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STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



Connecticut Office of
Early Childhood

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GUIDE TO THE PHASE IN OF NEW LEGISLATION

Special Session Public Act No. 17-2, signed by the Governor on 10/31/17 makes several changes to the background check requirements for individuals who work in Connecticut child care facilities.¹ One change is that background checks are required “at least once every five years.”² The Office of Early Childhood (OEC) is phasing in those changes.

Phase 1 – New Background Checks/Portability

For the following groups, please submit a background check status inquiry prior to having staff fingerprinted:

- New staff that have worked in other Connecticut child care facilities within the past five years.
- New child care license applicants.
- Child care center operators opening a new location.

Phase 2 – Existing Staff/Background Checks Good for Five Years Only

For those seeking to verify whether all the other staff in their program have completed background checks within the last five years, please wait for further instruction.

Phase 3 – Unsupervised Access

The statute also requires that no prospective employee “have unsupervised access to children ...until such comprehensive background check is completed....” The OEC will implement this requirement after it gets feedback from stakeholders and after it develops a new background check database.

¹ For purposes of this law, "child care facility" means a child care center, group child care home or family child care home, and the home of a Care 4 Kids family child care provider.

² Please note that in certain circumstances, the Commissioner of Early Childhood may require that an employee or prospective employee of a child care facility submit to comprehensive background checks more than once during a five-year period.

If Phase 1 applies to you, what does that mean?

Effective 12/15/17, if you are undergoing any change that requires a background check, e.g., new employment at a child care center, group child care home, or family child care home you **should begin** with OEC Background Check Status Inquiry Form. Upon reviewing that form, the OEC will be able to determine whether you may benefit from the law's new portability requirement.

Please note that there is no need for a Background Check Status Inquiry Form for anyone who has not been previously employed in child care. Those individuals must begin the process with a background check application.

BACKGROUND CHECK STATUS INQUIRIES

What about providers who had more than one background check in the last five years?

- The last date of completed results controls.

The background check has multiple components (state, federal, DCF). What is the date of completion?

- The latest date of completion of the three background check components is the date that the OEC will use to calculate the 5 year expiration date. E.g., if DCF was completed last, that will be the controlling date.

What if the results of background checks contain information that requires further review by the OEC, such as criminal and/or DCF records?

- The OEC will review any relevant information obtained related to the suitability of each individual to care for children before a background check will be considered complete.

Does the same law apply to household members?

- No. There are no changes to state law with respect to household members of family child care homes. Their background check results are not portable.

What can providers do to help?

- SEND IN INDIVIDUAL CHECKS instead of lump-sum checks for multiple applicants. That will make the process more efficient and avoid delays due to payment.

Please contact the OEC Legal Division at oeresults@ct.gov with any questions.