

# Department of Human Services Information Bulletin

**To:** Licensed Providers, Medicaid-Approved Providers, and Fiscal Intermediaries  
**From:** Deborah Robinson, Director Office of Program Integrity and Accountability  
**Date:** April 1, 2024  
**Subject:** **Updated Employee Onboarding Requirements**

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## **Background**

In April 2020, the Department of Human Services, Office of Program Integrity and Accountability (OPIA) temporarily modified onboarding requirements due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. As fingerprinting service sites were experiencing staffing shortages and reduced hours of operation, OPIA allowed providers and fiscal intermediaries to request temporary clearance for new hires if a pre-employment fingerprinting appointment could not be scheduled. In such circumstances, new hires were required to schedule fingerprinting as soon as possible after employment began.

## **Update**

With an increased availability of fingerprinting appointments, OPIA will be returning to normal onboarding requirements. Effective April 15, 2024, new hires must complete onboarding requirements prior to employment and OPIA's Employment Controls and Compliance Unit (ECCU) will no longer process emergency requests for hire. For employees who have already begun employment based on emergency approval, employers will have until June 15, 2024 to complete criminal background checks via fingerprinting.

## **Guidelines Effective April 15, 2024**

Check the Central Registry of Offenders (CRO) <https://cro.dhs.state.nj.us> before offering an applicant a position.

All new employees shall be cleared by the Department through a criminal history background check via fingerprinting upon hire.

A person applying for employment as a direct care staff member shall consent to and undergo drug testing for controlled dangerous substances as a condition of such employment.

All new employees' completed CARI applications shall be submitted within 10 days of hire. Employees may work without restrictions while the CARI check is conducted.

Newly hired employees may begin training, but may not have contact with individuals receiving services until ECCU fully confirms clearance.

Questions should be directed to [DHS.ECCU@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:DHS.ECCU@dhs.nj.gov)