Screening for Insider Threats in US Law Enforcement: A National Sample of Department Policies and Practices Plain Language

Summary

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Plain Language Summary

July 2024

PROJECT OVERVIEW
For this project, we conducted multi-pronged formative research on insider threats in U.S. law enforcement. Our main objective was to better understand current policies and procedures to screen for and identify insider threats in the hiring process and among active officers.

KEY TAKEAWAYS
Archival Analysis
1. Agency-level hiring and screening criteria is often not made accessible to potential recruits or is incomplete on the agency’s website.
2. Agency-level transparency and rigor around hiring and screening criteria varies.
Survey Analysis
3. There is substantial variation in recruitment and hiring processes across agencies.
4. There is substantial variation in protective measures and proactive policies across agencies.
5. There is less variation in stated adherence to policies for personnel across agencies.
6. Variation in grounds for termination across agencies depends on offense severity.
7. There is less variation in perceived risks and concerns for insider threats across agencies.
8. Municipal police departments and sheriff’s offices differ on some hiring and screening processes and procedures, but not others.

METHODOLOGY
Findings presented come from 730 agency websites and 532 surveys from agencies. More information on the project, including the methodology, findings, and related deliverables can be found here.


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