

How Human Resource Professionals View the Use and Effectiveness of Background Screening Methods

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Executive Summary

In an increasingly global economy, employers are rightfully placing a premium on the safety of employees and the community. Employers continue to utilize professional background checks at a near universal rate, according to a newly released survey from the National Association of Professional Background Screeners. The second annual survey gauging the views of human resources professionals found that public safety was their top priority.

Employers of all sizes and locations report using background screening as part of their onboarding process, with a majority waiting until after an interview or job offer to conduct the background check. The number one challenge reported continues to be the length of time in getting results.



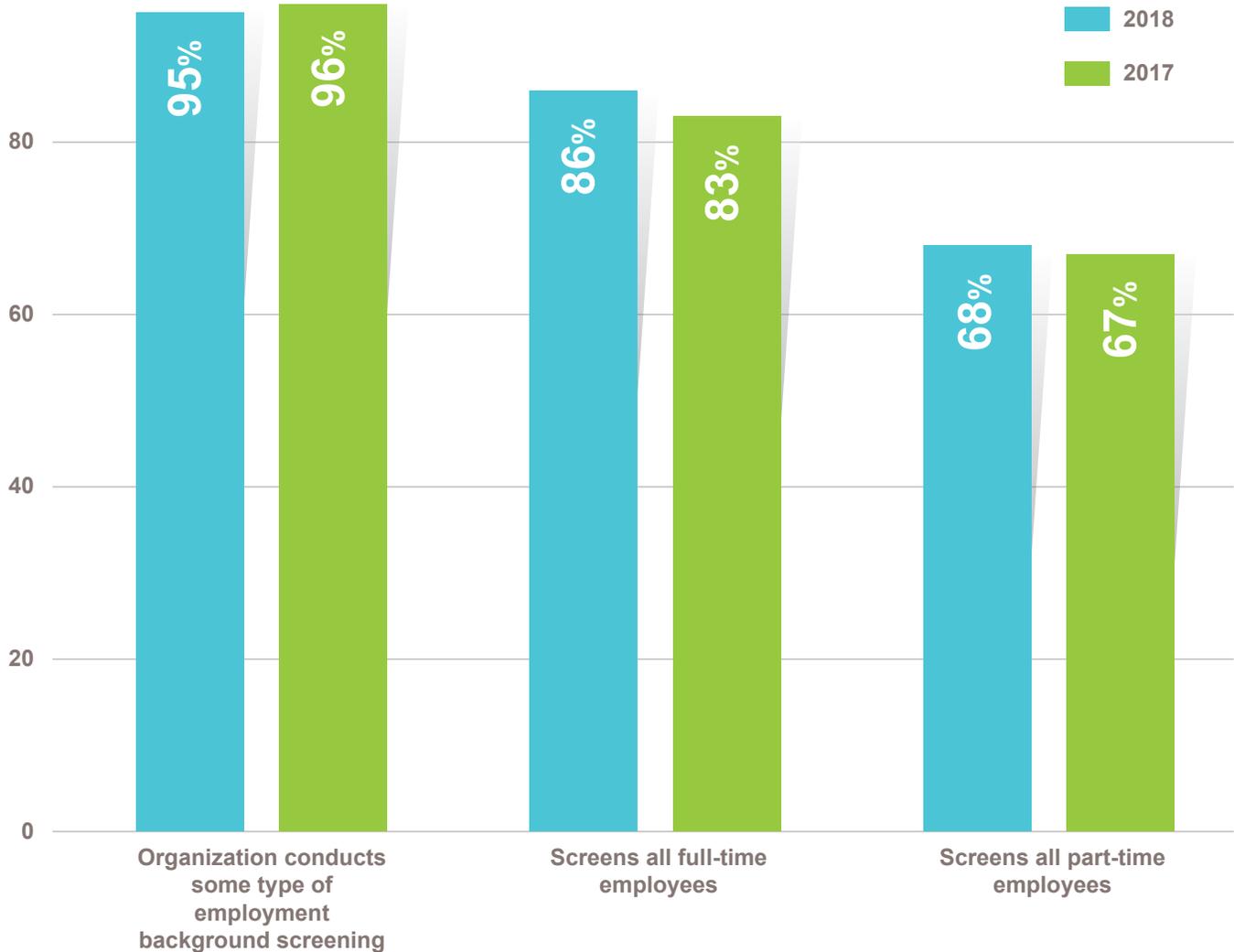
The Universal Utilization of Background Checks

Nearly all respondents stated they conduct background checks of some kind, with a majority saying they screen both part-time and full-time employees. Ninety-five percent of employers stated their organization conducts one or more types of employment background screening. A background check is, in basic terms, information compiled

on an individual which may be considered when determining eligibility for a job.

