

April 28, 2008

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Employees of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service

SUBJECT: Background checks on all employees administratively tied to Texas AgriLife Extension Service

The safety of our employees and those they serve is of utmost concern to the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. One important precaution that we have taken is conducting background checks on new Extension employees and volunteers.

In the past, applicants for positions that were deemed “security sensitive” were routinely screened. “Security sensitive” positions included those participating in activities involving youth, handling agency funds, or accessing information such as social security numbers. Since March 2000, all new county agents have undergone pre-employment background checks. In September 2006, the screening was expanded to include all incoming Extension employees. Furthermore, all 4-H volunteers are subject to a more rigorous criminal history check using a national database/registry.

After careful consideration, I have decided to further expand our screening efforts to cover all current Extension employees. Effective immediately, all employees who are administratively tied to the Texas AgriLife Extension Service will be checked for criminal history as a condition of continued employment. This condition of employment does not apply to personnel who are administratively tied to Texas A&M University, Texas AgriLife Research, or another entity; however, it is my hope that you would consent to the background check if your salary includes any Extension funding. Screenings will be conducted by a third-party vendor and the results will be confidentially received by the office of the Assistant Director for Human Resources, Mr. Steve Schulze.

In the event of a finding that requires further attention, a confidential, prescribed process will be followed by certain Human Resources staff to confer with the employee. An HR confirmation of findings that may be grounds for an adverse employment action will be reported only to me, and I will make the decision on any subsequent work restrictions or continued employment.

My leadership team has already submitted to a background check. However, conducting checks on all Extension employees will extend well into the summer. You will not receive a personal notice about the completion of your background check, but I will send a general message to inform all personnel when we have completed this new security measure agency-wide.

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Page 2 Cont'd—Background checks

This decision was not made lightly and is not a response to any specific concerns regarding our employees. Instead, it builds on our history of respect for employees and constituents by taking another step to ensure a safe environment. I ask that you join me in embracing this action by submitting the attached consent form by May 9, 2008.

Simply sign the completed form and return it by May 9 to the AgriLife Human Resources Office, either by e-mail to [HRBackground@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:HRBackground@ag.tamu.edu), fax to 979-458-1046, or U.S. mail to 2162 TAMU, College Station TX 77843-2162. **Again, as a condition of employment, all employees administratively tied to the Texas AgriLife Extension Service must complete and submit this form.** For additional information regarding these checks, go to <http://aghr.tamu.edu/employ-sssp.htm>

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward G. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "E".

Edward G. Smith  
Director