

Licensed Child Care Background Checks – Frequently Asked Questions

The Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014 sought to make child care safer by ensuring that individuals working with or in proximity to children have not committed violent crimes, child abuse or sexual offenses. The new federal law requires states to establish and manage state-administered background checks for individuals to operate, reside in or work at a child care center.

This table provides answers on Frequently Asked Questions about licensed child care background check requirements:

Question	Answer
Who conducts background checks?	The Department of Children and Families (DCF) conducts background checks for applicants, licensees, household members, and employees of a child care center. In some instances, DCF may conduct a background check on minor household members.
Who is subject to the background check requirements?	<p>Applicants, licensees (including board presidents), adult household members and caregivers are subject to a FBI fingerprint background check. Volunteers may be required to complete a background check if they are used in meeting staff/child ratios or have direct contact with and unsupervised access to children in care.</p> <p>In addition to individuals providing care and supervision to children, all employees and contractors working in regulated child care settings are also subject to background checks.</p> <p>Minor household members age 10-17 are subject to checks with Child Protective Services (CPS) and Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN). In some instances, minors may be subject to a criminal background check.</p>
Is a BID form required?	The BID form has been replaced with the digital Background Check Request (BCR) form and is required for individuals age 10 and older. Providers submit a BCR for themselves and others through the Child Care Provider Portal (CCPP). The digital form must be submitted initially and reviewed at the time the five-year fingerprint check is due.
What is reviewed for a background check and how often are background checks conducted?	<p>Initially and every five years, a fingerprint-based FBI check is conducted for all individuals subject to a background check. In addition, DCF checks these databases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) • Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) criminal history database • Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) records • Wisconsin Sex Offender Registry (SOR)

Question	Answer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional licenses maintained by the Department of Safety and Professional Services • Consolidated Court Automation Programs (CCAP) • Wisconsin's Caregiver Registry • Previous regulatory and program integrity history • Name-based search of the following in each state where the individual has resided in the past five years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ State criminal repository ○ State child abuse and neglect ○ State sex offender registry search • A criminal history search annually after the initial FBI check • Individuals who reside out of the state of Wisconsin are required to have an FBI check every year <p>An annual named-based check encompasses a review of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) criminal history database • Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) records • Wisconsin Sex Offender Registry (SOR) • Professional licenses maintained by the Department of Safety and Professional Services • Consolidated Court Automation Programs (CCAP) • Wisconsin's Caregiver Registry • WI DOJ Criminal History Database •
My employees previously completed fingerprint checks. Are they required to complete them again through DCF?	<p>The one-time WI Shares fingerprint check conducted by licensees for their employees does not meet the new federal requirements. All existing employees will be subject to the new background check requirements, even if they had a fingerprint check done in the past. DCF will conduct new FBI checks on existing employees beginning in 2019. DCF will send fingerprinting instructions to licensees and employees as we phase in background checks on existing employees.</p>
Will DCF send new instructions for completing fingerprint-based checks?	<p>Yes. DCF will send new instructions to applicants, licensees (including board presidents), household members and center employees for completing a fingerprint-based background check. The instructions will include a Fieldprint code and a unique Reference ID that is to be used only for the individual named in the letter. If an individual schedules a Fieldprint appointment using another individual's Reference ID or enters an incorrect Reference ID, the background check cannot be processed, delaying the initial eligibility determination needed to begin working or residing in the center.</p> <p>Note: The following Fieldprint codes are invalid as of 9/30/18 and cannot be used to schedule fingerprint appointments: FPWIDCFHHMember and FPWChildCareEmployee.</p> <p>Programs should add, inactive and update individuals through the Child Care Provider Portal (CCPP).</p>

Question	Answer
How long will it take for a background check to be completed?	<p>A background check begins once DCF receives the fingerprint check results. Within five to seven business days, DCF issues a preliminary eligibility determination based on a review of the criminal history for barred convictions. Individuals may not begin working or residing at a child care center until they receive preliminary eligibility. New employees may begin working with preliminary eligibility but must be under supervision until they receive final eligibility.</p> <p>In most cases, DCF provides the final eligibility determination within 45 days. At times, the final eligibility determination may take longer, such as when out-of-state records are needed. Once DCF determines the final eligibility, it will send separate notices to the program and individual. Final approval means the individuals can work or reside in a child care without supervision.</p>
What does it mean to work under supervision?	Supervision shall include at a minimum periodic direct observation by an individual with a DCF approved background check. The intent is that the person is supervised during the time they have access to children.
Does every new employee need a new initial background check?	DCF conducts initial checks on all prospective and current employees. Individuals who previously had a DCF-approved FBI fingerprint background check within the last five years do not need a new initial check if they have a gap in child care employment less than 180 days.
What offenses make an individual ineligible?	<p>Offenses barring individuals from holding a license to operate, residing at or working in a licensed child care program can be found here:</p> <p>https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/publications/pdf/5206.pdf</p>
What are the fees for background checks?	<p>FBI fingerprint-based checks cost \$30.00 with an additional Fieldprint collection fee \$7.75. If the individual schedules a fingerprint appointment at a Fieldprint location that does not capture the prints digitally, additional fees may be charged for inked-rolled prints.</p> <p>Annual name-based Wisconsin DOJ checks cost \$10.00.</p>
Why do I need access to the Child Care Provider Portal?	<p>In addition to accessing Wisconsin Shares information, programs can use the Child Care Provider Portal (CCPP) to request background checks and view results electronically. Requesting background checks through the automated portal process can reduce the time it takes to initiate and receive background check results.</p> <p>For more information on how to gain access, visit the Child Care Provider Portal information page at https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/provider-portal/info.</p>

The table below is not an exhaustive list of roles in licensed child care but is meant to provide examples and additional clarification regarding who is subject to the initial and 5-year FBI check and the annual DOJ background check.

Role	FBI (Initial & 5 Year)	Annual DOJ Check
Applicant/Licensee	Yes	Yes
Adult Household Member	Yes	Yes
Minor Household Member (unless concern warrants criminal check)	No	No
Substitute	Yes	Yes
Caregiver Employees (providers/assistants/directors/lead teachers)	Yes	Yes
Emergency Back-up Provider	No	No
Contracted transportation service/van driver who provides regular transportation to/from child care program (contracted by the operator) but who is not a caregiver	Yes	No
Periodic parent volunteer assisting operator during special events/field-trips	No	No
Housecleaner (contractor) who provides cleaning services at the home during hours of operation but who is not a caregiver	Yes	No
Housecleaner (contractor) providing cleaning services after hours of operation	No	No
Birth to Three or other therapists who provide services to a child in the child care program but who are not employees of or contracted by the operator	No	No

ACRONYMS

BECR – Bureau of Early Care Regulation	BID – Background Information Disclosure Form	CAN – Child Abuse and Neglect
CBU – DCF’s Caregiver Background Unit	CPSS – Child Protective Service System	DCF – Department of Children and Families
DHS – Department of Health Services	DOJ – Department of Justice	FBI – Federal Bureau of Investigation
IBIS – Integrated Background Information System	HHM – Household Member	NCIC - National Crime Information Center
NCIC – National Crime Information Center (FBI)	NSOR – National Sex Offender Registry	OOS – Out of State
SOR – Wisconsin’s Sex Offender Registry	WISCCRS – Wisconsin Child Care Regulatory System	