

**CRIMINAL OFFENDER RECORD INFORMATION (CORI)
and
SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY INFORMATION (SORI)
POLICY**

INTENT:

Holyoke Community College recognizes the need to ensure a safe environment for those we serve. As one means of providing a safe and credible environment, the College has implemented a Criminal Offender Records Information and Sex Offender Registry Information check policy which is reviewed on an annual basis.

POLICY STATEMENT:

People who provide service and/or support to any state program or facility and whose duties entail the potential for unsupervised contact with persons from a vulnerable population will undergo CORI and SORI checks. Massachusetts law, as well as regulations promulgated by the Commonwealth Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) states that individuals convicted of certain crimes pose an unacceptable risk to vulnerable populations (i.e. underage, elderly, disabled or persons receiving care due to illness) and are therefore ineligible to provide services or support in such state programs or facilities.

POLICY PURPOSE:

Standardized procedures for the review of criminal and sex offender records help ensure that candidates under consideration are appropriate for serving in their positions. The Criminal History Systems Board has authorized Holyoke Community College to receive criminal record information regarding those individuals who need CORI clearance to work and/or provide voluntary services in educational worksites.

SCOPE:

The CORI as required by law and SORI checks apply to employees, volunteers, and/or trainees/students who provide service or support to any state program or facility in either a paid or unpaid capacity whose services entail the potential for unsupervised contact with vulnerable populations. Further, many private facilities are also requiring employees, volunteers, and trainees/students to undergo CORI checks in order to be eligible for placements.

PROCEDURE:

Prior to being placed or accepted into certain programs in which a clinical, field or any other practical experience working with vulnerable populations is a required part of the program, including but not limited to, Nursing, Radiologic Technology or Early Childhood Education, students will be subject to a CORI/SORI check. Furthermore, students in other programs who may have unsupervised contact with persons from vulnerable populations must complete CORI/SORI applications and receive clearance prior to the beginning of their work or service with vulnerable populations. Additionally, candidates for employment, employees, and volunteers who may have unsupervised contact with persons from vulnerable populations must complete CORI/SORI applications and receive clearance prior to the beginning of their work at the College or their work with vulnerable populations.

The CORI application is sent to the Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB) and the SORI application is sent to the Sex Offender Registry Board (SORB) which generally respond within four to six weeks. A College CORI/SORI reviewer examines the confidential CORI and SORI records and makes a determination as to the candidate's eligibility based on the standards established by the EOHHS. The candidate is notified of eligibility. A person who is the subject of CORI and SORI checks is entitled to review the information received by the College.

APPEALS PROCESS:

If the individual believes that his or her SORI or SORI report contains an error, the individual should contact the CHSB or the SORB directly. If it is determined that there was an error that was subsequently corrected, the individual should so inform the CORI/SORI reviewer who will repeat the CORI/SORI check.

If the report is correct, the individual may appeal the decision by providing to the College within thirty (30) calendar days, a written statement from a Criminal Justice Official (CJO) stating that the candidate does not pose an unacceptable risk of harm and reasons for that belief. This statement should also include a professional assessment of the individual in question and the risk posed to the general population and/or any specific groups or populations. In addition, the statement must include the CJO's current position and position at the time of supervising the candidate, dates during which the CJO supervised the candidate and all relevant information that may assist the College in considering the candidate's eligibility to interact with vulnerable populations in an unsupervised setting. Upon receipt of this statement from a CJO, the College will reconsider eligibility and will notify the candidate of the decision.