

## Best Practices in CCDF Comprehensive Child Care Background Checks

A primary objective of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 was to increase the health and safety protections for children in care. The law and regulations require state, territory and tribal Lead Agencies to conduct comprehensive child care background checks for child care staff members and prospective staff members.

While there have been challenges in implementing interstate checks, which include: Interstate criminal history checks, interstate sex offender registry checks, and interstate child abuse and neglect registry checks, many Lead Agencies have created websites and/or have developed technological solutions to help streamline the process. Some examples will be highlighted in this brief.

### Utah

Utah's Child Care Licensing website is comprehensive, informative and includes easy to understand instructions on how an individual, either in-state or out of state, can request background checks. In addition, Utah's website clearly outlines each background check component, the disqualifying crimes, as well as how to appeal the disqualifying decision of a background check.

Utah is one of the first states to implement a portable background check card. A background check card is issued when a background check is passed for the individual. A covered individual can use their current background check card to work or volunteer at any child care facility in Utah. Providers must associate covered individuals with their facility. Utah requires that background checks are completed annually.

### Ohio

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services website includes information, graphics, and weblinks for information regarding:

- Background check process which includes a graphic showing the steps to complete a background check;
- Background Check Instructions for Webcheck which outlines the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) and FBI reason codes that should be selected for fingerprints;
- Background Check Process for licensed, certified, and approved child care applicants, providers, and programs. This document outlines the background, update, actions, process (including appeals process), frequently asked questions, and helpful tips; and
- Prohibitive convictions which lists the disqualifying convictions and rehabilitation standards.

## Georgia

In addition to creating a background checks [website](#) which describes the background check requirements, Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning Bright from the Start website also has a [link](#) to out of state contacts. The out of state contacts list is maintained by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning and has a dropdown menu for each state with the contact information, instructions, and fee information.

The 2015 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly passed House Bill 401 (HB 401). HB 401 established a new entity called a 'Support Center'.

A Support Center is a business that provides potential employees for licensed child care programs and receives no children for care. A few examples of a Support Center are a temporary staffing agency, a university, or an independent contractor. A Support Center must register with Bright from the Start in order to submit the required records check applications for staff or students affiliated with the Support Center who may be placed in a licensed child care program.

## Florida

Florida's Department of Children and Families is one of seven state agencies that use the statewide screening database, "The Clearinghouse". The Clearinghouse provides a single data source administered by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) for background screening results for persons screened for employment or licensure that provide services to children, the elderly and disabled individuals. The Clearinghouse allows the results of criminal history checks to be shared among specific agencies when a person has applied to volunteer, be employed, be licensed (including foster parents), or enter into a contract that requires a state and national fingerprint-based criminal history check. The Clearinghouse provides numerous benefits to providers, including reduced costs and more up to date information. The Clearinghouse allows the results of criminal history checks to be shared among specified state agencies, thereby reducing duplicative screenings for individuals requiring screening across multiple state agencies.

The [website](#) that describes the Clearinghouse also includes links to their training page, application request form, and instructions/guides to utilize the Clearinghouse.

## North Carolina

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services [website](#) on Child Care Criminal Background Checks provides North Carolina's law, an application to initiate the background check, and the fees associated with background checks. In addition to the information provided, North Carolina also includes video tutorials for each step of the process.

## New Hampshire

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services [website](#) for background checks for child care personnel includes background information on child care background checks such as statutes, individuals required to complete background checks, links to forms required, and instructions on how to submit background checks. In addition, New Hampshire also includes step by step background check instructions video.

New Hampshire also includes a [link](#) to out of state abuse and neglect checks. The link provides information on individuals required to complete out of state abuse and neglect checks and forms for each state and territory that currently has a child abuse and neglect registry. Once clicking on the state's form, information on where to return the check is pre-filled in with New Hampshire Child Care Licensing address, phone number, and point of contact.

## Hawaii

Hawaii Department of Human Services (DHS) partnership with the Hawaii Criminal Justice Data Center (HCJDC) began decades ago, and since then, Hawaii DHS has been conducting criminal background checks, both state and FBI fingerprint checks, for child care providers who are licensed or registered as well as exempt provider caring for children whose families are receiving child care subsidy. Hawaii has recently strengthened that relationship to complete the requirements of participating in HCJDC's state Rap Back Program and the FBI Rap Back Program. Hawaii's DHS already had access to the FBI fingerprint results, state criminal records, and the state sex offender registry results through HCJDC's online portal system, but Hawaii DHS recently executed a memorandum of agreement with HCJDC to allow for reimbursement of costs for data system modifications to include the National Crime Information Center National Sex Offender Registry (NCIC NSOR) results.

## Summary

While all states are taking steps to implement comprehensive background checks, ensuring that state-specific policies and procedures are easily accessible to individuals requiring background checks is an important step to streamlining the process in completing interstate background checks. The websites mentioned in this brief also point to the importance of inter-agency partnerships, as well as inter-state partnerships.

The information presented in this brief, along with the contact list posted on the Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance System [website](#), are web-based resources to help all Lead Agencies to comply with the comprehensive child care background checks.