



DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND SUPPORT SERVICES
CITY OF CHICAGO

TO: DFSS Head Start/Early Head Start/Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership
Executive/Program Directors

FROM: Cerathel Burgess-Burnett *CD*
Deputy Commissioner

DATE: March 20, 2018

SUBJECT: **Clarification: Criminal Records Check Policies and Procedures**

Please use the brief clarifications points below in conjunction with the HS/EHS Background Checks policy contained in Chicago Early Learning Program Implementation Manual (CELS), Section 8: Program Management & Quality Improvement, Human Resource Management, Background Checks, pages 125-126.

New Hire Policy – Each delegate must have a hiring policy that aligns with the Chicago Early Learning Program Implementation Manual:

Hiring of staff and contractors, including transportation, must be a multi-step process that include the following steps. All steps must be cleared prior to finalizing hire and allowing staff and/or contractors to supervise children:

- a. Interview
- b. Reference check verification
- c. Sex offender registry check
- d. State criminal background check, including fingerprint checks
- e. FBI check, including fingerprint checks

In addition, the policy must include:

1) Conditional Hiring Policies. If an agency opts to hire before all background checks are cleared, 1) it **cannot put the hire on the HS/EHS/CCP budgets until all required background checks are clear**, and 2) it must include policies that govern conditional hiring in its HR/personnel policies. If the agency does not have conditional hiring policies, the policy should state that the agency does not use conditional hiring practices.

2) On-Line Search Use. If an agency uses on-line searches, on-line searches can be a supplement to an agency's pre-hiring or conditional hiring process, but it does not substitute for or override steps a-e for required fingerprinting. If any agency does not use on-line searches, the policy should state that the agency does not use on-line searches.

3) Child Supervision. Agencies must include in their policies language that indicates that staff and contractors cannot have unsupervised access to children until their background checks are fully cleared.

4) Volunteers. Regular volunteers must have background checks, steps c-e. Volunteers can never have unsupervised access to children.

5) Five Year Background check. Staff must have background checks (steps c-e) updated every five years.

Existing Staff Background Check Policy –Agencies must have a policy that requires existing employees or employees newly transferred to the Head Start/Early Head Start or Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grant or program, to have a background check, following steps c-e, every five years.

Executive Level Staff Background Check Policy – All agency staff funded in whole or in part by Head Start/ Early Head Start or Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership or who oversee Head Start/ Early Head Start or Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership programming or administrative work, must have a completed background check based on the agency's new hire policy (steps c-e).

Consultants/Auxiliary Staff –Similar to Executive level staff, all auxiliary staff and consultants that support Head Start/ Early Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership activities, are required to have completed background checks (steps c-e). The agency's Procurement and Contracting policy must include language requiring staff working on the contract to complete all background checks (steps c-e).

Documentation of CRCs in COPA – please refer to Criminal Record Check Documentation – Policy Clarification for guidance on entering CRC information into COPA.

Please note that no pre-hire searches should be uploaded into COPA edocs.

If you have any questions about this memo, CRC Policies and Procedures, contact Beatrice L. Nichols, Director of Operations, beatrice.nichols@cityofchicago.org. For questions regarding entering the Criminal Records Check clearances into COPA e-docs or any further guidance, please contact the DFSS Operations Team Supervisor assigned to your agency.

Thank You.

Criminal Record Check Documentation – Policy Clarification

In order to effectively monitor all Head Start and Early Head Start staff to ensure that the appropriate Criminal Record Checks have been completed before staff begin working under the Head Start or Early Head Start grants, it is imperative that all agencies enter background check information and documentation in COPA according to the following procedures. These procedures will capture both the date of the original background check clearance at the time of hire, and the schedule for five year updates.