- 86 percent of respondents said they screen all full-time employees
- 68 percent of respondents included part-time employees in their screening process

Percent Conducting Background Checks



Of the five percent of respondents who indicated their companies do not conduct background checks:

- 23 percent stated they are using other tools or methods to screen applicants
- 19 percent cited the associated costs
- 17 percent could not cite a reason that was responsible for their company not utilizing background screenings

Prioritization of Safety Remains the Top Concern

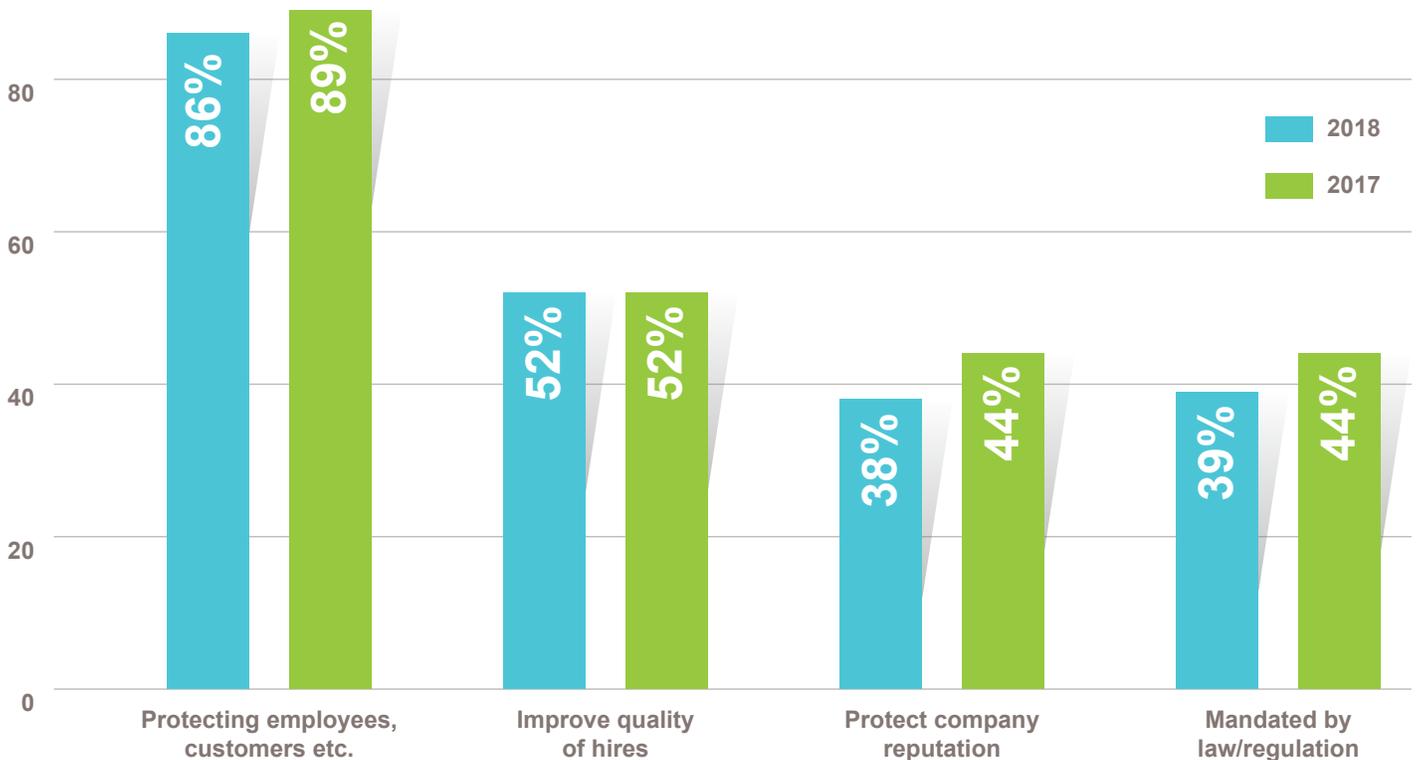
The percentage of employers citing public safety as the top reason they conducted background checks remained at the top of the list in this year's survey. A full 86 percent stated they conduct background checks to protect employees, customers and others.

Other top reasons cited for screening:

- Improving the quality of hires (52 percent)
- Law/regulation requirements (39 percent)
- Protecting company reputation (38 percent)
- Prevent and/or reduce theft, embezzlement and other criminal activity (36 percent)



