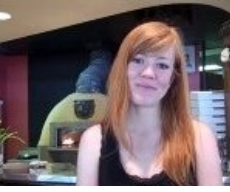


## EMPLOYERS AND POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES



Most people realize that it is hard to get a job in this day and age, especially as the economy is still in a recovery process and is not nearly back to what it was prior to the Great Recession, which began in 2007 and ended in 2009. Although the recession ended in 2009, things only seemed to get worse for the United States, as employment numbers dropped and severe job cuts were made. While it is generally hard to find a job at this very moment, it is even harder for those who have a blemish on their past to find employment. A minor mistake made in the past is often keeping tons of people from finding the employment they need to make a living. Background checks have been used for quite some time now and most of the employers in the United States conduct these criminal background checks to find out more about their potential employees. A recent study from the National Consumer Law Center showed that over 90 percent of the companies in the United States actually conduct these types of checks. Along with the check of criminal records, a lot of the businesses often look into other private records, which would include credit reports and even driving records. One background check firm, the Employment Screening Resources, says that the approach is generally that people should be able to find jobs but not all jobs are appropriate for certain people, more specifically those who have criminal pasts. If businesses do not check out employees with a criminal past who go on to commit a crime while working for them, they could end up in some trouble too. There are not many companies that want to deal with such embarrassment of having to find out that one of their employees chose to lie when they submitted their resume, much like what happened to the CEO of Yahoo, Scott Thompson. Many consumer advocates, however, are saying that while background checks should be used, many employers have just become overly cautious, to the point where it crosses over to downright nosy territory. Some companies have too many demands when it comes to their hiring process. For example, some companies expect applicants to provide them with the passwords and login information to their social media pages, which would generally include Twitter and Facebook. In several states, this act has been prohibited and many are working to have it prohibited in all states in America over time. Many lawmakers also believe that employers are using these background checks in other ways, basically screening out workers of certain categories, which leads to general discrimination. Because of this, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission decided to revise its guidelines, which is something it had not done in a while. The guidelines change the way that criminal background checks can be used and conducted.

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