



**Department of Human Services
Online Directives Information System**

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Child Abuse Registry

It is the policy of the Office of Inspector General's Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL) Unit to ensure that licensed child-placing agencies comply with all state laws affecting children and/or the operation of child-placing agencies.

The Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) is now required by Georgia law to maintain a registry of all substantiated cases of abuse and neglect on or after July 1, 2016 in a centralized Child Protective Services Information System (CPSIS/Child Abuse Registry).

The purpose of this policy is to alert RCCL staff and providers that child-placing agencies will now have access to information available on the Child Abuse Registry for licensing purposes. RCCL understands that a child-placing agency's ability to obtain Child Abuse Registry checks can enhance its ability to protect the welfare of children by investigating the home, character and reputation of the people residing in the home as required by Georgia law. Thus, child-placing agencies are expected to submit screening requests to DFCS' CPSIS Unit to screen prospective foster and/or adoptive parents and any other adult living in the prospective foster and/or adoptive home prior to making a decision on the approval status of the home.

All child-placing agencies shall begin submitting screening requests to the CPSIS Unit for the purpose of complying with this licensing policy, effective 10/15/2016. Child placing agencies may access the CPSIS/Child Abuse Registry's webpage at <https://gacar.dhs.ga.gov/> to request a screening. DFCS estimates that results from Child Abuse Registry requests may take up to 30 days from the date the request is received. Any information obtained from the Child Abuse Registry is confidential and shall not be released to unauthorized persons.

RCCL staff shall review a child-placing agency's files to ensure that required documentation is maintained and the directives outlined below are followed:

1. A child-placing agency shall document the date of a Child Abuse Registry request and maintain a copy of the request form in the prospective foster and/or adoptive parent's record.
2. A child-placing agency shall submit an email to CPSISSelfCheck@dhs.ga.gov to obtain the status of a request and

document such in the record, if the agency has not received a screening result within 30 days of submission of the request.

3. A child-placing agency shall document in the foster and/or adoptive home record any delays in the approval of a prospective foster and/or adoptive home based on results received from the Child Abuse Registry.
4. The Child Abuse Registry screening results shall be maintained in the foster and/or adoptive parent's record.
5. Child-placing agencies are expected to consider Child Abuse Registry results when making a decision regarding the approval status of a family for consideration of a foster care and/or adoptive placement.
6. A child-placing agency's decision to deny an application to provide foster care and/or adoptive services based on the results of a CPSIS screening shall be documented in writing to the applicant and maintained in the applicant's file. Per [O.C.G.A. § 49-5-186](#), information obtained from the child abuse registry shall not be made a part of any record which is open to the public except as provided in the statute.

The CPSIS does not contain historical information prior to July 1, 2016. Child Protective Service (CPS) historical information remains in the Georgia Shines data system. Obtaining information from the Georgia SHINES system is governed by strict confidentiality laws.

The RCCL Director is responsible for monitoring requirements for updating this policy. The RCCL Training and Policy Specialist will update this policy according to state requirements.

Authority

[O.C.G.A. §§ 49-5-180 to 187, § 49-5-8\(a\)\(6\), 49-5-12\(j\), 49-5-12\(i\), 49-5-41](#)

References

Rules and Regulations for Child-Placing Agencies, Chapter 290-9-2-.03(12)

Applicability

This policy applies to all RCCL Unit Staff and Licensed Child-Placing Agencies

Definitions

1. Child-Placing Agency: A child welfare agency that is any institution, society agency, or facility, whether incorporated or not, which places children in

foster homes for temporary care or in prospective adoptive homes for adoption.

2. Child Protective Services Information System or Child Abuse Registry: A central repository established and maintained by the Division of Children and Family Services where substantiated investigated child abuse and neglect reports are stored and maintained.
3. Georgia Shines: A web-based statewide automated child welfare information system designed to integrate child welfare case management information into one system allowing case workers to more effectively manage, track and share case information.
4. Prospective Adoptive Parent(s): The adult member(s) of a prospective adoptive family who expect to assume all legal and social obligations and privileges of parent(s) through the legal adoption of a child.
5. Prospective Foster Parent(s): The adult member(s) of a prospective foster family who provides supervision and care in a parental role for a child in foster care and who has a satisfactory criminal history background check determination.
6. Substantiated Case of Abuse and Neglect: An investigation disposition by a CPS investigator that concludes, based on a preponderance of evidence collected, that the allegation of maltreatment as defined by state law and CPS procedure requirements is true.

Related Forms

Child Abuse Registry Request Form