

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
ABOUT
NEBRASKA Child / Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Central Register/Registry

Q: What is the Nebraska Child / Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Central Register/Registry?

A: The Nebraska Child / Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Central Register/Registry are a statutorily mandated data collection of substantiated reports of child or adult abuse/neglect cases maintained by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Children and Family Services Division.

* **Children's Services Licensing does not maintain this Register and cannot change any information that is on the Register/Registry.** If you or an applicant has questions about the Nebraska Child / Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Central Register/Registry, please contact the DHHS Children and Family Services Division or visit their website at www.dhhs.ne.gov/nea/cr.htm.

Q: Do the Central Register screenings include criminal history background checks?

A: **No.** Criminal history background screenings are NOT included in the Nebraska Child / Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Central Register/Registry. It is important for Child Care Centers to conduct their own criminal history checks whenever there is any reason to believe an applicant or employee has a criminal history.

Q: When will I be able to conduct these screenings myself?

A: Due to the confidential nature of the information contained on the Nebraska Child / Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Central Register/Registry, it is extremely unlikely these Registries will ever be accessible to anyone except authorized Department of Health and Human Services staff.

Q: What happens when the name I submit is on one or both of the Registries?

A: The Children's Services Licensing staff has limited access to the Nebraska Child / Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Central Register/Registry. Whenever there is a possible match of an individual being checked with a name on one or both Registries, the Release of Information is shared with the appropriate DHHS Division for further action. The Children's Services Licensing staff can tell you only that the individual's name has been forwarded for further review. The Children and Family Services Division will handle communication between the individual being checked and Department of Health and Human Services.

Q: Is the information I get back confidential?

A: **Yes.** State law addresses the sharing of any and all information contained in the Nebraska Child / Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Central Register/Registry:

- Permitting, assisting, or encouraging the unauthorized release of any information contained on the Child Abuse and Neglect Central Register shall be a Class V misdemeanor. (28 – 725)
- Any person who knowingly releases information required to be kept confidential by the Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Act, except as provided in the act, shall be guilty of a Class III misdemeanor. (28 – 385)

Q: How often can licensed Child Care/Preschool programs request re-checks of current employees and volunteers?

A: The Children's Services Licensing program does not perform routine re-checks of current employees and volunteers. The only time we conduct the Nebraska Child / Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Central Register/Registry checks is "prior to hire". In the event you have reason to believe a current staff or volunteer is being or has been investigated by Health and Human Services for abuse or neglect of a child or vulnerable adult, you can request updated Central Register checks on that specific employee or volunteer. Just mail or fax a new Release of Information with a brief cover memo that describes why you are requesting the re-check of a specific current employee or volunteer.

Q: How many years of addresses should candidates include on the Release of Information form?

A: Addresses for the past 20 years should be listed on the Release of Information form:

- When the candidate is under 33 years of age, start when the candidate was 13 years of age and proceed to the current address; and
- When the candidate is 33 or more years of age, the past 20 years of addresses are required.

It is also necessary to include information as to when the candidate moved to and from each location. We prefer to have the month and year of each move. Writing just the number of years lived at an address is not sufficient.

Q: What if candidates/volunteers cannot remember their street addresses?

A: At a minimum, we need the name of the street, city and state for all addresses in Nebraska. If the candidate lived outside of Nebraska, the name of the city and state is sufficient.

Q. What does “Date of Vacancy” mean?

A: “Date of Vacancy” is the date you expect a vacancy at your child care program for which you want to hire the candidate who then needs “prior to hire” Central Register checks. If you are hiring for a new position, just state “new position”.

Q: Why is so much information about the candidate required?

A: Nebraska’s Child / Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Central Register/Registry contain the names of thousands of individuals. It is extremely important that the information provided is accurate. Whenever the names of candidates appear on one or both Registries, the information that is contained in the Register is matched against the information provided on the Release of Information form. Thus, all names, addresses, date of birth, Social Security Numbers and names of children are required to either confirm or deny the match of names.

The Children’s Services Licensing program started requesting dates of vacancies and interviews for employee candidates and start date for volunteers to:

- Assure that only “prior to hire” checks were being submitted; and
- Prioritize checks based on the date the licensed program needs the completed check returned.

Q: Why must the candidate be interviewed before a Release can be submitted for the Central Register checks?

A: Each licensed child care center and preschool should have criteria for employment for each position in their program. The interview is an opportunity to determine whether the applicant meets the criteria and can do the work that is required in your specific program. Clearance of the names of candidates on the Central Registries should be one of the criteria for employment, but not the only criteria.

Q: What should our program do with Felony/Misdemeanor Statements?

A: Felony/Misdemeanor Statements should be reviewed by the Director and kept in the employee/volunteer’s personnel file. If you have questions or concerns about the criminal history that a candidate or volunteer discloses or you know the individual has more criminal history than was reported on the Felony/Misdemeanor Statement, contact your Child Care Inspection Specialist. Do not send the Felony/Misdemeanor Statement with the Release forms.

Q: Where do I go if I need one or both of these Register screenings done on applicants or volunteers but my program is not licensed as a child care or preschool program?

A: If your agency or program is not a licensed child care or preschool program you need to contact the Child / Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Central Register/Registry. Contact information is provided below.

Q: If the Child Care Center is part of a multi-service agency (i.e. community center, Head Start), should I send all requests for Nebraska Child Abuse and Neglect and Nebraska Adult Abuse and/or Neglect Central Registries to the Children’s Services Licensing program?

A: NO. Only prior to hire Register Checks for staff positions and volunteers IN the licensed child care center or preschool should be sent to the Children’s Services Licensing Program. For Background checks on other positions in the multi-service agency please contact the Division of Children and Family Services to obtain the appropriate Release of Information form at:

DHHS/Children & Family Services
Policy Section
PO Box 95026
301 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln, NE 68509-5026

Or call (402)-471-9272

Or view our website at www.dhhs.ne.gov/nea/cr.htm

IMPORTANT: DO NOT use the “Children’s Services Licensing Release of Information Form” to send Register Checks to the Children and Family Services Division.

Q: What if I have more questions about these Central Register checks?

A: If you have questions about either of these Nebraska Central Registries, please use the contact information for the Division of Children and Family Services listed above.

If you have questions about the Children’s Services Licensing regulations that require your program to conduct these Central Register checks prior to hiring a new staff or accepting a volunteer into your program, contact:

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