

Tips for Better Hiring and Screening as We Transition to a New Normal

As 2020 winds down and the COVID-19 pandemic continues to surge around the world, employers are bracing for ongoing uncertainty in the months and years ahead. Businesses and their employees are being “stress tested” like never before; however, there are background screening strategies that can help ease the tensions and transition your hiring process to the new normal of tomorrow.

First Advantage has performed millions of background checks—between 15,000 and 25,000 daily—throughout this volatile period to help organisations worldwide securely hire, and in many cases rehire, the best talent. Here, we’re sharing background screening tips based on our experience assisting them through these unprecedented times.

The Candidate Experience Matters Now More Than Ever

At a time when an estimated [52.9 million jobs](#) have been lost across the Asia-Pacific region, you might think organisations have their pick of candidates. However, [labour participation rates](#) in the region have fallen, possibly due in part to fears of contracting the virus and other pandemic-related challenges. At best, today’s job market is precarious and unpredictable, and employers wanting to reach top candidates must offer a stand-out candidate experience.

- **One way to do this is to put candidates in control of their background screening process using a [mobile-enabled screening solution](#).** Even more convenient and accessible than traditional online tools, mobile solutions are accessible anytime from literally anywhere via a smartphone or tablet. It’s particularly appealing to Millennial and Gen Z candidates who grew up using mobile devices and together are estimated to [comprise the majority of today’s workforce](#). Likewise, the technology is attractive to global talent with multinational education and professional experience, as they can

easily submit required hiring documents, initiate the screening process and engage with recruiters in real-time via text from anywhere in the world. .

Find Innovative Ways to Efficiently Onboard Large Numbers of Employees

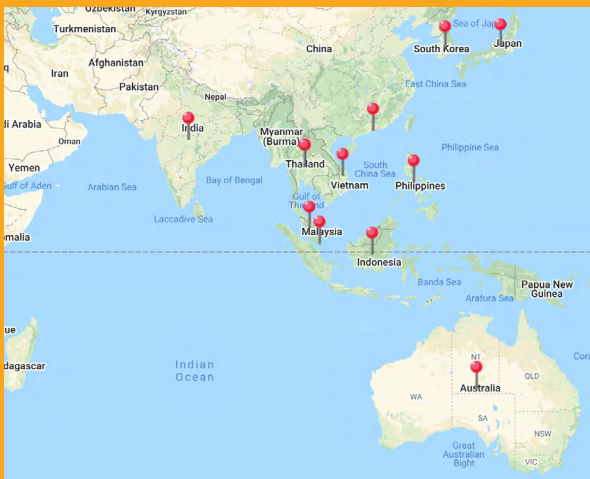
Whether they’re bringing back furloughed workers or ramping up hiring as markets recover, organisations seeking to rebuild their workforce will need strategies to seamlessly hire groups of employees. Law enforcement administrative offices, educational institutions and businesses around the world have been closed on and off throughout the pandemic, creating a backlog of background check requests that may slow down hiring.

- **In these cases, consider creating a background screening contingency plan to minimise delays.** For example, if a background check component is delayed due to the pandemic (or other uncontrollable circumstances such as political instability or natural disasters), conduct an alternate search. Instead of ordering a manual [criminal search](#) within a jurisdiction, perform a database search at the national level or a global terrorist watch list search. In some cases and based upon your legal advisor’s guidance you may consider making a conditional job offer, contingent upon the outcome of the results of a local search when it can be performed.



Use of First Advantage’s mobile application for collecting candidate background screening data increased by 147% in 2019.

As a courtesy to our valued customers, First Advantage offers a global map that highlights regions where organisations can expect COVID-19 screening delays, along with specific insight into the reasons and types of searches affected. [Click here to view the map.](#)



- **Another way to increase hiring efficiency is through the use of [background screening analytics](#).** Based on annual or monthly data derived from an organisation's screening program—things like turnaround time, unable to verify rates, match rates and more—screening providers can offer analytic insights that pinpoint hidden issues and opportunities in the process. For instance, at First Advantage we work with clients to analyse the efficiency of their background check adjudication matrix and make recommendations that may help improve key areas of performance. For other clients, we have analysed their end-to-end onboarding process to determine when candidates are most likely to drop out of the hiring process. Based on our analysis and recommendations, clients can take necessary actions to improve candidate retention and reduce fallout rates.

Expand Background Screening In Two Key Areas: Employee Rescreening and Contingent Workforce Screening

As the pandemic exploded, many organisations were forced to quickly close their doors and shift to teleworking. While a few [high-profile companies](#) have announced plans to implement permanent teleworking, other businesses will return their employees to the office when the timing is right.

- **In both cases, it's important to perform updated background checks on all employees.** Rescreening all employees on a regular basis—or at the very least, before bringing them back into the office—is a precautionary measure to promote a safe, secure workplace, protect your brand and also protect against potential negligent retention claims.
- **Don't forget about contingent workers and contractors—they should be screened too.** A recent Gartner survey revealed that 32 percent of organisations are replacing full-time employees with contingent workers as a cost-saving measure. While contingent labour may not legally be considered "employees," they may nevertheless result in the same liability risk to the organisation, and so from a screening perspective they should be screened at the same level as full-time employees. This strategy will also make it easier to transition contingent workers to employees without having to re-screen as the employment relationship evolves.

As your organisation navigates today's hiring challenges and adjusts to the new future of work, First Advantage is here to help. We offer a vast suite of sophisticated background screening solutions and unmatched global expertise to help you identify and hire the best talent anywhere in the world.

We can help. For more information, contact First Advantage today: