Background Check, Reference Check, Fingerprinting for Personnel, Volunteers or Interns

**Purpose:** The intent of the following policy is to ensure the safety of the persons served by CDS.

**Policy:** CDS will comply with regulations and protocols as defined by Florida’s Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Children and Families.

**Procedure and/or Process:**

When a director/supervisor identifies a person not currently employed by CDS as a potential hire or volunteer/intern, he/she must facilitate the completion of a Background Screening packet to determine the applicant’s eligibility for hire. Required forms will be available on the intranet website at [www.cdsgvl.org](http://www.cdsgvl.org).

**Background Screening procedures are as follows:**

1. Provide applicant with:
   1. *CDS Application for Employment*
   2. *IG/BSU-003 Criminal History Acknowledgment and Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Compliance Form*. (The applicant should sign this form in the presence of the “hiring authority” (i.e. director/supervisor).
2. Review the responses provided on *IG/BSU-003* to determine if reasonable to proceed with background screening.
   1. If an applicant indicates there are criminal charges on *Form IG/BSU-003*, the requestor should determine if the applicant is eligible for employment or volunteering, or whether the director/supervisor wants to move forward with the background screening.
   2. The application should not be forwarded to the BSU for background screening if there are convictions on disqualifying offenses indicated on *Form IG/BSU-003* that are less than 7 years old. The applicant is ineligible to be hired or volunteer.
   3. If the applicant has convictions over 7 years old or dropped charges on *Form IG/BSU-003*, and the requestor wants to continue with the employment process, the requestor should have the applicant follow procedures described by DJJ to request an exemption from ineligibility.
   4. The director/supervisor should not forward background screening requests on applicants whose criminal history acknowledgement is not acceptable to the hiring authority.
3. Provide applicant to be screened with the following:
   1. *Livescan Employee Memo* with instructions specific to the area.
   2. *IG/BSU-002 Request for Live Scan Background Screening form*
   3. *Privacy Policy Acknowledgment form* with related FDLE Notice and Privacy Statement.
   4. For Gainesville sites: use *Meridian Background Consent form*

For Lake City and Palatka sites: Use *Care Provider Background Screening Application*

1. Obtain a clear copy of Driver’s License and Social Security Card from applicant.
2. Collect background fee (if applicable).
3. When the applicant has completed the packet, it should be sent to the HR Dept. for processing, or, to the individual assigned to process screening packets at the program site.

Background screenings will be processed and housed in the Care Provider Background Screening Clearinghouse online portal. The procedure is as follows:

* 1. Request for screening is initiated through online Clearinghouse portal.
  2. If the applicant is found to have an existing profile in the Clearinghouse database, an Administrative Review is requested and the background fee is reimbursed. Proceed to step 7.

-OR-

* 1. An applicant profile is created in the Clearinghouse portal and a screening is initiated. Print the *Livescan Request Form* generated.
  2. An appointment with the Livescan Service Provider must be scheduled in advance before fingerprints can be obtained.
     1. Gainesville sites should direct applicants to follow instructions on the *Livescan Employee Memo* (for Gainesville) to schedule an appointment with Meridian Behavioral Health Services (4400 SW 13th St, Gainesville, FL 32608) by calling (352) 374-5600 ext. 8602.
     2. Lake City and Palatka sites: The individual assigned to process background screening requests will need to schedule applicant appointments through the Fieldprint vendor website [www.fieldprintflorida.com](http://www.fieldprintflorida.com) utilizing our company account Fieldprint Code.
  3. The applicant will need to bring a copy of the *Livescan Request Form* along with a current valid government-issued photo ID to be fingerprinted and photographed at the vendor site.

1. The following documents must be submitted directly by email to the DJJ Background Screening Unit for background screen processing:
   * 1. *IG/BSU-002* (or *IG/BSU-005* for Volunteers) *Request for Live Scan Background Screening* form. (Please note: Screening ID number is found on the applicant’s *Livescan Request Form*.)
     2. *IG/BSU-003 Criminal History Acknowledgment and Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Compliance Form*
     3. Clear copy of applicant’s Driver’s License and Social Security Card
2. Documents are submitted to the DJJ BSU using one of the following methods:
   1. Email: [generalbsu@djj.state.fl.us](mailto:generalbsu@djj.state.fl.us) (Subject line: “ENCRYPT”)
   2. Fax: (850) 921-6348
3. Screening results will be displayed on the Clearinghouse website within three to seven days from when DJJ BSU receives the packet and fingerprint data.
4. No offer of employment or volunteer/internship may be made prior to receipt of DJJ clearance.
5. The HR Manager/Community Outreach Safe Place Specialist must send an e-mail to the program site director/supervisor confirming the Background Screen Clearance before any employee/volunteer/intern can provide direct services to a participant.
6. In the case of a volunteer/intern, the Human Resources Manager/Community Outreach Safe Place Specialist should inform the volunteer/intern that it is their responsibility to contact the site director/supervisor to arrange their schedule.
7. Once the applicant has been cleared through the DJJ/Clearinghouse screening process, the director/supervisor must obtain a minimum of two (2) Employment References and three (3) Personal References. References are not required for volunteers.
8. If the director/supervisor determines that an offer for employment is appropriate he/she should contact the Chief Operations Officer to discuss the applicant and obtain authorization to make the employment offer.
9. If the director/supervisor determines that an individual is appropriate for providing volunteer/intern services, the director/supervisor may make arrangements for the individual to begin working.
10. Applicants will not be scheduled to participate in New Hire Orientation until after the Human Resources Department has received a copy of the background screening results, employment application, and reference checks.
11. If the applicant is hired, the Human Resources Department will conduct a three-year driving history and will inform the appropriate director/supervisor and the applicant if it is determined any action is necessary based on result of this check. This is not applicable for volunteers/interns.
12. A driving history check will be conducted within the month of their anniversary date of hire each year thereafter. This is not applicable for volunteers/interns.

