

# Veterinary Medicine: FINGERPRINTING CONCERNS

Minn. Stat. § 214.075 requires a fingerprint-based criminal background check to obtain a Veterinary Medicine license. To fulfill this requirement, the applicant must provide a set of high quality fingerprints to the Criminal Background Check Program for the Board. These prints are transmitted to the MN Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) and the FBI.

Please **DO NOT** send in a fingerprint card or come in for a fingerprinting appointment until you have **FIRST** paid your full application fee and submitted a complete application (online or via paper) to the MN Board of Veterinary Medicine.

Fingerprint cards mailed in before you submit those items to the Board will be returned, causing delay.

**Some aspects of working in veterinary medicine can cause your fingerprints to be rejected by the FBI as “unclassifiable” and therefore not usable for comparison!!!**

## Why Is This Important To Me?

Most criminal history results are received within 2-3 weeks. When the FBI rejects your fingerprints, you have to start the background check **over again** by providing **new fingerprints**. 2-3 weeks easily becomes 4-6 weeks, 6-8 weeks, or more!

## Why Does This Happen In Veterinary Medicine?

- Veterinary Medicine Workers: 1) use their hands all day long; and  
2) wash/disinfect their hands repeatedly throughout the day

These factors can leave some Veterinary Medicine workers with dry skin and fingertip ridges that are “worn down.”

**To minimize delays caused by poor quality fingerprints, you can do the following:**

### 1. LOTION

The best thing you can do to avoid having your fingerprints rejected is to **moisturize!** Start using lotion on your fingertips at least twice daily for several days before fingerprints are taken. This improves fingerprint quality by reducing dryness and helping skin ridges to heal.

### 2. LIVESCAN

If possible, try to find a law enforcement agency that uses LiveScan (digital) fingerprint technology. Ink fingerprints are legally acceptable, but digital equipment produces better images. Prints must be taken **either** at the MN Board of Veterinary Medicine’s Criminal Background Check Program office **or** by an employee of a law enforcement agency. (No private vendors.) The police agency does **not** need to digitally transmit your prints. They merely need to scan your fingerprints and print out a hardcopy fingerprint card that you mail in. There are many police agencies to try: City Police, County Sheriffs, State Crime Agencies, State Patrol, Federal Law Enforcement, and even licensed campus police. You can also try police in other cities or states convenient to you, even if you’re just home visiting for a few days!

### 3. “LIFT LESS”

Lifting weights is very hard on fingertips—especially free weights like dumbbells. At the end of each repetition, the weight in motion is stopped by your fingertips squeezing more tightly against the moving weight. Even with very light weights, this has the effect of literally “scraping” the weight against the ridges of your fingertips. This causes breaks, tears, and overall wearing down of the skin ridges that are essential for high quality fingerprints. To maximize fingerprint quality, avoid using weights for several days before your fingerprints are taken. (Go Cardio!) In addition, avoid other activities that are hard on fingertips, such as rock climbing, bleach and chemical cleaners, and even chlorine from swimming pools!

Please email or call if you have any other questions about fingerprinting or the background check process overall.



These are ink fingerprints from a person who lifts weights 2-3 time/week.

**MN Health Licensing Boards  
Criminal Background Check Program**  
651-201-2822  
[cbc.staff@state.mn.us](mailto:cbc.staff@state.mn.us)



This is a LiveScan fingerprint from a person who moisturized & avoided “hard” activity for 5 days.

## Fingerprint Ridgeline Improvement Over Time With Regular Lotion & Reducing Activities That Are Hard On Fingertips:

