

Wolf Administration: Guidance Available for People Needing FBI Background Checks During Stay-at-Home, Reopening Phases

Harrisburg, PA – The Department of Human Services (DHS) today released guidance for people needing Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal history background checks as a condition of employment while counties are operating under stay-at-home orders and differing points of the reopening plan. Earlier this month Governor Tom Wolf signed Act 18 of 2020, which extends the time period for certain professions to obtain an FBI background check upon hiring.

“The limited number of locations where individuals can be fingerprinted has created challenges for those required to receive an FBI background check for employment or other involvement in child welfare and child care systems as per required by the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL),” said DHS Secretary Teresa Miller. “The Wolf Administration is committed to helping Pennsylvanians meet this requirement and where this is not possible, allowing temporary flexibilities that ensure individuals who obtain other required clearances are able to fill essential service positions.”

In order to receive an FBI background check, fingerprints must be submitted as part of the criminal history check. Fingerprint scans can normally be taken at an IdentGO location in the commonwealth, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many IdentGO locations are temporarily closed, creating challenges for people still trying to meet the fingerprinting requirement.

Under [Act 18 of 2020](#), individuals who are required to obtain an FBI background check are given additional time to meet this requirement if they are unable to complete their fingerprinting scan due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The extension for new hires to obtain the FBI background check lasts until 60 days following the expiration of the disaster emergency declaration issued by Governor Wolf on March 6, 2020, or December 31, 2020, whichever is sooner. Individuals seeking a renewal of the FBI Criminal History Background Check have until December 31, 2020, to obtain the check. All individuals required to obtain additional clearances, including the Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check and the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance, must still obtain these clearances prior to employment. Both of these clearances can be obtained online.

Act 18 of 2020 applies to individuals who must get their FBI Criminal History Background Check prior to beginning employment as found in [Section 6344](#) of the CPSL and those individuals required by [Section 6344.4](#) of the CPSL that are due to have their fingerprint checks renewed. The law does not extend the time for getting the fingerprint and background checks required under the CPSL for new volunteers, or for public new school employees prior to employment, and others required to receive FBI background checks under laws other than the CPSL.

DHS has issued guidance on Act 18 of 2020 so providers and potential employees understand what flexibility is available and how they can still receive fingerprinting services to obtain background checks now.

Despite this flexibility, Pennsylvanians are still strongly encouraged to get fingerprinted and obtain their FBI Criminal History Clearance as soon as they are able. Anyone seeking fingerprinting services should call IDEMIA's customer service at 844-321-2101 to ensure the

location is still operating, schedule an appointment, and discuss necessary COVID-19 safety precautions.

Mobile fingerprinting services are also available through IDEMIA for groups needing clearances for 20 or more people. Agencies with this need should contact [IDEMIA](#) with at least two weeks' notice.

Visit the PA Department of Health's dedicated [Coronavirus webpage](#) for the most up-to-date information regarding COVID-19.