

## Initial and Re-Accreditation Application Packet



Thank you for your interest in the Professional Background Screening Association (PBSA) Background Screening Organization Accreditation Program (BSOAP). The BSOAP advances professionalism in the screening profession through the promotion of best practices, aware of legal compliance, and development of standards that protect consumers / data subjects. The BSOAP Accreditation Standards were developed with broad input from members of the screening committee.

The following application form will guide you in providing the needed documentation and other evidence to demonstrate that your organization conforms to the BSOAP Accreditation Standard. Before applying for accreditation, you should carefully review the BSOAP Accreditation Standard(s) and the corresponding conformity measures. Copies of the Standard(s) and the measures, as well as the Policies and Procedures which govern the program are available on the PBSA website at [www.thepbsa.org](http://www.thepbsa.org)

**For questions about the process, please feel free to contact the PBSA Accreditation team at 919.459.6108 or email [accreditation@thepbsa.org](mailto:accreditation@thepbsa.org)**

### Accreditation Application Packet Contents

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## Instructions for Completing the Desk Audit

1. All applicants should review the BSOAP Accreditation Standard(s) to which they wish to become accredited, including the guidelines for the process, prior to submitting their application and desk audit materials. The current BSOAP Accreditation Standards and Policies and Procedures which govern the program can be found on the website at [www.thepbsa.org](http://www.thepbsa.org).
2. Applications must be submitted in the English language.
3. All deadlines for submission, payment and response must be met or the application process may be terminated.
4. Supporting information needs to be uploaded for each clause. The clause number should be indicated in the file name for easy reference.
5. Applicants are encouraged to provide a thorough and clear response to each clause. 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) when a single sample could adequately provide evidence of meeting the clause.
6. 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 name of the electronic file. Attachments should be uploaded individually for each clause it supports, as addressed in the Standard.
7. If an attachment demonstrates conformity with multiple clauses, it must be uploaded for each clause to which it is applicable.
8. 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 a 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 viewed by staff, auditor, and BSCC legal counsel. However, data submitted by applicants may be used in an aggregate form for statistical or research purposes.
9. Applicants will be required to submit data which will include employee names, customer listings, vendor names and other information. Pricing information may be redacted but sufficient detail must remain in the report for the Auditor to identify the relevant requirements.
10. Applicants should delete personal identifier information from any sample letters, contracts or agreements.
11. All documents submitted as part of the audit process become property of PBSA and should be marked as Proprietary and Confidential by the organization, if appropriate. The organization 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 or the auditor's ability to utilize the documentation to properly review and assess the organization's preparedness for accreditation. Documents which are overly redacted and deemed unusable by the auditor or PBSA may be required to be resubmitted and/or alternate documents may be required.
12. Incomplete or incorrectly prepared supporting documentation may be required to be resubmitted when properly completed, may result in delays of your review, and/or the issuance of a complexity fee.
13. Not Applicable or "N/A" answers are not acceptable. Applicants must specify why they believe a particular clause is not applicable to their organization.
14. Accreditation staff, Auditor, Consultants, or volunteers may ask for additional information during the course of the review process.
15. If any reference materials are in an electronic format only, or included on your website, please ensure you submit a copy of this information with your submission. Do not just refer the auditor to the source site.
16. Applicants will be informed of the BSOAP decision on their submission within one (1) month of the completion of the BSCC review of the auditor's report.
17. Applicants that are aggrieved by the BSOAP decision on their submission may appeal the decision. Details regarding this process can be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual on the PBSA website.

## Accreditation Application

**Instructions:** Please provide all the requested information. A non-refundable payment must accompany the application. All applications must be submitted in the English language only. Once the application is reviewed, Staff will contact the main contact with the total fees to be paid and outline the next steps in the accreditation process.

Please check the appropriate box of Accreditation for which you are applying:

Initial Application US	<input type="checkbox"/>	Renewal Application US	<input type="checkbox"/>
Initial Application General	<input type="checkbox"/>	Renewal Application General	<input type="checkbox"/>
Initial Application Bundel US & General	<input type="checkbox"/>	Renewal Application Bundel US & General	<input type="checkbox"/>

*NOTE – if you are submitting an application for your Interim Surveillance Audit, this is not the correct form. The current ISA application may be found on the PBSA website [www.thepbsa.org](http://www.thepbsa.org)*

### Applicant Organization Location and Contact Information:

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

Organization  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province/Territory: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal / Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Country / Region: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Website: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Is your organization currently, or has it previously been, a member of PBSA? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

Please indicate the type of business:

Sole Proprietorship \_\_\_\_\_ Partnership \_\_\_\_\_ Corporation \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

If *in the US*, Federal Tax ID Number (last 4 digits of social security number if sole proprietorship):  
\_\_\_\_\_

If *located outside of the US*, please enter your applicable business identification number as proof of incorporation from the applicable governmental registration source. If not incorporated, please provide a current business license number. Upload supporting documentation of the same. \_\_\_\_\_

If re-accrediting, has your organization gone through an acquisition or merger transaction since your last audit? If so, please explain below: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please describe the type of business you do by percentage (i.e. criminal verifications 50%, verifications 25%, drug testing 10%, other 15%) These items must total to 100%:

