



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

## Department of Human Services

*Children's Care Licensing*

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*Phone: (503) 373-2227*

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TO: Licensed Foster Care and  
Adoption Agencies  
From: Children's Care Licensing  
Re: Fingerprinting for Foster Care  
and Adoption Agencies  
Date: April 6, 2020



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This message is intended for DHS-licensed child-caring agencies that provide foster care and/or adoption services.

On March 24, 2020 the Children's Care Licensing Program distributed the first of the two attached variance notices to *all* child-caring agencies (CCAs) across the state. This guidance describes how certain requirements related to background checks for CCA employees have been suspended in order to aid CCAs in their ability to recruit, hire and activate new employees quickly to deal with the staffing gaps some agencies are experiencing in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Most notable among these is the suspension of the requirement for newly hired personnel to be fingerprinted as part of the background check process. At the time the variance notice was issued, the suspension of the fingerprint requirement only applied to CCA employees and not to foster parents or adoption applicants.

Beginning today, April 6, 2020, DHS is extending the suspension of the fingerprinting requirement to *current* CCA-certified foster parents who are due for the annual renewal of their foster certification *and* to individuals who are currently approved for adoption and are due for the 2-year renewal of their adoption approval. This variance also applies to other adults who live in the homes of currently certified foster parents and currently approved adoption applicants. Please see the attached Variance Grant document for additional details.

While this rule suspension is in effect, there is no need for foster and adoption agencies to seek approval of an individual situation-specific rule exception to forego fingerprinting for foster certification renewals and renewal of adoption approval.

For *new* foster applicants and *new* adoption applicants, an individual licensing rule exception is still required. The form for requesting a rule exception is attached, and these requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by Licensing. When approved, the signed exception request form must be submitted to the DHS Background Check Unit along with the background check request for the identified foster or adoption applicants. Foster and Adoption agencies should request and obtain written approval of an exception to the fingerprinting requirement before initiating a background check for a new foster or adoption applicant.

As always, thank you for continuing to serve and care for Oregon's vulnerable children and youth during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Children's Care Licensing Program and our partners at DHS Child Welfare, the Oregon Youth Authority and the Oregon Health Authority are grateful for your dedication, and we will continue in our efforts to assist you in meeting the current challenges.

*"Safety, health and independence for all Oregonians"*  
An Equal Opportunity Employer



## Background Check Unit Shared Services



Kate Brown, Governor

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<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/chc/>

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TO: Tom VanDerVeen, Children's Care Licensing Program Manager  
Harry Gilmore, Licensing Coordinator Manager  
Jennifer E. McIntosh, OPA3, OTIS Operations and Legal Analysis

FROM: Jeff T. Akin, Administrator, Background Check Unit

RE: Variance Request during state of emergency

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Pursuant to your request for a variance received on 04/02/2020, the Background Check Unit, serving the Department of Human Services and the Oregon Health Authority, is granting this variance.

For all subject individuals who are licensees, household members, employees or otherwise associated with child foster homes or child adoptive licensed by child caring agencies, the Background Check Unit is suspending the need for fingerprints as indicated in OAR 407-007-0250, effective on 03/30/2020 until the end of the state of emergency in Oregon. This variance impacts all new background check requests as well as all background checks currently pending with the Background Check Unit.

In particular, Department of Human Services Children's Care Licensing will consider granting exceptions for new child foster homes and child adoptive homes. If Children's Care Licensing grants and exception, the SIs under the exception shall have the fingerprint requirement suspended at this time and if the outcome of the background check is approved, BCU shall issue an "Approval with Variance."

For any rechecks on licensees, household members, employees or otherwise associated with child foster homes or child adoptive licensed by child caring agencies, the SIs shall have the fingerprint requirement suspended at this time and if the outcome of the background check is approved, BCU shall issue an "Approval with Variance."

Once the state of emergency is lifted, child caring agencies shall submit new background check requests on those subject individuals whose fingerprints were suspended. Submission of the new background checks shall take place over a period of time to be determined at the end of the state of emergency.