

EX OFFENDER APPLICATION POLICY

Division: Student Affairs

Policy Statement

Terra State Community College (TSCC) maintains a high standard of conduct for all members of its College community, including students. In order to promote the safety and well-being of the TSCC community, all applicants are required to disclose any prior or current felony convictions, as well as any prior convictions involving but not limited to all violence charges, sex offenses, drug abuse or trafficking, harm to others, domestic violence, or the use of weapons, regardless of jurisdiction (whether within the United States or internationally), at the time of application.

The College reserves the right to evaluate the nature and circumstances of such criminal convictions in determining an applicant's eligibility for admission. Based on this evaluation, the College may take one of the following actions: admit the applicant, admit with restrictions, defer the application, or deny admission.

Terra State Community College is dedicated to maintaining a safe and secure campus environment for all students, staff, faculty, and visitors. The purpose of the Ex-Offender Admissions Policy is to ensure that individuals with prior or current felony convictions are afforded an equal opportunity to pursue a college education, while balancing the College's responsibility to safeguard the campus community.

Policy Details

Students applying to the College, as well as continuing students, are required to self-report (including plea bargains) who have been charged or convicted, have pled guilty to any level felonies and misdemeanor crime(s) of violence including but not limited to, sexual offenses such as assault, rape or any violent crimes, domestic violence, weapons, or the use, possession, sale transportation or distribution of a controlled substance. The College may deny continued or initial enrollment based upon the nature and circumstances of the crime or other restrictions based on the student code of conduct. Terra State Student Code of Conduct can be found at [Student Code of Conduct](#)

All felony applications are subject to a mandatory BCI/FBI background check, and an interview with the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT). The Behavioral Intervention Team may vote on whether an interview with the BIT Team is necessary or deny acceptance based on the totality of the circumstances surrounding the felony conviction and seriousness of prior convictions and/or terms of probation.

Procedures

Application Review Process

(A) Students who disclose a felony conviction on their College application will be referred for review by the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) Chair. The BIT Chair will then notify the Admissions team through the application system and via email regarding the requirement for a Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) background check.

A BCI/FBI background check is mandatory for all applicants with felony convictions and must be conducted through Terra State Community College. No background checks conducted outside of the College will be accepted. In addition to the background check, an interview with the BIT Team will be required.

This policy also applies to any applicant who is found to have falsified their application. If it is determined that an applicant has provided false or misleading information regarding their criminal history, they will be required to undergo a BCI/FBI background check and interview with the BIT Team, consistent with the process outlined above.

(B) In the event that a student is found to be enrolled in classes and is later determined to have a felony conviction or falsified their application, a hold will be placed on their account. The student will be required to attend a mandatory meeting with the BIT Team and must undergo a BCI/FBI background check before being allowed to continue attending classes.

Upon completion of these requirements, the BIT Team may allow the student to continue taking courses or may deny the student admission for the following term, depending on the findings of the review. Applicants may also face consequences through the student code of conduct or removal of taking courses on TSCC campus

(C) Background checks may be purchased through the Cashier's Office and will be conducted by Campus Safety and Security. Applicants are required to pay all costs associated with the background check at the time of purchase; there is no option for deferred payment. The student is also responsible for scheduling an appointment directly with Campus Safety and Security.

If the applicant is under the age of 18, a legal guardian or parent must be present at the time the background check is performed.

Students required to submit a background check will have their application status remain as "pending" until the background check results have been received and approval from the BIT Chair has been granted.

(D) If an applicant indicates that they accidentally selected "yes" regarding a felony conviction on their application or if they have had prior records expunged, the applicant will still be required to complete a Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) background check, as well as attend an interview with the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT), before they can be accepted to Terra State Community College and enroll in classes

(E) Additionally, if a student is currently on probation or parole, they may be subject to denial of admission if the terms of their probation or parole would prevent them from successfully completing their program. Students with current felony charges undergoing the court process may also be denied admission based on the seriousness of the crime and/or the potential for jail or prison time.

Admission to the College and course registration will not take place until the background check has been completed and the applicant has attended an interview with the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT).

(F) If an applicant previously applied and disclosed a felony conviction, but did not complete the application process, the applicant shall not be considered for admission to Terra State Community College until such time as the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) background checks are completed and an interview with the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) has been conducted.

(G) If an applicant previously applied, underwent the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) background checks, and participated in an interview with the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT),

but did not attend classes, and more than one year has passed since the completion of those requirements, the applicant will be required to repeat the background check process. Background checks are valid for a period of one year, and any application submitted after this period will require updated background checks and a new interview with the BIT

(H) The Chair of the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) and up to three committee members will conduct the interview with the applicant. Each member will have one vote, and a simple majority vote is required to determine the outcome of the applicant's admission. The results of the vote will be shared with the Admissions Specialist or Advisor, who will then contact the student to inform them of the final decision.

If the decision is made to deny admission, the student will receive a denial letter by mail, which will include the BIT's rationale for the denial. Denials are based on factors including the seriousness of the felony, the year of the felony, the length of any jail or prison sentence, and the terms of any probation.

(I) Final determinations regarding the enrollment of students with criminal backgrounds and the safety and security of the College shall rest with the Chair of the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) and the BIT members. The Dean of Enrollment Services may request a meeting with the BIT Chair and BIT members to discuss the admission decision of a potential student. If the Dean of Enrollment Services does not concur with the BIT's decision and vote, a brief written rationale for the decision will be provided. This rationale shall be made available to the applicant upon request

Resources

Definitions

Term	Definition
<i>Ex offender</i>	A person who has been charged with a felony conviction and has a criminal record. May have served Jail/Prison time.
<i>BIT TEAM</i>	Behavioral Intervention Team
<i>BCI/FBI Background Check</i>	BCI (State) and FBI (Federal) comprehensive criminal record check against state's and FBI's national database

Approval History

Date	Policy/Procedure or Entire Document	Notes (Types of Actions)	**Approved by
9/9/2013	Effective	New	Elizabeth Sable
2017	Policy	Updated	Elizabeth Sable / Jeffery Huffman
2/19/2021	Entire Document	Updated, Edited and Revised	Director of Campus Safety & Security
1/19/2023	Policy	Approved by CASA with Edits	William Taylor CASA Co-Chair

Ex Offender Application Policy***Division: Student Affairs***

1/3/2024	Policy & Procedure	Reviewed. No Updates Needed	Director of Campus Safety & Security
4/3/2024	Policy Details	Sentence added regarding misdemeanor crimes	Director of Campus Safety & Security
1/31/2025	Policy/ Procedure Details	Re-structured sentencing, updated application review process	Director of Campus Safety & Security

**Full name of CASA Committee Chair, signatory, or designee

Effective Date: 1/19/23

Next Review Date: 1/19/26