

3. Screening Reports

Seattle Office of Housing
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Review the sources and accuracy of screening report information.

Increase usefulness of screening reports by identifying quality concerns at the time the vendor is selected and training staff on interpretation of reports.

Consider Office of Housing guidelines for housing providers to use when selecting a reporting company.

Questions to consider when selecting a screening company:

- Whether the screening company directly accesses public record information, or whether it relies on databases (whether its own or prepared by other agencies)
- How often the screening company (or owner of the database) updates its databases of public record information.
- What procedures the company uses to ensure the maximum possible accuracy and completeness of the information in its reports.
- What procedures the company uses to ensure compliance with local, state and federal law.

Issues to consider when reviewing the background check:

- Designate staff to review background checks
- Ask the tenant screening company to train the person(s) who will review the background check on how to identify:
 - The charge or type of offense
 - The level of the offense (felony or misdemeanor)
 - Whether there was a conviction, or the case was dismissed

Questions/Next Steps for working group:

- Contact screening companies now, ask these questions
- Develop model RFP, use these questions when contracting
- Could also develop model contract
- Organize meeting with screening companies and housing providers
- Screening companies may have concerns about revealing business practices