



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Home and Community Living Administration
P.O. Box 45600 • Olympia, Washington 98504

October 16, 2025

HCLA: NH #2025-052

**CLARIFICATION OF WASHINGTON NAME AND DATE OF BIRTH BACKGROUND CHECKS
AND NATIONAL FINGERPRINT-BASED BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENTS**

Dear Provider/Administrator:

This letter is to provide clarification on the Washington Name and Date of Birth (WNOB) and national fingerprint-based background check requirements.

Nursing homes (NH), including nursing facilities and skilled nursing facilities, must have a valid criminal history background check for any individual employed directly or by contract, or any individual accepted as a volunteer who may have unsupervised access to any resident. Such background checks must be repeated every two years.

NHs licensed under RCW 18.51 must make a background check inquiry request to one of the following:

1. The department's Background Check Central Unit (BCCU); or
2. The most recent employer licensed under RCW 18.51 (Nursing Homes), RCW 18.20 (Assisted Living Facilities), and RCW 70.128 (Adult Family Homes) provided employment was terminated within twelve months of the current employment application and the previous inquiry was completed by either BCCU or the Washington State Patrol (WSP) within two years before the current date of employment by the nursing home.; or
3. A nursing pool licensed under RCW 18.52C provided the background check was completed by the Washington State Patrol within two years of the current date of employment.

All individuals who have resided less than three continuous years in Washington state must have fingerprint-based background checks, since a WNOB will not be available. Individuals who reside out of state, but work in Washington state, must have fingerprint-based background check since a WNOB check will not be available.

The Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) screens and oversees all initial applications, revalidation applications, change of ownership applications pursuant to [42 CFR 489.18](#), applications to add a new practice location, and applications to report any new owner (regardless of ownership percentage) pursuant to a change of information or other enrollment transaction under title 42, based on a CMS assessment of risk and assignment to a level of "limited," "moderate," or "high." Any person with a 5% (five percent) or more direct or indirect ownership interest in the provider must a set of fingerprints to the Department of Health within 30 days upon request from CMS or the department.

RCS Dear Provider Letter: **CLARIFICATION OF WASHINGTON NAME AND DATE OF BIRTH
BACKGROUND CHECKS AND NATIONAL FINGERPRINT-BASED BACKGROUND CHECK
REQUIREMENTS**

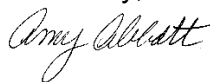
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Medicare providers are [required](#) to submit fingerprints for a national fingerprint-based background check upon submission of a Medicare enrollment application or within 30 days of a Medicare contractor request. When a Medicare provider or supplier is deemed to be “high risk,” that provider or supplier is [required](#) to submit fingerprints for a national fingerprint-based background check on all individuals who maintain a 5% (five percent) or more direct or indirect ownership interest in the provider or supplier.

Thank you for your continued commitment to resident health and safety. If you have any questions, please Karen Clark, LTC Policy Program Manager Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, at RCSPolicy@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Amy Abbott, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: “Partnering with People”

Related Resources:

- [42 CFR 455.434](#) Code of Federal Regulations Criminal Background Checks
- [42 CFR 489.418](#) Code of Federal Regulations Change of Ownership or Leasing: Effect on Provider Agreement
- [CMS Fingerprinting](#)
- [RCW 18.20](#) Assisted Living Facilities
- [RCW 18.51](#) Nursing Homes
- [RCW 18.52C.040](#) Nursing Pools Background Check
- [RCW 43.43.837](#) Washington State Patrol Background Checks
- [RCW 70.128](#) Adult Family Homes
- [RCW 74.42](#) Nursing Homes - Resident Care, Operating Standards
- [WAC 388-97-1790](#) through [WAC 388-97-1800](#) Nursing Homes Background Check, Criminal History Disclosure and Background Inquiries