

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES</b> <b>CHILD WELFARE POLICY</b>	
	<b>Chapter 13:</b> Background Checks <b>Section 05:</b> Conducting Checks – Non-Emergency Unlicensed Placements	
	<b>Effective Date:</b> January 1, 2026	<b>Version:</b> 11

### POLICY OVERVIEW

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) requires background checks to be conducted on all non-emergency unlicensed placements to help ensure the safety and well-being of children placed in their care.

### POLICY STATEMENT

#### Before Placing a Child in an Unlicensed Home

DCS must complete background checks for:

1. All household members, and
2. Anyone who:
  - Stay at the home 21 days or more in a 12-month period (the days do not have to be consecutive), or
  - Works or volunteer in the home with a child who is under the care of the unlicensed resource.

The child will remain in the current placement until the following are completed and cleared:

1. A Child Protective Services (CPS) History Check:
  - For Indiana and every state the person has lived during the last five (5) years.
  - All individuals six (6) years of age and older.

**Note:** CPS history is reported from those states as far back as there are records or to the date that state’s law indicates records should be maintained. Indiana maintains substantiated history back to 1988.

2. A National Sex Offender Registry Check:
  - For all individuals 14 years of age and older
  - For every state in which the person has lived during the last five (5) years
3. A Local Criminal Records Check:
  - For anyone 18 years of age and older
  - For every criminal court where the person has lived during the last five (5) years
4. A Fingerprint-Based National Criminal History Check (Fingerprint-Based Check)
  - For all individuals 18 years of age and older (see policy [13.15](#)).

**Note:** Fingerprint-Based Checks completed for any other purpose (e.g., foster family home licensure, adoption, or employment) may not be used for the purpose of unlicensed

placement. A new fingerprint-based check will be required.

#### After a Child is Placed in an Unlicensed Home

DCS requires completion of background checks on:

1. New household members
  - Who stays in the home for 21 days or more in a 12-month period (the days do not have to be consecutive), and
  - Background checks are to return with qualified results or a granted waiver before a new household member can move into the home.
2. Current household members who:
  - Turns six (6) years old,
  - Turns 14 years old, or
  - Turns 18 years old.

**Note:** Fingerprint-Based checks may not be completed prior to 18 years of age. Fingerprints must be obtained within 30 days of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Any required background checks not completed previously (based on the individual's age) must be started 30 days prior to their birthday.

3. New employees and/or volunteers in the home.
  - Required background checks are to be completed and returned with qualified results or a granted waiver before they may begin working or volunteering in the unlicensed resource home.

DCS will not conduct background checks on children under DCS care and supervision.

#### **LEGAL REFERENCES**

- [IC 10-13-3-27.5: Record check by department of child services under exigent circumstances; transmittal of report copy; providing fingerprints; removal of child for failure to provide fingerprints; compliance with federal law; contesting denial of placement; fee](#)
- [IC 10-13-3-31: Release of data to subject person; fee; challenge of data authorized](#)
- [IC 31-9-2-22.5: "Conduct a criminal history check"](#)
- [IC 31-26-5: Family Preservation Services](#)
- [IC 31-34-18-6.1: Predispositional report; contents](#)
- [IC 31-34-20-1.5: Placement in household with certain individuals prohibited; criminal history checks; exceptions; considerations](#)
- [240 IAC Article 6: Criminal History Record Information](#)