The four most important reasons that organizations conduct background screening

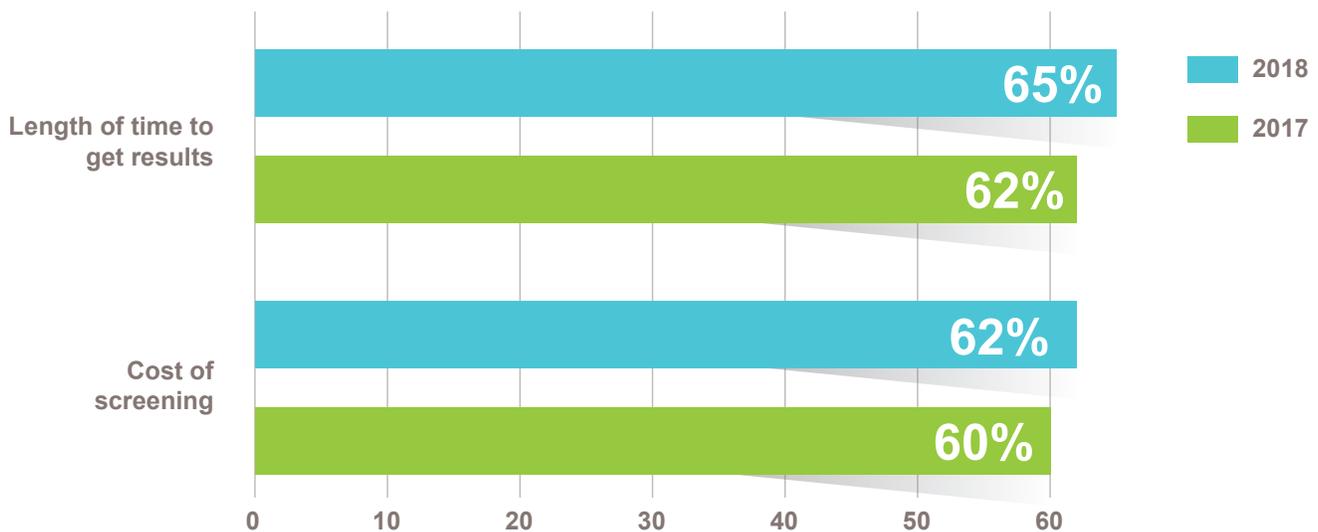


Accuracy Is Paramount

In the 2018 survey, human resources professionals reconfirmed their focus on accuracy with 98 percent stating that the accuracy of their background screenings is “very important.” This percentage was consistent with last year’s survey. At the same time, an increased number of respondents stated that the length of time to get results is the most significant challenge facing their organization when conducting background screens – 65 percent this year versus 62 percent in 2017.



The two most significant challenges faced when conducting background screening



Accuracy is critical for professional background screeners and an accurate background check is dependent on access to personal identifiers such as complete name and complete date of birth. However, the redaction of identifiers—such as dates of birth—by federal, state and local court systems can lead to delays in hiring. This is particularly true in the federal court data system known as PACER, which systematically excludes dates of birth. This can lead

to applicants losing out on a job while the search for identifiers to confirm or refute that a record matches the applicant is ongoing. The lack of identifiers in a system such as PACER can also impact the federal government itself, which consistently has a backlog of Office of Personnel Management background checks. The Government Accountability Office recently labeled this backlog a “high risk.”

Multiple Types of Entities Use Background Checks, Usually After a Job Is Offered

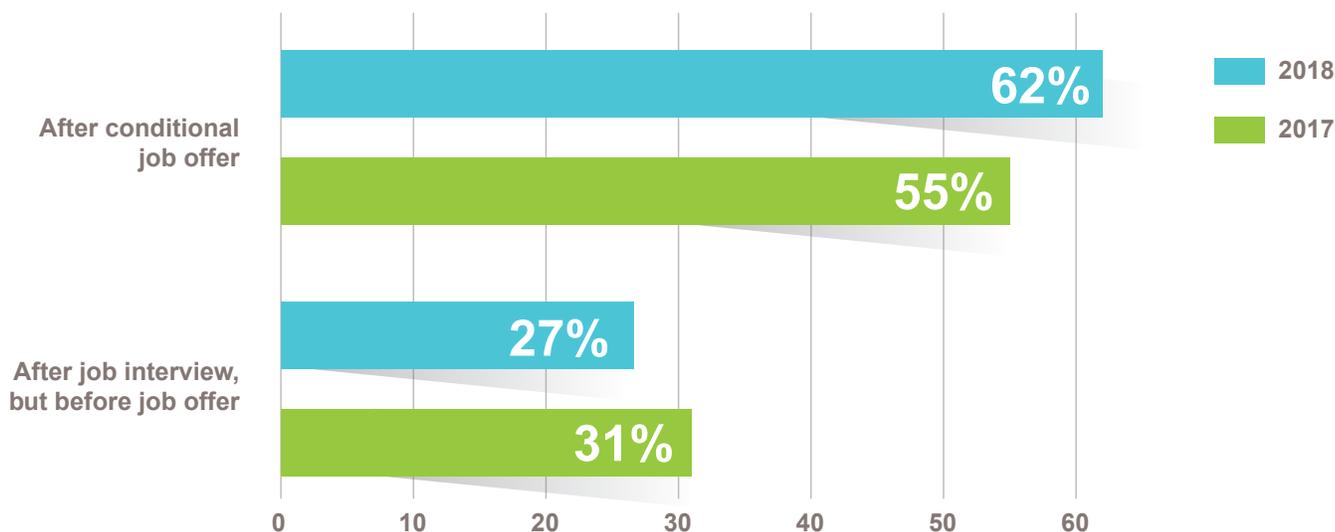
Nearly half of respondents represented organizations with fewer than 100 employees (45 percent). Forty-nine percent of entities represented were privately held, and 28 percent were non-profit.

Seventy-six percent of survey respondents said their company had a documented background screening policy, with nine percent indicating they weren't sure. Increasingly, however, companies are waiting until

after the job interview or conditional job offer before conducting a background screen.

The proportion of companies waiting until after a job interview or conditional job offer to conduct a background check increased by three percentage points over last year, to 89 percent. Sixty-two percent of respondents reported waiting until a conditional job offer is made.

At what point in the hiring/onboarding process does your organization conduct background screening?



Among employers that conduct background checks, most report conducting the check during the hiring process. For those employers that conduct additional background checks, the reasons for subsequent screenings are varied.

- 60 percent conduct a background check only during the hiring process
- 14 percent report the use of background checks at times other than the hiring process because they are required to do so by law
- 10 percent said they conduct background checks at times other than the hiring process for cause

Many Employers Are Thinking Globally and Value Access to International Screening Capabilities

As the economy continues to become more global in nature, NAPBS implemented a new line of research into this year's survey to establish a baseline and identify trends in employers' views and uses of international tools to screen employees.

Regardless of whether a respondent has locations outside the United States or job applicants that live or have lived overseas, employers overwhelmingly (80 percent) stated it is at least somewhat important for companies to have access to global/international screening capabilities. A majority of respondents (52 percent) stated they believe access to global screening capabilities is important, while 28 percent believe it is somewhat important.

Among respondents that consider candidates who live or have lived in other countries:

- Eighty-four percent believe it is important for companies to have access to global/international screening capabilities, including 56 percent who believe it is "very important" and 28 percent who say it is "somewhat important."

Among the respondents with locations outside the United States:

- Eighty-nine percent believe it is important for companies to have access to global/international screening capabilities, including 70 percent who believe it is "very important" and 19 percent who say it is "somewhat important."



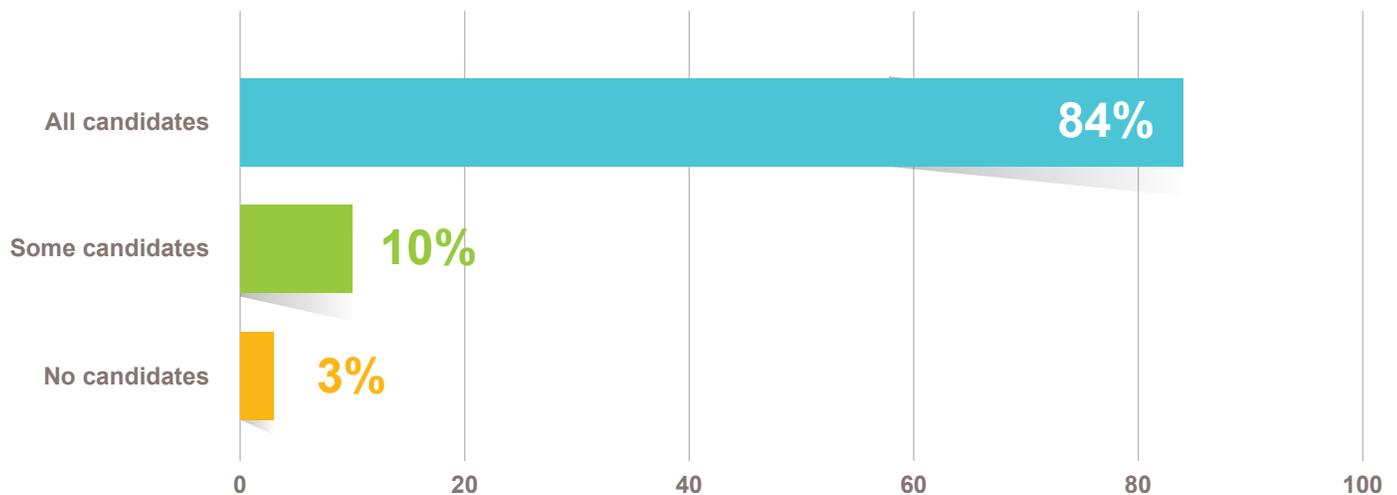
What Is, and Isn't, a Common Component of a Background Check

Some form of criminal history check continues to be the most commonly included component of a background check, while the use of social media in the screening process remains low. Ninety-four percent include some form of criminal history check in their screening program. Seventy-three percent of employers currently do not use social media in their

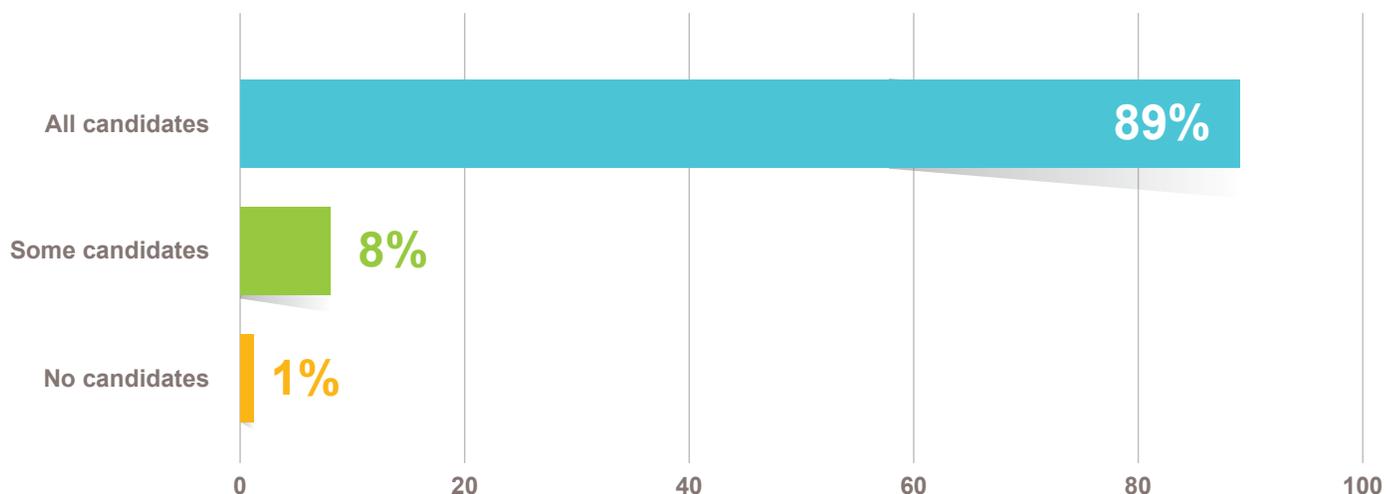
screening process, and only eight percent use social media for all candidates.