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

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

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

Is the applicant organization a subsidiary of or controlled by any other organization or entity?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Date organization was started (organization must be operating under the BSOAP Standard for a minimum of 1 year prior to applying for accreditation): \_\_\_\_\_

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

What is the name of your organization’s CEO (Chief of Staff / Office Holder):  
\_\_\_\_\_

List commercial/professional offices you operate out of (not including home offices):

Location City, State/Province, Country	Type of Work Performed and Percentage it Presents of that Work (include Verifications, Criminal, HR, Compliance, IT, Sales, Finance)
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<b>EXAMPLE:</b> Walnut Grove/MN/US	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verifications - 100%</li> <li>• Criminal - 25%</li> <li>• I/T Security - 100%</li> </ul>
Mayberry/NC/US	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance – 100%</li> <li>• HR – 100%</li> <li>• Sales – 100%</li> <li>• Finance – 100%</li> <li>• Criminal – 75%</li> </ul>
Guelph/Ontario/Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verifications – 100%</li> <li>• Compliance – 100%</li> </ul>
London/United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment – 80%</li> <li>• Government – 10%</li> <li>• Volunteer – 10%</li> </ul>
Chennai/Tamil Nadu/India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verifications – 100%</li> <li>• Criminal – 25%</li> <li>• I/T Security – 100%</li> </ul>

<b>Location</b> City, State/Province, Country	<b>Type of Work Performed and Percentage it Presents of that Work</b> (include Verifications, Criminal, HR, Compliance, IT, Sales, Finance)

NOTE: Working from home/remote locations for the purposes of the BSOAP is defined as those individuals who will retain files/paperwork at their location. If organization workers will only access their systems but will not be retaining or printing information, these do not need to be disclosed.

Based on the definition above, do you have organization workers who are performing work under the Standard from home offices or remote locations (i.e., verifications, criminal, HR compliance, IT, sales, finance, management, security, etc.)? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

If yes, please list each location below with type and percentage of work (i.e., Raleigh, NC, US – criminal 10%, IT 90%; Delhi India – Human Resources 50%, Sales 50%)

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***We agree with and are bound to the following:*** (Organization's authorized representative must INITIAL each item and sign at the bottom)

\_\_\_\_ I certify that I have read, understand and accept the BSOAP Code of Conduct for Accredited Organizations (outlined below)

\_\_\_\_ I understand and agree to the schedule of fees in effect at the time of this application.

\_\_\_\_ If applying for the US Employment Screening Accreditation, I certify that our organization is in full compliance with all terms of the Fair Credit Reporting Act. If applying for the General Background Screening Accreditation, I certify that our organization is in full compliance with the relevant data privacy and screening laws of the jurisdiction(s) in which we operate.

\_\_\_\_ I certify that our organization has no unresolved complaints or grievances filed with PBSA/NAPBS or the BSCC.

\_\_\_\_ If a PBSA member, I certify that our PBSA membership has never been revoked for any reason.

\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand the BSOAP 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, (as determined by the BSOAP) may result in failure to be accredited, forfeiture of the application fees, 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.

\_\_\_\_ The audit and any Accreditation achieved as a result are application to the location listed on this application, as well as all other physical location which the organization uses to operate all or any parts of its business.

\_\_\_\_ Organization may not apply any accreditation achieved through this audit or for any other non-organization related operations or locations owned by the organization.

\_\_\_\_ In the event of multiple operation centers, the auditor, with the assistance of PBSA Staff, will determine whether to audit a single or multiple locations. The applicant is responsible for coordinating and locating all personnel and material needed to conduct a "virtual visit(s)" at the location(s) determined.

\_\_\_\_ I understand that our firm must reapply for accreditation every five (5) years prior to the expiration of the current accreditation period, as well as complete the Interim Surveillance Audits in the 3rd 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, contractors and/or Auditor harmless from any claim of damage or loss as a result of our organization'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 organization workers are eligible to work in their respective jurisdictions and we have all the necessary documentation to confirm this fact.

\_\_\_\_ I understand that random unannounced audits are part of the BSOAP. 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 organization 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 from the email/mail timestamp of the decision notification from PBSA to submit to the BSCC Appeal Panel in writing any protest of the results of the audit. Appeals may also be submitted to PBSA at the address provided on this application. I understand that the dispute should clearly state the perceived reason of the failure to achieve accreditation 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 organization, including all of its workers 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 the BSCC in writing in accordance with the Policies and Procedures. Such changes may include changes in ownership, location move, or any information provided in this application.

\_\_\_\_ I agree that if the accreditation for which this organization is seeking is granted through PBSA and if we then elect to discontinue any or all accreditation operations or endorsements, we must notify PBSA within 30 days of said status change.

\_\_\_\_ I hereby agree to indemnify and hold auditor, as well as its organization workers, 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 organization premises to the extent injury or damage is directly caused by the acts or omissions of organization, its personnel or agents, and organization 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 organization. I understand that if any of our organization representatives willfully deceive PBSA or an accreditation Auditor, my organization could be immediately removed from PBSA and/or our accreditation revoked.

