

# Background Check Process for Group Care Agencies

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1. **Applicant** completes the online Background Check Authorization form using only Google Chrome at: <https://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/bcs/> or manually completes the [\*DSHS 09-653 Background Check Authorization Form\*](#).  
**Applicant** must provide the:
  - States lived in last five years other than Washington (when applicable)
  - Online confirmation code
  - Name
  - Date-of-birth or the completed Background Check Authorization form to their group care agency  
**Applicant** may have to complete [\*DCYF 14- 012 Consent Form\*](#), if requested.
2. **Group care agency** reviews submitted forms for completeness and legibility and returns to applicant for corrections, if necessary.
3. **Group care agency** fills out Section 1A and 1B of the [\*DCYF 09-133 Group Care Request/Decision Form\*](#) and sends completed form(s) to the DCYF Background Check Unit [dcyf.rlgcclearances@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dcyf.rlgcclearances@dcyf.wa.gov).
4. **DCYF Background Check Unit (DCYF BCU)** reviews forms for completeness; determines if the applicant requires child abuse and neglect history checks from other states the applicant has lived.
5. **DCYF BCU** enters the request into the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Background Check System (BCS) or returns form(s) to the applicant and the group care agency if corrections or additional information needed.
6. **DSHS** receives request and issues a fingerprint appointment form to DCYF BCU.
7. **DCYF BCU** emails the fingerprint appointment form and child abuse and neglect forms, if applicable, to the applicant or mails the forms to the applicant if they did not provide an email address. DCYF BCU includes the group care agency in the email or will email separately if the forms are mailed to the applicant.
8. **Applicant** receives the fingerprint appointment form, schedules, and completes electronic fingerprinting.
9. **DSHS** receives electronic fingerprints and submits them to the Washington State Patrol (WSP) and the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and returns results in system to DCYF BCU when received.
10. **DCYF BCU** reviews all background information and determines if further review by the DCYF Suitability Assessment Unit (SAU) is required. If a suitability assessment is not required, DCYF BCU reviews the criminal history, FamLink, and available out-of-state child abuse and neglect history for negative actions and renders a decision. (See Step 12).
11. **DCYF BCU** emails the suitability assessment request to the SAU and copies the group care agency, if required.
12. **A Suitability Assessment Specialist** is assigned and does the following:
  - a. Reviews criminal and negative action history, CPS referral history, and requests court and law enforcement records for crimes that may relate directly to child safety.
  - b. Sets up a trauma-informed interview with the applicant to discuss the criminal or negative action history, services ordered and completed, rehabilitative efforts and changes in the applicant's life since the conviction or negative action.



c. Completes and sends a written summary of the assessment and collateral documents to the decision-making authority.

13. **Decision-making authority** reviews and renders a final decision to pass or not pass based on the following criteria:

- The amount of time passed since crime or negative action
- The seriousness of the crime or negative action
- Age at time of conviction or negative action
- Completion of services or other evidence of rehabilitation since conviction or negative action
- The purpose of the background check and/or role
- If applicant received a CROP or CPI

14. **Decision-making authority** forwards final decision to DCYF BCU.

15. **DCYF BCU** sends decision to pass or not pass applicant to group care agency requestor(s) listed on the Request/Decision form:

- Documents decision in FamLink background check tab under the applicant's Person ID
- Notifies applicant of background check result if they passed with history or did not pass and provides instructions on how to request a copy of their result
- Sends the completed Background Check Request/ Summary form with the background check decision to the requestor (requesting group care agency staff) listed on the Group Care Request/Decision form.

**Note:** DCYF BCU will notify the group care agency requestor and request a suitability assessment if the results of an out-of-state child abuse and neglect check are received that would change the background check decision.

For questions related to background check processes or background checks, please reach out to: [dcyf.rlgcclearances@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dcyf.rlgcclearances@dcyf.wa.gov)