

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 13: Background Checks Section 09: Conducting Checks – Foster Family Home Licensing	
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 11

POLICY OVERVIEW

State law requires the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) complete background checks for all foster family homes to help keep children safe while in a foster family home.

POLICY STATEMENT

State law requires background checks to be completed for initial licensing or relicensure of a foster family home on household members, including biological parents who reside in the foster family home, and all persons who:

- Stay at the home for 21 days or more in a 12-month period. The days do not have to be in a row; or
- Work or volunteer in the home regular or continuing basis with children who are under the foster parent’s care.

Foster family homes must tell their licensing worker (within 24 hours) if any of the following people are arrested, convicted, or substantiated for Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N):

- The licensee
- A household member
- An employee, contractor, or volunteer

The licensing worker and their supervisor will review the situation on a case-by-case basis and contact the Central Office Background Check Unit (COBCU) for further guidance.

The type of background checks depends on the person’s age:

1. Child Protective Services (CPS) History Check
 - For anyone six (6) years of age or older, and
 - Must be done for Indiana and every state in which the person has lived in the last five (5) years.
2. National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR)
 - For anyone 14 years or older, and
 - Must be completed for every state the person has lived during the last five (5) years.
3. Local Criminal Records Check
 - For anyone 18 years of age or older, and
 - Must be completed in every criminal court jurisdiction in which the person has resided during the last five (5) years.
4. Fingerprint-Based Check
 - For anyone 18 years of age or older, and
 - must be completed and returned with qualified results (see policy [13.15](#)).

Note: Fingerprint-Based Checks completed for any other purpose (e.g., adoption, unlicensed placement, employment) may not be used for the purpose of foster family home licensure. A new fingerprint-based check will be required.

DCS will not conduct background checks on children under DCS care and supervision, including Youth in Collaborative Care (CC). DCS does not have the statutory authority to complete a Fingerprint-Based Check.

Annual Reviews

At each annual review, DCS will:

- Search the MyCase website for all household members 18 years or older, including biological parents who reside in the foster family home, and those who stay, work, or volunteer in the foster family home.
- Require full background checks and a cleared status for anyone who has not completed them during the current license period (see policy [13.10](#)).

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [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 31-27-4-5: Apply for licenses; criminal history check](#)
- [IC 31-34-20-1.5: Placement in household with certain individuals prohibited; criminal history checks; exceptions; considerations](#)
- [IC 31-34-18-6.1: Predispositional report; contents](#)
- [240 IAC Article 6: Criminal History Record Information](#)