

## Why is the background screening process changing for APD Providers?

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- The changes are part of a statewide implementation of a background screening 'Clearinghouse' used by multiple State agencies to screen individuals that provide care to vulnerable populations.
- The new system will make screening information more accessible and reduce the overall cost of screenings for many providers.
- The Clearinghouse allows the participating State agencies to 'share' screening results, thereby eliminating the need for individuals to submit and pay for new fingerprints every time regulations require a screening.
- See this link for more information about the legislation implementing the Clearinghouse (bottom of the page): [http://ahca.myflorida.com/MCHQ/Central\\_Services/Background\\_Screening/BGS\\_results.shtml](http://ahca.myflorida.com/MCHQ/Central_Services/Background_Screening/BGS_results.shtml)

## What is the 'Clearinghouse?'

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- The Clearinghouse system incorporates two websites - one for providers and one for the State agency that processes the screenings.
- Providers use the **Clearinghouse Results Website** to initiate screenings, check results, and maintain an employee roster.
- The State agency uses the **Clearinghouse Screening Management System** to process screenings and share criminal history results.

## When I register for the Clearinghouse Results Website, it says AHCA, but I need to do APD/Medicaid screenings.

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The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) houses and maintains the Clearinghouse, so providers register for a Clearinghouse account through the AHCA portal. You will select the agency from which you want to request screenings as part of the registration process.

## Is it mandatory for APD providers to use the Clearinghouse?

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Yes. The Florida legislature passed State law mandating the following agencies to screen care providers through the Clearinghouse:

- AHCA
- DOH (licensees)
- Vocational Rehabilitation (DOE-VR)
- DCF
- APD
- DOEA
- DJJ

## Will DCF continue to do APD screenings?

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Yes.

## How will the screening process change?

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DCF will continue to process APD provider screenings and APD eligibility standards will remain the same. Individuals will continue to submit fingerprints to FDLE. The following list identifies changes to the process for which providers will receive further instruction when registration begins:

- APD providers will submit fingerprints via Clearinghouse -registered Live Scan Vendors.
- APD providers will use the Clearinghouse Results Website to check screening results/eligibility determinations.
- APD providers will be able to track the screening process via the Clearinghouse Results Website.
- APD providers will check screening results in the Clearinghouse Results Website, so they will no longer receive a letter from DCF with an eligibility decision for screenings.
- APD providers will have capability to print decisions for employee files from the Clearinghouse Results Website.
- APD providers will receive a notification to check the Results Website when eligibility determinations of individuals listed on their employee roster changes.

## Are providers required to screen existing employees again through the Clearinghouse?

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No. Providers will continue normal screening practices for new hires, existing employees at their 5-year rescreening date, and those with a lapse in employment that meets rescreening standards.

## What is required to screen a person through the Clearinghouse?

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Inclusion in the Clearinghouse requires the person undergoing screening to:

- Undergo a Level 2 screening and have fingerprints retained by FDLE, and
- Have a photograph taken when fingerprinted, and (done by the live scan vendor)
- Sign a privacy policy (done by the provider)

Individuals must submit fingerprints and photo through a Clearinghouse -registered Live Scan Vendor. The Clearinghouse Results Website contains a list of locations throughout the State. All Clearinghouse -registered vendors have photo capability. Vendors will receive notification of new Clearinghouse ORIs for APD providers at least two weeks before activation.

\*It is important to check on the Live Scan Vendor of your choice to ensure they are Clearinghouse-compliant. Some vendors take a picture at fingerprinting, but are not Clearinghouse-compliant. If you are not sure, call the AHCA Background Screening Help Desk at 1-800-289-7799 Option 4.

## What are the benefits of the Clearinghouse for APD Providers?

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- Reduced background screening costs
  - Free screenings for some individuals
    - *Agency Reviews* - Providers can request a free 'Agency Review' for individuals that have already been screened through the Clearinghouse, *regardless of which State agency conducted the existing Clearinghouse screening*, thereby avoiding the initial cost of fingerprinting new applicants already in the system
  - Reduced cost screenings for some individuals
    - *90 Day Lapse Screenings* - Once screened through the Clearinghouse, if an individual has a 90 day lapse in employment, the provider is only required to pay for a new national criminal history check (currently \$14.75), rather than another full price screening
- Immediate arrest notifications
  - When providers screen an individual through the Clearinghouse, the system retains the person's fingerprints.
  - This allows the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) to notify each State agency that has screened the individual of subsequent arrests.
  - The State agency reviews the person's arrest charge(s), makes a new eligibility decision, and notifies the provider via email to check the Clearinghouse Results Portal for the person's new eligibility.

Clearinghouse will save screening costs and applicant/employee resources when the person undergoing screening meets even one of the following conditions:

- Has maintained continuous employment for 5 years and needs a re-check
- Is required to have two screenings under different State agencies or funding programs (e.g., one for Medicaid enrollment and one for APD-required provider employment)
- The individual changes employment from one type of provider or program to another (e.g., works for a day program for the developmentally disabled and moves to a group home – or – works for a hospital and moves to a pharmacy)
- The individual leaves employment and returns after 90 days (requires a national check only).
- The individual is employed by and/or volunteers with multiple providers/facilities

Providers with questions about this new process may visit DCF's Background Screening webpage at [www.myflfamilies.com/backgroundscreening](http://www.myflfamilies.com/backgroundscreening). The webpage offers more information on the Clearinghouse, along with step- by- step instructions on the process to begin submitting screenings through the Clearinghouse. Providers may also call the DCF Background Screening Help Desk at 1-888-352-2842.