



Minnesota Sheriffs' Association
100 Empire Drive, Suite 222
St. Paul, MN. 55103-1885
651-451-7216

Background Investigations for Public Sector Employers

September 2-3, 2026

8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

(This class will be offered in person only)

This two day class is taught by long time legal counsel and nationally recognized public employment law attorney Rick Hodsdon. Rick covers all of the danger points and provides practical techniques and sources for background materials from a person who himself has personally conducted several dozen such investigations. Rick has spent all of his professional life representing and defending state and local officials, conducting criminal prosecutions, training and advising criminal justice and government officials.

Course Description

One of the most perilous aspects for a public sector employer is the vetting and backgrounds of potential employees. An agency that does not properly background its prospective employees prior to employment faces serious liability under theories of negligent hiring and deliberate indifference to the risk of harm to **third parties**. An agency that conducts such investigations, but does it poorly still faces liability risk to third parties but adds a major risk of suit and human rights complaints from the unsuccessful candidate. If the agency can walk that tight rope there remains the issue of how to get the needed information in a world that increasingly seems unwilling or unable to provide it.

In Day One we discuss the legal and liability issues inherent to this subject, including negligent hiring, discrimination issues under state and federal law, Minnesota statutes and related topics. Day Two focuses on use of the background questionnaire, releases and authorizations, writing the report and using the data practices act and other sources to conduct a sound and legally defensible background process. It will also discuss and provide suggestions for the agency that is assigned the increasingly common task of conducting record checks for non-law enforcement personnel in government.

This course is designed for any person who hires, manages, or supports law enforcement personnel, whether, full-time, part-time or volunteer. This class is very appropriate for LE, HR, County Administration, or County Attorneys.

By the time you are done with this course you will have outlines, forms, samples and a deep understanding of the do's and don'ts of background investigations.

*If you have questions or need further information please contact:
Matt Luitjens, Training Coordinator - mluitjens@mnsheriffs.org*



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Cost: \$300 per person (Lunch is provided)

Location: Sourcewell – 202 12th St. NE, Staples, MN 56479

P.O.S.T. Credits: 16

Registration: Register for this training [HERE](#) (or visit the MSA Website and navigate to Trainings → Legal Issues for Public Agencies)



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