SAMPLE



**Certifications: Has the Applicant Organization or any owner or principal/officer with decision-making authority:**

1. Been convicted, whether at trial or by plea, by a court or general court martial of any crime at any time? Yes\_\_\_No\_\_\_
2. Been subject to a civil judgment for fraud, misrepresentation, unfair competition, or similar tort, within the last 7 years? Yes\_\_\_No\_\_\_
3. Had a professional membership, license or certification denied, suspended or revoked (other than a lack of minimum qualification or failure of examination)? Yes\_\_\_No\_\_\_
4. Been censured or disciplined by any professional body or organization? Yes\_\_\_No\_\_\_
5. Presently debarred, suspended, proposed for disbarment, or declared ineligible for the award of any contract by any federal, state, or governmental agency? Yes\_\_\_No\_\_\_
6. Presently charged with any crime or subject to a civil complaint for fraud, misrepresentation, unfair competition, or similar tort? Yes\_\_\_No\_\_\_

If you answered YES to any of the above and believe circumstances exist which warrant special considerations by the 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 offence, time that has passed since the offence occurred, nature of accreditation and evidence of rehabilitation.

By signing below, 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 BSOAP and agree to abide by the BSOAP Accredited Organization Code of Conduct.

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

Full Name of Person Authorized to Make this Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Person Authorized to Make this Application: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## **BSOAP ACCREDITED ORGANIZATION CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **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 Organization Accreditation Program advances professionalism in the 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 (BSCC). The BSCC 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 BSOAP Accredited Organization Code of Conduct “the Accredited Organization Code”) serves as a code of conduct for organization workers of Accredited Organizations of the BSOAP.

Violations of the Accredited Organization Code may result in sanctions imposed under the policies and procedures as defined by the BSCC. The principles and requirements that comprise the Accredited Organization Code are based upon and are designed to ensure full conformity by BSOAP Accredited Organizations and their organization workers with the Accredited Organization Code. At the same time, the Accredited Organization 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 Organization Code and procedures are designed to strike the proper balance between ensuring full conformity with an Organization’s obligations and ensuring the integrity and efficacy of the Accredited Organization Code on one hand, and protecting Organizations, 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 Organizations and their Organization workers shall perform professional duties in accordance with the law, the highest moral principles and the BSOAP 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 Organization and their Organization workers 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 the practice of filing knowingly false or frivolous complaints or accusations against other Organizations, which if found to be the case, may result in loss of Accredited status.

## **CODE**

**3. All Accredited Organizations and their Organization workers 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 Organization's competence nor shall competence be claimed when not possessed.

## **CODE**

**4. All Accredited Organizations and their Organization workers 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 third 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 Organizations and their Organization workers shall avoid injuring the professional reputation or practice of colleagues, clients, or employers. However, nothing in this code limits an Organization 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 Organization of a third person unless the principal consents after full disclosure of all the facts. This confidentiality continues after the business relationship between the Organization and his principal has terminated.

5.2 Individuals are not bound by the confidential disclosures made of acts or omissions, which constitute a violation of the law unless they have agreed to do so.

5.3 Understand the 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, Organization'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 organization 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.

**Applicant:** The organization that is applying for accreditation.

**U.S. Employment Screening Accreditation:** Organizations providing services under the BSOAP United States Employment Screening Standard can apply for accreditation regardless of physical operating location(s). The organization will be subject to the same audit expectations as outlines in the BSOAP Policies and Procedures. For additional details, please see the Physical Location of Organization Applying for Accreditation Opinion Letter at [www.thepbsa.org](http://www.thepbsa.org)

**General Accreditation:** The General Background Screening Accreditation program is the first expansion program beyond the existing US Employment Screening Accreditation program. It is meant to meet the needs of background screeners who deliver services outside the U.S. The General program is based on the Fair Information Privacy Principles (FIPPs), the Organisation for Economic Co-operations and Development (OECD) Privacy Principles, and APEC Privacy Framework, which endorsed the Cross-Border Privacy Rules (CBPR) System. Organizations providing services under the BSOAP General Standard can apply for accreditation regardless of physical operating location(s).

**Organization or Organizations:** The entity seeking or having received accreditation from BSCC.

**Organization Code:** BSOAP Accreditation Organization Code of Conduct by which all accredited organizations must abide.

**Board:** PBSA Board of Directors

**BSOAP:** Background Screening Organization Accreditation Program

**Background Screening Credentialing Council:** is 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 which is the governing body for the accreditation program.

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

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

**Outsourced:** Product 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 organization's

own workers. Example – an employment verification completed in its entirety by an outside supplier and then provided to the organization for inclusion in the background report is “outsourced.” Information provided by a field researcher that will be reviewed and potentially modified by the organization before inclusion in a background report is not “outsourced”; it is rather information provided by the data furnisher.

**Operations:** Any location that performs functions that would be required to comply with the requirements as listed in the Accreditation Standard(s).

**Staff:** PBSA Staff, management company and contracted partners.

**Standard:** BSOAP Accreditation Standard.

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