This survey continues to provide one of the most in-depth glimpses into the types of background checks employers are using. These types include:

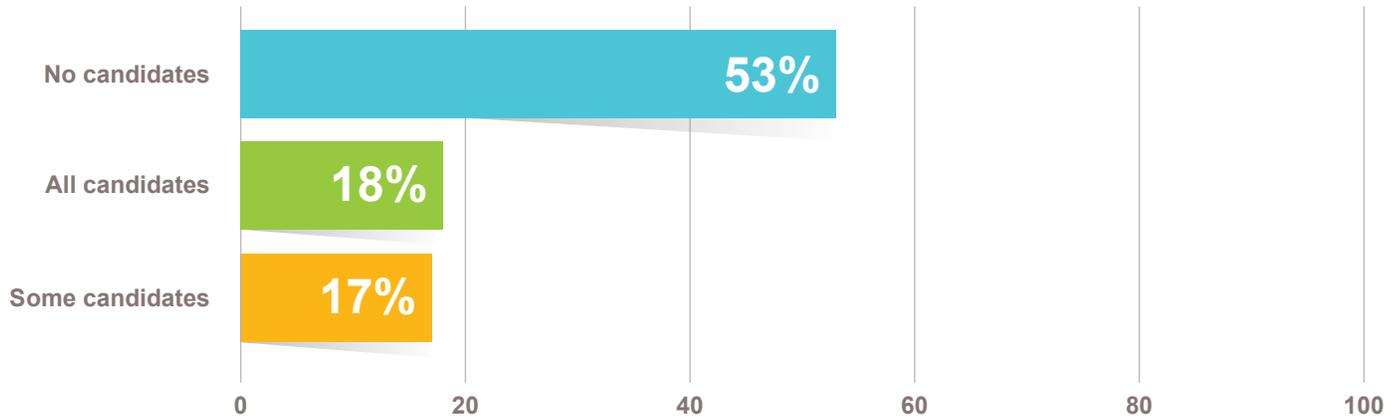
Database/National Criminal



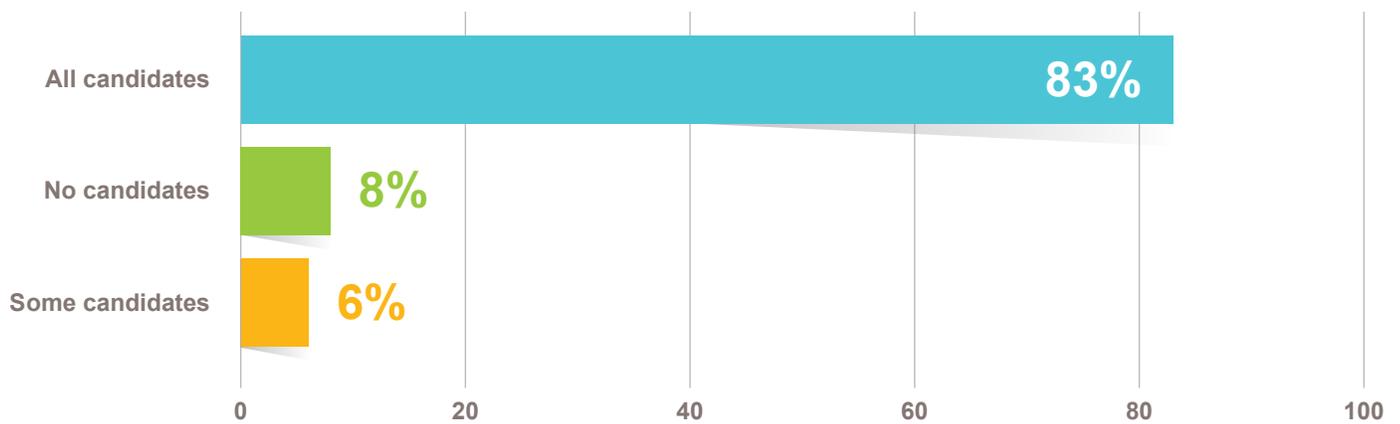
County/Statewide Criminal Searches



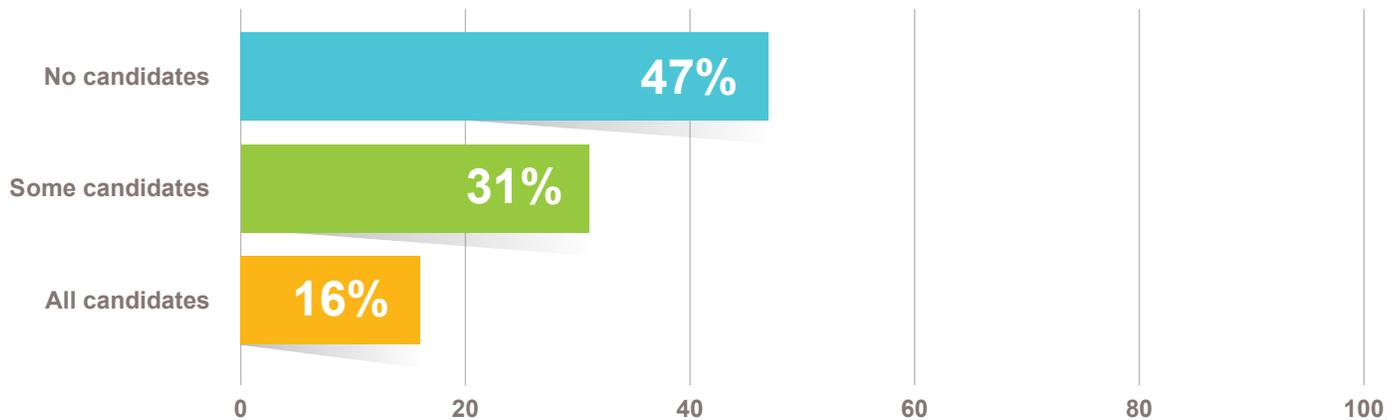
Fingerprint Based Criminal Searches



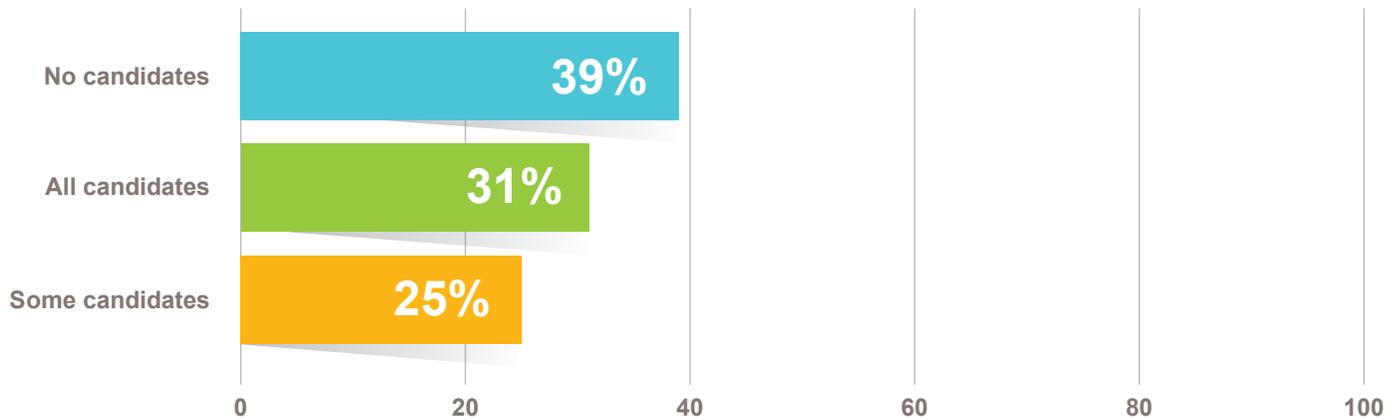
Social Security Number Trace (this may be referred to as an identity check, location search tool for adding criminal jurisdictions or similar)