Criminal Record Check information should be recorded in the COPA HR module in the following manner:

- ***In the “Background Check” field please enter the initial Illinois State Police Clearance Date – this date should be before the staff person’s first day working under the Head Start or EHS grant.***
- ***In the “FBI Clearance” Date field please enter Federal Bureau of Investigation Clearance Date***
- ***In the “CANT Check” Date field please enter SACWIS Clearance Date***
- ***In the “Child Abuse Clear #” Date field please enter Sex Offender Registry Clearance Date***
- ***In the “DOJ Clearance” Date field please enter Illinois State Police Clearance Date (Even though the Illinois State Police Clearance is not a Department of Justice Clearance, we are requiring that the State clearance be included in this section.) In cases where a second, more recent re-check has been conducted, this field may be updated (but do not change the Background Check field!) Please contact your PDM SSC for clarity if needed.***

Please note that the date must be entered in the Date field to the right of the text field, and not in the text field itself. The Date field can be identified by the picture of a calendar to the right of the field. Please review the following examples for clarification.

This is the **WRONG** way to complete the background check section of COPA:

Enter the dates please

The screenshot shows a 'Background Check' section with several rows. Each row has a dropdown menu for status and a 'Date' field. In the 'Background Check' row, the dropdown is set to 'Yes' and the date '03-15-06' is entered directly into the text field of the 'Date' column. A red box highlights this incorrect entry. To the right, a box labeled 'Enter the dates please' has arrows pointing to the 'Date' fields of the other rows, which are currently empty.

Why is it wrong? Notice that the dates for clearances are added under the comments section under each background check, not the actual “date” sections. This is the **WRONG** way to complete this section. Do not do this.

Date does not go here

The screenshot shows the same 'Background Check' section. In this version, the date '03-15-06' is correctly entered into the date field of the 'Background Check' row. A red box highlights this correct entry. A box labeled 'Date does not go here' has an arrow pointing to the text field of the 'Date' column. Another box labeled 'Date goes here' has an arrow pointing to the date field of the 'Background Check' row.

This is the **RIGHT** way to complete the background check section of COPA:

Background Check

Marital status: Separated | Other Specify: | Background Check: Yes | 03-15-2006 | Expires:

DOJ Clearance: Yes | 03-15-2006 | Expires: | Child Abuse Clear #: Yes | 03-15-2006 | Expires:

FBI Clearance: Cleared | 03-15-2006 | Expires: | CANT Check: Yes | 03-15-2006 | Expires:

Background Check

Marital status	Separated	Other Specify	Date	Expires	Date
DOJ Clearance	Yes -		03-15-2016	Expires	03-15-2021
FBI Clearance	Cleared -		03-15-2016	Expires	03-15-2021
Child Abuse Clear #	Yes -		03-15-2016	Expires	03-15-2021
CANT Check	Yes -		03-15-2016	Expires	03-15-2021
Background Check	Yes -	03-15-06	03-15-2006	Expires	03-15-2021

Note that the dates have been moved from the text fields to the "date" section. For the "Expires" fields, the date used should reflect CEL Standards, which require a background check to be conducted for all staff at least every five years.

-Other important factors to consider when entering information about employee background checks:

*There must be a **DATE** under "Background Check." Words are not acceptable (For example, "cleared," "done," or "yes" are not sufficient, because they don't allow DFSS to monitor whether the check was completed before the hire date). When entering a new background check for an existing staff person, **DO NOT OVERWRITE** the date under "Background Check." Update the other dates, but leave the date of the initial, pre-hire background check in place.

*For staff working for a HS or EHS program, there must be a Head Start hire date in COPA HR under the "Staff User Defined Fields" section. This will allow us to ensure that all background clearances were conducted before hire into the EHS/HS program. The Head Start hire date is the date a staff person began working under the grant – for example, if a teacher has worked for a preschool program since 2003, and the program became a Head Start Partner in December 2014, the Head Start Hire Date should be in December 2014.

Personal Info | Employment Info | Credentials | Medical Records | **User Defined** | Absence Info | Professional Development Plan | Professional Affiliations | Staff Assessment | Staff e-Docs

Staff Data User Defined Fields

Name: Agency: FSS Site: Employee ID:

Criminal Record Check Tracking

Head Start Hire Date: 04-17-2006 Initial Criminal Record Check Date: 03-15-2006

*** All background checks must be uploaded to EDOcs for each EHS/HS staff (Paid and Non-Paid). Multiple Documents can/should be uploaded, if there were multiple background checks, please upload all to EDOcs.**