



Caregiver Background Unit
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Governor Scott Walker
Secretary Eloise Anderson

Division of Early Care and Education
Bureau of Early Care Regulation

June 13, 2014

TO: Family Child Care Center Licensees
Group Child Care Center Licensees
Day Camp Licensees

BECR Memo 2014-03

FROM: Mark Andrews, Director
Bureau of Early Care Regulation

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Andrews".

RE: Conducting Fingerprint-based Background Checks on Caregiver Employees

A new law will require a licensee to conduct a one-time fingerprint-based background check on all caregiver employees, volunteers counted in the staff to child ratio and contractors. This law only applies if the center wishes to receive Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy reimbursements. Centers participating in the YoungStar Quality Rating program are subject to this requirement. Centers that are not or do not plan to receive Wisconsin Shares subsidy payments or participate in YoungStar are not subject to the law. However, these centers may conduct fingerprint-based checks if they choose.

Licensed centers are required to conduct the fingerprint-based background checks on caregiver employees. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) will conduct the fingerprint-based background checks on the licensees and any adult household members of child care centers participating in YoungStar.

Timeframe to conduct fingerprint checks on employees

Licensed child care centers will have until December 31, 2015, to complete a fingerprint-based background check on all caregivers. This includes teachers, assistants, center directors, and any other person having direct, regular contact with children in the program.

The fingerprint-based background check may be used to meet the requirement for a caregiver background check under child care licensing rules. Centers may want to run the fingerprint-based check when a name-based check would normally be conducted. This will allow the center to remain on the same schedule for background checks. Once a fingerprint-based check is conducted the center may return to completing the name-based check through the Department of Justice (DOJ) since the new law requires a one-time only fingerprint check.

Cost of a fingerprint check

The cost of a fingerprint check is \$34.50 per check. There may be an additional cost for capturing fingerprints. The breakdown for costs associated with a fingerprint check is as follows:

\$16.50 for the FBI fingerprint check, \$15.00 for the DOJ check, and \$3.00 for the caregiver portion of the Wisconsin caregiver background check.

All centers conducting fingerprint-based checks will need to have an account with DOJ. Centers will be billed by DOJ for any checks conducted. Fingerprint-based checks **may not** be paid for by personal check or credit card at the time of the check as some centers may have done previously. Information on how to obtain a DOJ account may be found at this link:

<http://www.doj.state.wi.us/sites/all/themes/wi-doj-ag/dles/cib-forms/record-check-unit/DJ-LE-251.pdf>.

Collecting fingerprints

DCF recommends that centers use digital means to collect fingerprints as they are more likely to be processed quickly and accurately by the FBI. Digital fingerprints will also reduce the possibility that the fingerprints will be smudged or need to be resubmitted. Wisconsin contracts with Fieldprint to collect digital fingerprints for background checks. Information on Fieldprint can be found at this link: <http://fieldprintwisconsin.com/>.

The cost for obtaining fingerprints through Fieldprint is \$7.75 per set of fingerprints collected. **DCF will cover the cost of the digital fingerprint capture if the licensee uses Fieldprint to collect the prints.** In addition, if Fieldprint is used, DCF will be able to verify that a fingerprint check has been done.

Fieldprint has offices around the state where an individual can schedule an appointment to have fingerprints collected. Information on how to schedule an appointment with Fieldprint is available at this link: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/ccregulation/pdf/fieldprint-fingerprint-appointment.pdf>

Fingerprint check results

The results of a fingerprint-based background check will be available to centers on the DOJ website. Information on interpreting the results can be found at this link: <http://www.doj.state.wi.us/dles/cib/background-check-criminal-history-information>. If a fingerprint-based check returns information from a state other than Wisconsin, the licensee will need to determine if the conviction is substantially similar to a conviction that appears on the Crimes Table: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/ccregulation/cbc/crimes-table.pdf>. A substantially similar conviction in another state will result in the same action identified in the crimes table.

For more information

DCF has added a Fingerprint Background Checks – Frequently Asked Questions section to our website: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ccbgcheck>. For other questions, contact the DCF Caregiver Background Unit at 608-266-8001 or dcfplicbecrbu@wisconsin.gov.