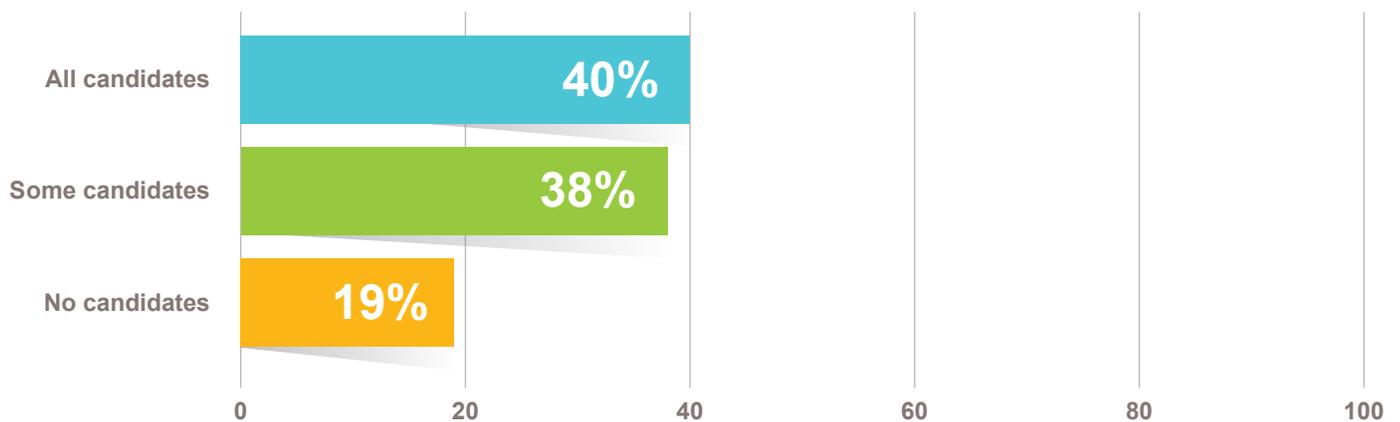
Credit/Financial



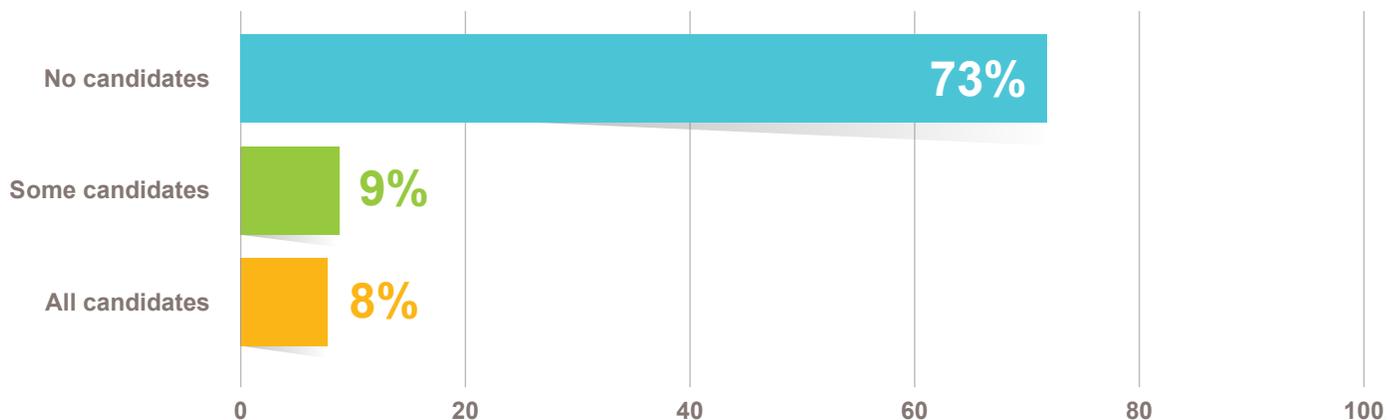
Education Verification



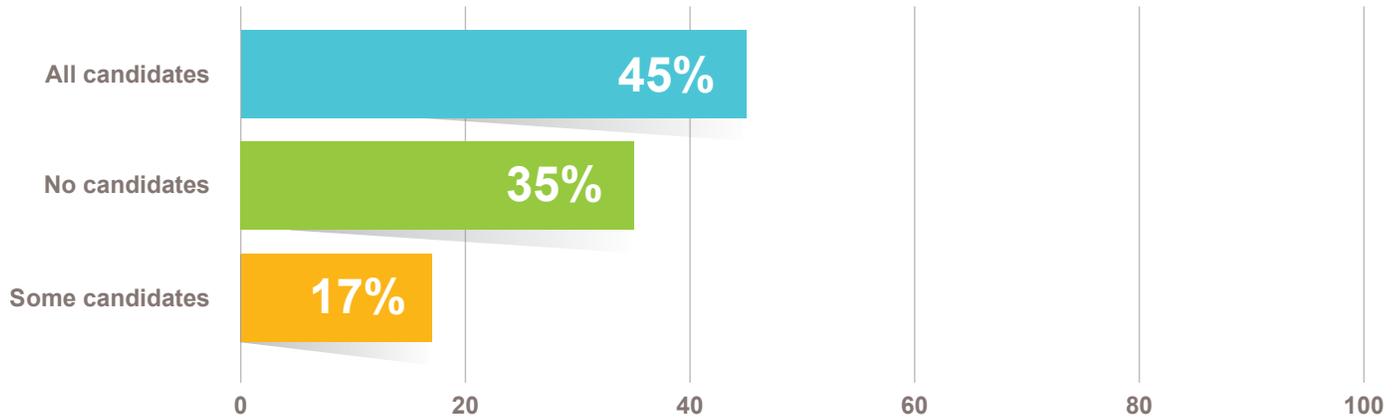
Motor Vehicle Driving Records



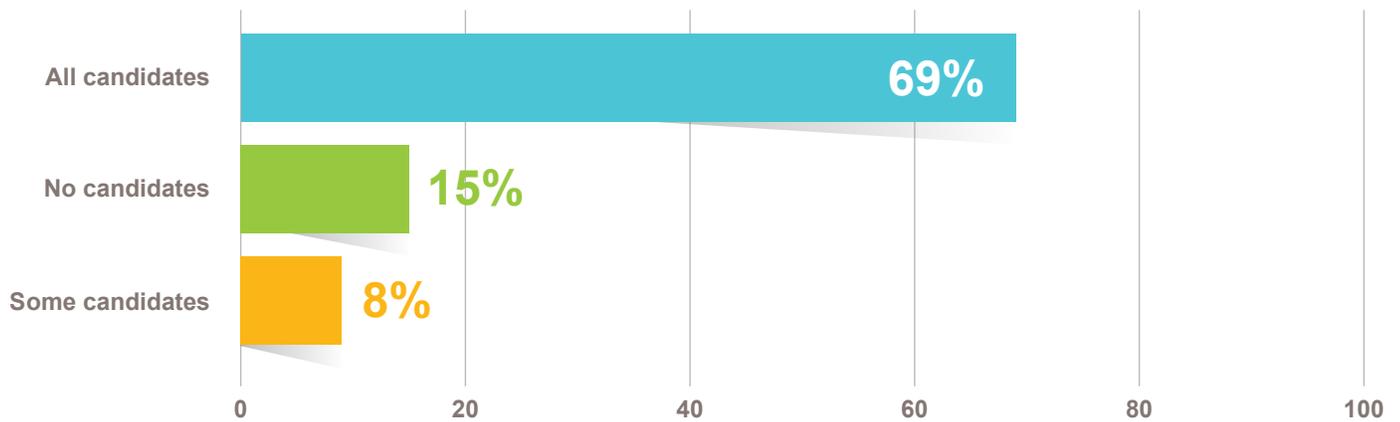
Social Media



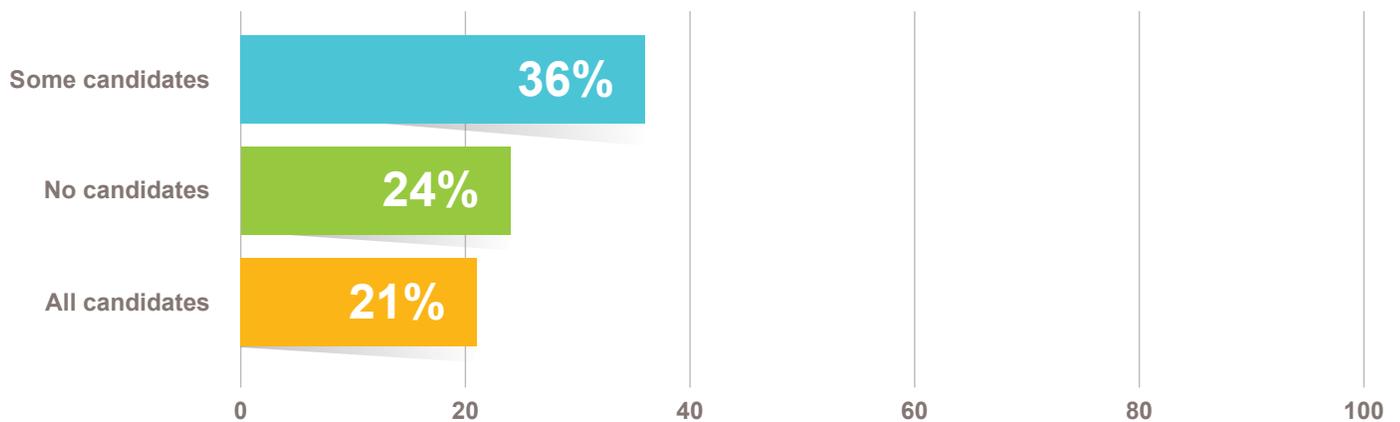
Drug and Alcohol Testing



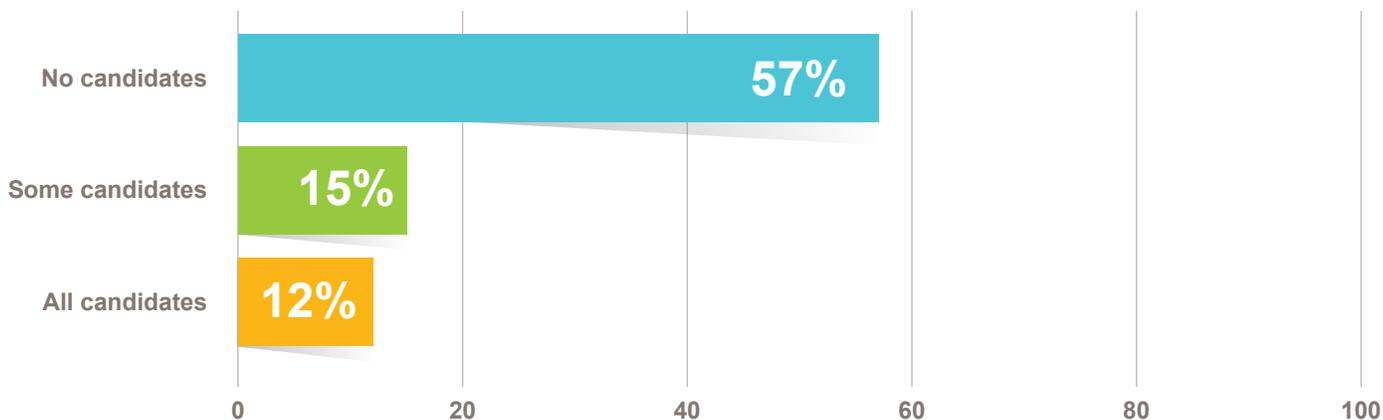
Sex Offender Registry



Professional License Verification



International Checks



Items included in background screenings	All		Some		None	
	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017
Database/National Criminal	84%	83%	10%	10%	3%	3%
County/Statewide Criminal Searches	89%	87%	8%	10%	1%	1%
Fingerprint	18%	11%	17%	16%	53%	62%
SSN	83%	80%	6%	7%	8%	7%
Credit/Financial	16%	6%	31%	25%	47%	62%
Education Verification	31%	18%	25%	23%	39%	53%
Motor Vehicle Driving Records	40%	30%	38%	38%	19%	26%
Social Media	8%	5%	9%	N.A.	73%	77%
Drug and Alcohol Testing	45%	37%	17%	15%	35%	45%
Sex Offender Registry	69%	61%	8%	9%	15%	19%
Professional License Verification	21%	17%	36%	32%	34%	44%
International Checks	12%	4%	15%	14%	57%	69%

To determine which components may be included in a background check, applicants are encouraged to consult with their prospective employers and property managers

The National Association of Professional Background Screeners (NAPBS) commissioned HR.com to conduct an unprecedented national survey of 2,137 human resources professionals to gauge their views on background screening.



About NAPBS

Founded in 2003 as a not-for-profit trade association, the National Association of Professional Background Screeners (NAPBS) represents the interests of over 850 member companies around the world that offer employment and tenant background screening. NAPBS provides relevant programs and training aimed at empowering members to better serve clients and maintain standards of excellence in the background screening industry, and presents a unified voice in the development of national, state, and local regulations. For more information, visit www.napbs.com



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