**Background Re-screening procedures are as follows**:

**Five-Year Background Re-screens:**

1. Five-year re-screens should be conducted on employees, calculated from the “Retained Prints Expiration Date” posted on the Clearinghouse site.
2. The HR Manager, through the Clearinghouse portal, with Initiate a Resubmission and will send the following to the BSU:
   1. Request for *Live Scan Background Screening form IG/BSU-002*. (Screening ID number is found on the applicant’s Livescan Request Form.)
   2. *IG/BSU-003 Criminal History Acknowledgment and Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Compliance Form*
   3. Clear copy of applicant’s Driver’s License and Social Security Card

**Additional Checks for Shelter Employees:**

1. FBI/FDLE/Abuse History Screenings: All three screenings received through the DCF Clearinghouse are on one document. These screenings must be ran for each direct care staff member before hire and annually.
2. FBI/FDLE Screenings are good for five (5) years
3. “DCF General” determination must show eligibility
4. Abuse Screening will indicate if the individual has a verified finding of abuse
5. Local Criminal Records Check: This screening must be requested from the local law emergency agency in the county/city that the employee resides. This check must be completed before hire and annually.
6. 911 Call Out History: This screening must be requested from the local law emergency agency in the county/city that the employee resides. The check must be completed before hire and annually.
7. Civil Court Screening: The screening must be completed in the county that the employee resides. This check must be completed before hire and annually.
8. Sex Offender Screening: This screening is ran on the National Sex Offender Public website: <https://www.nsopw.gov>. This check must be completed before hire and annually.
9. Out of State Abuse History (Adam Walsh Act Screening): This screening must be completed before hire if the applicant resided in another state within the previous five (5) years.

**For Employees in DCF funded programs:**

1. FBI/FDLE/Abuse History: All 3 Clearinghouse screenings must be ran for each DCF funded employee before hire and annually.
2. Civil Court Screening: The screening must be completed in the county that the employee resides. This check must be completed before hire and annually.
3. Sex Offender Screening: This screening is ran on the National Sex Offender Public website: <https://www.nsopw.gov>.This check must be completed before hire and annually.

**Lapse in Service Exceeding 90 Days:**

In a case where an employee is not employed by a participating agency for more than 90 days, a new screening and a payment in the amount of $16.50 will be required (paid through the Clearinghouse portal). The a case where an employee who had a break in service and who are in good standing may be reemployed with the same agency without an additional background screening if the break is less than 90 days.

**Primary Source Check of Credentials:**

For those positions requiring a degree or minimum level of education, licensure or certification credentials must be checked at the primary source.

1. The hiring director/supervisor should inform the applicant upon making the job offer that an official transcript of the highest degree earned must be acquired and presented at New Hire Orientation.
2. At New Hire Orientation, the Human Resources Department will notify the new employee or volunteer/intern that an official transcript must be sent to Human Resources by the primary source and a copy of the letter proving that the request has been made from the New Hire shall be maintained in the personnel record. When received the official transcript and the envelope it was received in shall be maintained in the personnel record.
3. For licensed or certified individuals, a copy of their documentation will be made at the New Hire Orientation. Within 14 working days the Human Resources Department shall initiate a search on the licensure/certification websites for primary verification of credentials. A print out of this verification shall be maintained in the personnel record.
4. If, for any reason, the official transcript is not received, the Human Resources Department will provide reminders to the employee and director/supervisor via the monthly Pending List.

**Annual Affidavit of Good Moral Character**

The **Form IG/BSU-006,** Annual Affidavit of Compliance With Good Moral Character Standards is required to be completed annually by each Contracted Provider facility receiving grants and/or funding from DJJ. The form can be found on the DJJ website: https://www.djj.state.fl.us/partners-providersstaff/forms-library/inspector-general.

The completed Form **IG/BSU-006** is due to the BSU by January 31 of each year. The information required for Form **IG/BSU-006**:

1. The person in charge (owner, director, principal, etc.) of the local provider/facility shall enter his/her name and sign the form.
2. The facility/local provider name shall be entered.
3. The document must be signed in front of a Notary Public and notarized.
4. The form should then be sent to the BSU.