



## **NEAMA Hiring Policy**

**NEAMA™ (Nonprofit Education and Advocacy for the Movement Arts™)** “the Organization”, is committed to ensuring that the individuals representing our mission reflect our values, and are a safe addition to our community and workplace.

This document, NEAMA™ Hiring and Engagement Principles and Procedures, outlines our approach to hiring and engaging potential candidates into our team of employees, independent contractors and volunteers. NEAMA aims to show consistency, fairness and uniformity in the evaluation and final decision making process when we choose to bring individuals into our internal working environment.

### **Policy Scope**

The Hiring policy applies to any candidate volunteer, independent contractor, board member, and/or employee of the Organization.

### **Policy Employment**

1. Background screenings are conducted for every incoming candidate, and repeated at least every two years;
2. Reference checks are conducted for members with whom we have no prior professional relationship.

### **Hiring and Engagement Philosophy**

At NEAMA, we onboard candidates who confidently hold and practice the same core values we believe in.

NEAMA doesn't just accept differences; it celebrates and embraces them as essential to our community and culture. Important to our hiring and engagement process is working with people with different lived experiences, which leads to diversity of insight and perspectives. We welcome Religious diversity, racial diversity, gender diversity, as well as diversity in thought and ideas.

NEAMA identifies as an **equal opportunity employer (EEO)**, and commits to not discriminating against employees and volunteers based on their race, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex, religion, national, social or ethnic origin, age, physical, mental or sensory disability, HIV Status, and/or expression, marital, civil union or domestic partnership status, medical/health choices, family or parental status, socioeconomic class, family medical history or genetic information. It also commits to providing employees and volunteers with a work environment free of discrimination and harassment. NEAMA recognizes that identifying as an EEO goes beyond a title; the values promised must be reflected in our hiring practices, which the remainder of the policy is meant to demonstrate.

NEAMA also practices **second chance hiring**, meaning that the Organization is open to hiring candidates with a criminal background. We believe that this practice, among others, is an important step to reducing recidivism in America and pushing against systemic barriers to entry that prevent formerly incarcerated individuals from reintegrating into society. Given that the activities at NEAMA centers the safety and wellbeing of kids, however, the Organization does not onboard candidates with past convictions tied to violent crime, neglect, or abuse of any form correlated with laws protecting felons. Otherwise, the eligibility of each candidate will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the following:

- the nature and seriousness of the offense/crime;
- the time that has passed since the criminal offense or completion of the sentence;
- the nature of the job: criminal convictions unrelated to the position will not be seen as a deterrent;
- explanation from the candidate about their conviction and/or recovery.

When faced with employment decisions related to candidates with a criminal background, NEAMA will proceed in line with guidelines set by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Hiring decisions at the Organization are, as much as possible, conducted:

- In a manner that is objective, impartial and free of personal bias;
- In a manner that respects the candidate's time and confidentiality
- In a manner that at every step asks consent to obtain personal information about the candidate
- In a manner that opts for frequent and open communication with candidates;
- In a manner that encourages the recruitment of staff with disabilities. NEAMA will make reasonable adjustments to all stages of the recruitment process and as required in order for a successful candidate with a disability to undertake the post;
- Employing the principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment.

## **Hiring Process**

During NEAMA's launch, for some members we did not perform application reviews and conduct an intake meeting, or contact reference checks on certain members we already had a long standing professional relationship with. Any new member that we do not have a professional history with of two or more years require two or more reference checks during the onboarding evaluation process.

### **Application Review and Intake meeting**

An intake meeting is conducted when NEAMA accepts applicants for a given position, exclusively with candidates that meet our experience requirements. If needed, NEAMA will review CV, Identifying information, basic questions surrounding required experience for the role. We must also verify the eligibility to work legally in the United States.

### **Reference Checks**

When the Organization chooses to conduct a reference check, NEAMA management contacts the job applicant's colleges, previous employers and personal references to discover more about their background and qualifications.

1. Candidates will be sent the Organization's Reference Check Intake and Authorization which asks them to:
  - a. Provide three professional references from past or current employers.
2. Candidates will sign a Statement of Reference Check Authorization consenting to the Organization reaching out to the given references. NEAMA sends the following to candidates:
  - Email containing Service Provider Agreement to sign;
  - Background check link to fill out their info and sign off on the process; and
  - Request for a list of past references.
3. The Organization will contact the listed referees and document their interview process.

The Organization will then decide whether any information raised in the reference is of concern and, if so, take further steps to inquire. We do reserve the right to not hire or engage a candidate after a fair evaluation process if we feel that any of the information we gathered does not align with the core values of our mission.

### **3. Criminal Background Checks**

All members of NEAMA must undergo a criminal background check. This section outlines our hiring and background check process.



Background checks help us:

- Get insight into candidates' background.
- Ensure we hire reliable members.
- Verify candidates' information for truthfulness and accuracy.
- Screen candidates convicted of serious criminal behavior that may be of concern, especially related to minors.

When NEAMA conducts a criminal background check, the Organization makes use of the criminal background checking service Checkr.

If there is a mistake in the criminal background check, candidates are given a chance to point them out. Questions about criminal background history and the criminal background check will be conducted after a conditional job offer.

If at any point in the verification, through references or criminal background checks, negative information surfaces, NEAMA will offer the candidate an opportunity to explain why the information should not impact the worker or volunteer's ability to do the job. In these instances, a final decision will be made by the Board of Directors, specifically the Executive Team.

Once onboarded, NEAMA members are asked to sign a Non Disclosure Agreement. This in order to protect confidential information that may be shared about survivors or by survivors internally, protect the ideas of survivors who are seeking a confidential space to present their project ideas, and protect confidential business information ("intellectual property") and trade secrets shared regarding C.A.R.E.S. and the Board of Directors - with which Allies may intersect that should not be public knowledge. NDAs do not prevent someone who would like to speak out about ethical concerns and problems described in our Whistleblower Policy to speak out.

## Resources

- [Arrest and Conviction Records: Resources for Job Seekers, Workers and Employers](#)
- [Enforcement Guidance on the Consideration of Arrest and Conviction Records in Employment Decisions under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act](#)
- [What Is the Difference Between a Reference Check and Employment Verification?](#)
- [The Best Background Check Services for 2022](#)
- [Why EEO statements fall short](#)
- [What is Included in a Reference Check for Employment](#)