

CITY OF COOS BAY CITY COUNCIL

Agenda Staff Report

MEETING DATE	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER
May 5, 2026	4.c

TO: Mayor Benetti, Council President DiNovo, and City Councilors

FROM: Tom Lindahl, Police Captain

THROUGH: Nichole Rutherford, City Manager

ISSUE: Public Hearing to Consider Enacting an Ordinance Establishing Authority for Performance of Background Checks by Coos Bay Police Department

SUMMARY:

Authority for the Police Department to conduct pre-employment criminal history background checks on City employee & volunteer applicants, tow truck drivers, certain nonprofit organizations serving youth, and liquor license applicants is required through enacting an ordinance designating that authority.

Staff recommends that the Council find that immediate enactment of this ordinance is necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety. Immediate implementation will support the timely hiring and onboarding of public safety personnel, permitting staff, and other essential employees, and will ensure that appropriate criminal history screening procedures are in place without delay.

ACTION REQUESTED:

If it pleases the Council, enact an ordinance allowing the Police Department to conduct pre-employment criminal history background checks on prospective city employee applicants and volunteers.

BACKGROUND:

In April 2026, it was brought to the Police Department's attention that authority for the Police Department to conduct criminal history background checks on new employee & volunteer applicants, tow truck drivers, certain nonprofit organizations serving youth, and liquor license applicants needs to be granted through a Council-enacted ordinance. These rules are set forth by the Oregon State Police Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS), which is the statewide system used by the Police Department to access criminal history information. Coos Bay Police Department has an agreement with LEDS that requires us to comply with their rules and policies to access this information through their system, which is subject to audit.

For the police department to conduct these background checks, which are vital to maintaining the highest degree of public trust and confidence in our employee vetting, an ordinance has been drafted and is before the Council for review and enactment.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

There are no new budget implications. This function is a task of the Police Department handled by staff.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- _____ Ordinance for Criminal History Checks.pdf

