillance Audit: _____

Name of Company's Designated Representative: _____

Representative's Business Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Website: _____ Email: _____

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

If yes, please list dates: _____

Date company submitted Initial Letter of Intent to Apply for Accreditation through PBSA: _____

Date company was granted Accreditation through PBSA: _____

3-Year Interim Surveillance Audit Applicant Profile:

Please note any information that has changed or is otherwise new information since the time of the filing of your original Letter of Intent by placing a * next to the information you provide. Please provide all information requested regardless of whether it is new information, changed information or the same as when you first applied for accreditation.

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:

_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
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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): _____

3-Year Interim Surveillance Audit Applicant Questionnaire:

1. Have you or any of your owners, principals, directors, officers or employees charged with enforcement of company policy been convicted by a court or general court martial or are any criminal charges now pending with regard to a crime involving dishonesty, fraud or moral turpitude? Yes No

If “Yes,” please provide details and a statement in support of the continuance of your accreditation in light of the same. Attach a separate explanation.

2. Have you or any of your owners, principals, directors, officers or key employees had a professional membership, license, registration or certification denied, suspended or revoked (other than a lack of minimum qualification or failure of examination)? Yes No

If “Yes,” please provide details and a statement in support of the continuance of your accreditation in light of the same. Attach a separate explanation.

3. Have you or any of your owners, principals, directors, officers or key employees been censured or disciplined by any professional body or organization? Yes No

If “Yes,” please provide details and a statement in support of the continuance of your accreditation in light of the same. Attach a separate explanation.

3-Year Interim Surveillance Audit Applicant Agreement and Certification:

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.
- To the best of my knowledge, 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.
- 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 surveillance application process after submission of the surveillance application fee, yet prior to any Auditor Assessment, I understand that only 75 percent of the fee is refundable. I understand that 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 reaccreditation every five (5) years, prior to the expiration of the current accreditation, and that it must successfully complete the Interim Surveillance Audit process in the year (3) of each five (5) year accreditation period. If we choose not to reapply and/or not to submit to this required interim surveillance, 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 or maintain accreditation.
- I understand and agree that the specification and fees for accreditation are subject to change at the discretion of the BSCC.
- I understand that random unannounced audits are part of the BSAAP. I agree to allow an accreditation auditor to gain physical access to my company location(s) for purposes of conducting such unannounced audits.
- Once access is granted to an accreditation auditor to conduct an unannounced audit, 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 compliance with the accreditation criteria.
- I understand that the Auditor does NOT approve or deny our ongoing accreditation based upon a review of surveillance materials. The Auditor’s findings will be submitted to the BSCC for the determination of maintenance of accredited status.
- I have 30 days (as determined by the postmark) to submit to the BSCC Appeal Panel in writing any appeal of the results of the interim surveillance audit. Appeals are to be submitted to PBSA at the address below. I understand that the appeal should clearly state the stated reason for the failure to achieve accreditation and why the BSCC determination is incorrect. I understand that the BSCC Appeal Panel, within a reasonable amount of time, will make a ruling on any appeal. 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 agree that if the accreditation which this company is seeking is granted and the company then elects to discontinue any or all accredited operations, we will notify PBSA in writing within 30 days of said status change.

- 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.

3-Year Interim Surveillance Audit Applicant Fee Schedule

1. The Interim Surveillance Audit will require payment of a non-refundable fee of \$ 2,000 for PBSA Members and \$ 3,000 for non-PBSA members. This fee assumes a desk review process prior to the completion of the year three (3) of accreditation. Additional fees may apply in the event of any new or changed information which may require further on-site review in order to maintain accredited status. Applicants will be notified in advance of incurring such additional expenses.
2. All accredited agencies will have to renew their accreditation during year (5) of the process. The renewal fee is \$ 5,000 for PBSA Members and \$ 7,500 for non-PBSA members. The renewal application will involve the same process as the initial accreditation application and review. Fee refunds are applicable in the same situations as original application fees.
3. 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.
4. Should an agency initiate an appeal, the non-refundable appeal fee is \$ 1,000.
5. No fees are charged for unannounced visits to an accredited agency.
6. 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, the current BSAAP Fee Schedule will apply. BSCC reserves the right to change the Accreditation Fee Schedule at any time and without notice.

Required Attachment – Please attach a copy of the following:

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 with regard to a crime involving dishonesty, fraud or moral turpitude? 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. 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:

By signing below and submitting all of the information herewith, I certify, based on information and belief formed after reasonable inquiry, 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 may be grounds for revocation of any accreditation awarded. I authorize the BSCC to verify any of this information, and release all concerned from any liability in connection therewith. I further agree to abide by the BSAAP Accredited Agency Code of Conduct provided as part of this application process.

Full Name of Applicant Company or Individual:

Full Name of Person Authorized to make application:

Signature of Person Authorized to make application:

Signature Date:

Instructions for Submission Of 3-Year Interim Surveillance Audit Application

Mail the completed application with required attachments and Surveillance Audit fee to:

**PBSA
110 Horizon Drive, Ste. 210
Raleigh, NC 27615
Fax: 919.459.2075**

Contact the PBSA office by phone at 919.459.2082 or email at accreditation@thepbsa.org.

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.

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 Accreditation 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.

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

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.