



Guide to Background Checks

The Purpose of this Guide: This guide acts as an extension of the 6800. Background Checks policy and supports Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) staff by clarifying the requirements for each background check purpose.

Purpose of Background Checks: Background checks are not required for normal childhood activities less than 72 hours under the reasonable prudent parent standard as outlined in the [Caregiver Guidelines for Foster Childhood Activities DCYF 22-533](#).

Division	Type	Purpose	National Crime Information Center (NCIC)	National Background Check (Fingerprint-Based)	In-State Background Check (Name and Date-of-Birth)	Washington Child Abuse/Neglect History Check (FamLink)	Out-of-State Child Abuse/Neglect History Check for Adults from Each State
Child Welfare Programs and Field Operations Divisions	CPS Investigations (NCIC Purpose Code C) Completed at the discretion of the investigating caseworker; it is not a requirement .	When: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing the child and caseworker's safety on alleged subjects and other adults related to the investigation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to the caseworker's initial visit to the home When any new adult related to the investigation is identified and has not been previously assessed prior to completing a safety assessment 	YES (call 1-800-998-3898)	NO	NO	NO	NO
	Emergent Placement (NCIC Purpose Code X) Background checks are required on all household members age 16 and older who may have unsupervised access to a child, including those living on the premises. Background checks may be completed on youth under the age 16 with supervisor approval to ensure the safety of the foster child in the home.	When: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determining if a child can be placed with an unlicensed individual, including VPAs, that has not completed a background check and there is a sudden unavailability of the child's current primary caregiver (e.g. parents, legal guardians, or licensed or unlicensed caregivers), or An emergent placement could not be approved for an unlicensed home and child was initially placed in licensed care, but another relative or suitable person has come forward and the child has been in licensed care for less than seven calendar days 	YES (call 1-800-998-3898)	YES for all adults, and minors age 16 or 17 who have lived outside of WA in the last three years. Adults must submit fingerprints within 15 calendar days of NCIC request or child must be removed.	YES for minors age 16 or 17 who have lived in WA for three years consecutively before application (under age 16 requires supervisor approval)	YES	YES if individual age 18 or older has lived outside of WA in the last five years
	Placement In-state	When:	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) • Adoption (including court required update) • Child in Need of Services (CHINS) • Unlicensed placement (including new member to unlicensed home) <p>Background checks are required on all household members age 16 and older who may have unsupervised access to a child, including those living on the premises.</p> <p>Background checks may be completed on youth under the age 16 with supervisor approval to ensure the safety of the foster child in the home.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out-of-home placement is being considered or planned change in placement. • A caregiver is in need of respite for a dependent child. • Court requests to use CA's placement resources for a CHINS case. • CA approves placement with an unlicensed caregiver • Parental rights are being reinstated 		for all adults, and for minors age 16 or 17 who have lived outside of WA in the last three years	for minors age 16 or 17 who have lived in WA for three years consecutively before application (under age 16 requires supervisor approval)		if individual age 18 or older has lived outside of WA in the last five years
	Trial Return Home (Sirita's Law) RCW 13.34.138	Prior to returning a dependent child home for all adult household members, including parents. This is not for the purpose of disqualification but to assess for any additional services needed to ensure the safety of the child prior to returning the child home.	NO	YES only for adults	NO	YES	YES if individual 18 or older has lived outside of WA in the last five years
	ICPC Border Agreement	Prior to Oregon placing a dependent child in bordering WA county	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES



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	<p>Background checks are required on all household members age 16 and older who may have unsupervised access to a child, including those living on the premises.</p> <p>Background checks may be completed on youth under the age 16 with supervisor approval to ensure the safety of the foster child in the home.</p>			for all adults and minors age 16 or 17 who have lived outside of WA in the last three years	for all residents age 16 and older for initial placement (under age 16 requires supervisor approval)		if individual 18 or older has lived outside of WA in the last five years
	ICPC Parent Home Study	Prior to placing a dependent child from another state in Washington state	NO	YES only for adults	NO	YES	YES if individual 18 or older has lived outside of WA in the last five years
	<p>Unsupervised Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babysit • Respite with unlicensed individual • Support for case services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supervising visits ○ Transportation ○ Visitation that is unsupervised • Safety-plan participant and the parent is not present <p>• Background checks are required on all household members age 16 and older who may have unsupervised access to a child, including</p>	<p>When authorizing an unlicensed individual unsupervised access that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not related to a normal childhood activity less than 72 hours; or • Regular and ongoing regardless of the length of time 	NO	YES if applicant, age 16 and older, has lived outside of WA in the last three years	YES if applicant, age 16 and older, has lived in WA for three years consecutively before application	YES	NO



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	those living on the premises.						
Licensing Division	Licensing or renewing a license for a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential foster parent • Unlicensed caregiver • Child placing agency • Group care facility Background checks are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not completed on foster children, including Extended Foster Care youth. Required on all household members age 16 and older who may have unsupervised access to a child, including those living on the premises age 16 and older. • Completed on youth under the age 16 with supervisor approval for unlicensed home studies and foster care licenses to ensure the safety of the foster child in the home. 	Completing a home study (licensed or unlicensed)	NO	YES for all adults, and for minors age 16 or 17 who have lived outside of WA in the last three years	YES for minors age 16 or 17 who have lived in WA for three years consecutively before application	YES Regardless of household member's age	YES if individual 18 or older has lived outside of WA in the last five years
		Issuing a new state or child placing agency foster home license	NO	YES for all adults, and for minors age 16 or 17 who have lived outside of WA in the last three years	YES for minors age 16 or 17 who have lived in WA for three years consecutively before application	YES Regardless of household member's age	YES if individual 18 or older has lived outside of WA in the last five years
		Renewing a state or child placing agency foster home license	NO	YES if household member, age 16 or older, has lived outside of WA in the last three years	YES for all household members age 16 or older	YES Regardless of household member's age	NO
		DLR new respite provider	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES if individual 18 or older has lived outside of WA in the last five years
		DLR respite provider renewal	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO
		Substitute care provider (e.g. babysitting, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not related to a normal childhood activity less than 72 hours; or • Regular and ongoing care regardless of the length of time 	NO	YES if applicant, age 16 and older, has lived outside of WA in the last three years	YES	YES	NO
		A new employee, intern or volunteer at a child placing agency	NO	YES if applicant has lived outside of WA in the last three years	YES if applicant has lived in WA for three years consecutively before application	YES	NO
		Renewing a child placing agency license	NO	YES if applicant has lived outside of WA in the last three years	YES if applicant has lived in WA for three years consecutively before application	YES	NO



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		An employee at a group care facility, this includes employees that aren't directly working with children	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES if individual has lived outside of WA in the last five years
		An intern or volunteer at a group care facility	NO	YES if applicant has lived outside of WA in the last three years	YES if applicant has lived in WA for three years consecutively before application	YES	NO
		Renewing a group care facility license	NO	YES if applicant has lived outside of WA in the last three years	YES if applicant has lived in WA for three years consecutively before application	YES	NO
Administrative Services Division	Contracts	When: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issuing a new contract Approve a new individual to work under a contract Renewing a contract 	NO	YES if applicant, age 16 and older, has lived outside of WA in the last three years	YES if applicant, age 16 and older, has lived in WA for three years consecutively before application	YES	NO