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October 15, 2010

To: Regional Managers
Directors, Local Offices, Department of Child Services

From: James W. Payne, Director
Angela Green, Deputy Director of Practice Support
David Judkins, Deputy Director of Field Operations
Jeff Lozier, General Counsel

Subject: Exceptions to Fingerprint-Based National Criminal History Check
DCS-10-10

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) continues to improve partnerships with the children and families we serve. In fulfilling the value that “children thrive in safe, caring, and supportive families and communities,” we must keep child safety paramount.

This administrative letter outlines an exception that is permitted in limited circumstances to the fingerprint-based national criminal history background check. Below is a summary of the changes effective October 15, 2010.

If an applicant is required to have a fingerprint-based national criminal history check, the only exception to fingerprinting an applicant is if the applicant has a physical disability that prevents fingerprinting. This exception does not apply to those applicants who are able to be printed but the quality of the fingerprints is poor. The exception can only be granted by the DCS Background Check Unit and is for limited and case-specific situations, such as the following:

1. A person trained to take fingerprints has documented that the applicant’s disabling condition prevents fingerprinting; or
2. A qualified medical practitioner has documented that the applicant’s disabling condition prevents fingerprinting, or
3. When the individual does not have fingers.



Protecting our children, families and future

To request an exception, the Family Case Manager (FCM) must send the following to the Background Check Unit:

1. A letter requesting the exception and explaining the disabling condition; and
2. The required documentation from the person trained to take fingerprints, the qualified medical practitioner, or evidence that the individual does not have fingers.

Updates will also be made to Chapter 2 –Administration of Child Welfare, Chapter 8 –Out of Home Services, Chapter 10 –Adoption, Chapter 12 –Foster Family Home Licensing, and Chapter 13 –Residential Treatment of the DCS Policy Manual to reflect these important changes.

If you have any questions regarding this change please contact Regina Ashley, Deputy General Counsel, at regina.ashley@dcs.IN.gov or the DCS background check unit mailbox at Background.CheckUnit@dcs.IN.gov.

Sincerely,

James W. Payne, Director
Department of Child Services

