

Are there risks associated with real-time verifications?



We are often asked for real-time information when conducting background checks for clients, but with the rise of Artificial Intelligence and new global legislation pertaining to this, it is essential that companies understand the risks they face with this information.

We all know that an effective employee screening programme is essential to minimising risk in an organisation. Additionally, such policies need to be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are legally compliant while addressing the risk and remaining up to date on the latest legislature.

Real-time Verifications or instant checks are often the most desirable checks because employers want information immediately, so that they can make an informed hiring decision quickly.

However, the new AI laws and the various global laws regarding the protection of personal information must be considered.

In South Africa, the most common real-time checks are:

- Credit checks
- Pep and sanctions check
- ID verification
- Company credit check • FAIS Comprehensive
- SAFPS (South African Fraud Prevention Services)
- Court cases
- Directorship search (CIPC)

- Person contact trace
- Photo-enhanced ID verification and contact trace
- Trust Information search
- Marital status

The cornerstone of obtaining this information is to ensure that the permission of the candidate has been correctly and fully obtained, with the purpose of the check in question properly outlined. Ethical best practices are crucial in our data-driven world, especially if we consider the vast and uncharted potential that comes with utilising AI.

Employers should also ensure that the employee screening company they are making use of, is not only legally compliant but also provides trustworthy data. This is a key factor in maintaining the integrity of your screening process.

The possibility of legal risk is high unless your organisation has partnered with a reputable, and fully compliant employee screening company. This company also needs to be up to date on the ever-changing legal landscape and how it adapts its laws to include oversight for the use of AI.

We have put together an [article](#) of what to look for when hiring an employee screening company to ensure your company receives the best results whilst also avoiding the most risk.