



DCS Practice SOP Background Checks

13.01: Conducting Checks – Licensed Facilities & LCPAs	Related Policy: 13.01
Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 1

Roles

- Central Office Residential Licensing Unity (RLU)
- Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) Licensing Unit
- DCS Central Office Background Check Unit (COBCU)

Procedure

Indiana law requires background checks for anyone who is:

1. An employee, volunteer, or intern of DCS-licensed agencies;
2. A contractor or other worker who may be alone with children in a child caring institution;
3. A director or manager of a DCS-licensed agency; or
4. A licensing applicant of a DCS-licensed agency (i.e., administrator for residential facility or the executive for a Licensed Child Placing Agencies [LCPA]).

DCS will complete the following background checks:

1. Fingerprint-Based National Criminal History Check (Fingerprint-Based Check);
2. Child Protective Services (CPS) History Check;
3. National Sex Offender Registry Check (NSOR); and
4. Local Criminal Records Check.

DCS will maintain confidentiality of all information collected during the background check process, by following all applicable state and federal laws (see References).

Initial Licensure and Relicensure of a DCS-Licensed Agency

When applying for initial licensure or relicensure, the DCS Central Office RLU or LCPA Licensing Unit will make sure the DCS-licensed agency:

1. Completes all background checks for the licensing applicant; and
2. Confirms the person has not been charged or convicted of a disqualifying event.

Per Indiana law a DCS-licensed agency must complete the following at initial licensure and relicensure:

1. A CPS History Check for Indiana and every state in the subject of the check has resided in the last five (5) years, for all people six (6) years old or older;

Note: States must be searched based on where the person has lived during the last five (5) years. However, CPS history is reported as far back as state records allow or to the date that the applicable state's law indicates records should be maintained. Indiana maintains substantiated history back to 1988.

2. A National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) Check on all possible aliases in every state in which the subject of the check has lived in the last five (5) years, for all persons 14 years of age and older;
3. A Local Criminal Records Check in every criminal court jurisdiction in which the subject of the check has lived in the last five (5) years, for all persons 18 years of age and older; and
4. A Fingerprint-Based Check for all persons 18 years of age and older.

The DCS-licensed agency will need to complete another background check on employees, volunteers, contractors, and interns if the DCS-licensed agency license is renewed and more than one (1) year has passed since the individual was printed.

Annual Reviews of a DCS-Licensed Agency

DCS **recommends** all DCS-licensed agency employees, volunteers, contractors, and interns that are required to have background checks at hiring, initial licensure, and relicensure have the following annual background checks completed:

1. CPS History Check for Indiana and every state the subject of the check has lived during the past five (5) years from the date of the annual review completion;
2. NSOR Check; and
3. Local Criminal Records Check (18 years of age and older) in every criminal court jurisdiction the subject of the check has lived during the past five (5) years from the date of the annual review completion.

New Hires of a DCS-Licensed Agency

Once a DCS-licensed agency has an active license, all required background checks must be completed and should be returned with qualified results on or prior to the hire date for all new employees, volunteers, contractors, and interns.

Exception:

An individual may be employed by a DCS-licensed agency as an employee, volunteer, contractor **prior to** all background check requirements being met if all the following conditions are satisfied:

1. The following have been **completed and passed**:
 - a. Fingerprint-Based Check;
 - b. NSOR Check;
 - c. Indiana CPS History Check; and
 - d. Indiana Local Criminal Court Records Check.
2. The following have been **requested** if the individual lived outside of Indiana during the five (5) years before their hiring by the DCS-licensed agency:
 - a. Out-of-state CPS History Check; and
 - b. Out-of-state Local Criminal Records Check.
3. The individual's employment, prior to completing required background checks is limited to training and:
 - a. Does not have contact with children under the care and control of the DCS; and
 - b. Does not have access to records containing information regarding children who are under the care and control of the DCS.
4. The DCS-licensed agency makes sure the Attestation to Begin Work in Child Caring Institutions, Group Homes, or Licensed Child Placing Agencies Before Certain Criminal

History Checks are Returned form is completed by the individual under penalty of perjury, disclosing the following information:

- a. Any child abuse or neglect (CA/N) complaints made against the individual with the child welfare agency of a state other than Indiana in which the person lived within the five (5) years preceding the date of the attestation; and
- b. Any contact the individual had with a law enforcement agency (LEA) in connection with the individual's suspected or alleged commission of a crime in a state other than Indiana where they within the five (5) years preceding the date of the attestation.

Completion of Background Checks

The RLU or LCPA Licensing Unit will check that all required background checks are done for each person:

1. Verify the identity of each subject of the check, regardless of age (see References), by reviewing one (1) available and current, government-issued identification (ID) document such as, but not limited to a:
 - a. Driver's license
 - b. Government-issued photo ID
 - c. Passport
 - d. Social Security Card
 - e. Birth certificate
2. Have the subject of the check complete the "Application for Criminal History Background Check" form using their legal name as shown on a current government-issued photo ID;
3. If the person is 18 or older, register them for the Fingerprint-Based Check (see References);

Note: Fingerprints done for a specific DCS-licensed agency and purpose may not be reused for another unless approved by DCS (see References).

4. Conduct a National Sex Offender Registry Check of the subject (14 years of age or older) using the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website:
 - a. Search every name or combination of names used in the person's lifetime, and

Note: If searching a common name and results show multiple matches, narrow the search by state. If this occurs, search every state the subject has resided for the past five (5) years.
 - b. Print the results of each name searched (see References).
5. Conduct a CPS History Check for anyone who is six (6) years of age or older:
 - a. For Indiana use the CPS electronic portal submission (see Resources); and
 - b. For all other states, conduct a CPS History Check search for every state in which the subject has resided during the past five (5) years.

Note: Use the Background Check Website (See Resources) to get a current listing of the Out-of-State CPS Contact List.

6. Conduct a check of local criminal records in every jurisdiction where a person who is at least eighteen (18) years of age has resided within the previous five (5) years.

Note: MyCase is a statewide resource for local criminal records.

Arrest, Conviction, or Substantiation of Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N)

DCS requires the applicant or the employing DCS-licensed agency's Human Resources Department or designee to notify the assigned DCS Licensing Specialist within 24 hours of the arrest, conviction, or substantiation of CA/N of:

1. The applicant; or
2. Any manager, employee, volunteer, contractor, or intern in the DCS- licensed agency.

The Licensing Specialist will evaluate the severity and seriousness of the offense on a case-by-case basis and contact the DCS Central Office Background Check Unit (COBCU) for re-evaluation of fingerprint results.

Definitions

- [Child Caring Institution \(CCI\)](#)

Resources

- [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF 53259\)](#)
- [Attestation to Begin Work in Child Caring Institutions, Group Homes, or Licensed Child Placing Agencies Before Certain Criminal History Checks are Returned \(SF 53080\)](#)
- [Child Protective Index Checks/Child Protection Services History Checks/CANS/Adam Walsh Checks/Out of State Child Welfare Agency](#)
- [Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website](#)
- [MyCase website](#)
- Out-of-State CPS Contact List – available on the [Background Checks website](#)

Additional Information

- [Inaccurate Fingerprint-Based Checks](#)
- [Third Party Background Check Vendors](#)

References

- [Policy 2.06 Sharing Confidential Information – Related Practice SOP](#)
- [Policy 13.02 Evaluating Checks – Licensed Facilities & LCPAs – Related Practice SOP](#)
- [Policy 13.15 Fingerprint-Based Checks – Related Practice SOP](#)
- [Practice SOP 2.09 Verifying Identity and Relationships](#)