



**Topic: Modified Pre-Employment Screening Requirements for
Provider Staff and Self-Directed Employees**

Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) Checks

1. My fingerprinting appointment was canceled. Are IDEMIA fingerprinting services operational?

Yes, IDEMIA fingerprinting services are still operational; however, some sites are experiencing staff shortages and a reduction in hours during the current health emergency. Applicants are encouraged to make an appointment/reschedule a canceled appointment.

2. Is it safe to go for fingerprinting during the current health emergency?

IdentoGO enrollment center agents sanitize their hands between customers and regularly disinfect surfaces that come in contact with customers. All sites have increased cleaning protocols related to high-touch surfaces like door handles, keyboards, counters, and chairs, and have implemented social distancing practices. In addition, applicants are expected to review and comply with the following preventive strategies to help stop the spread of COVID-19:

- Do not enter the enrollment center if you have symptoms, are awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test, or have been advised to self-quarantine.
- Reschedule your appointment if you have symptoms, have a cold, or suspect you have the flu.
- Have identification documents and payment in your hand when you approach the agent.
- Do not place personal items (purses, hats, cell phones, etc.) on the counter or desk.
- Practice social distancing by staying six feet away from other customers.

Wait times may be longer than normal due to sanitizing of equipment and surfaces between appointments. IDEMIA is taking care of its staff and taking extra steps to take care of its customers.

3. Is the NJ Department of Human Services (DHS) modifying new-hire background check requirements during the current health emergency?

In the event a fingerprinting appointment cannot be scheduled within the required timeframe, service providers and fiscal intermediaries (for new self-directed employees) may send requests for temporary emergency CHRI clearance for new hires to the OPIA Employment Controls and Compliance Unit (ECCU). Submit requests via confidential, secure email to DHS.ECCU@dhs.nj.gov with **Request for Hire** in the subject line and include the following information:

- Applicant's first and last name
- Applicant's date of birth
- Last four digits of applicant's social security number

ECCU staff will process requests as soon as possible, usually within one day. Agency new hires may begin training while the request is processed, but may not have contact with individuals receiving services until ECCU confirms temporary clearance.

Agencies and fiscal intermediaries will receive one of the responses below from ECCU. **In all cases, including temporary clearance, new hire must go for fingerprinting as soon as possible.**

In cases where ECCU is unable to provide temporary clearance, fingerprinting must be scheduled and a background check obtained before moving forward with hiring.

AGENCY EMPLOYEE	SELF-DIRECTED EMPLOYEE
CLEARED: Worker temporarily cleared to work with individuals, still must go for fingerprinting as soon as possible.	CLEARED: Worker temporarily cleared to work with individuals, still must go for fingerprinting as soon as possible.
NOT CLEARED: Worker not cleared to work with individuals, must go for fingerprinting.	NOT CLEARED: Worker not cleared to work with individuals, must go for fingerprinting.

Central Registry of Offenders against Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

1. Are providers required to check the Central Registry for new hires during the current health emergency?

Yes, providers must continue to check the Central Registry prior to hiring new employees. If the new employee is not listed on the Central Registry, the employee may be offered a position and begin the onboarding process.

2. What should I do if I encounter difficulty with accessing the Central Registry?

DHS staff are available to assist with password resets, new user accounts and name changes. Please be patient as wait times may be slightly longer than usual.

In the meantime, if you are having trouble accessing the Central Registry and need to check a name or names against the Central Registry, send an email to DHS.OPIA@dhs.nj.gov with **CRO Name Check** in the subject line and include the first and last name only of the new hire you need to check. OPIA staff will respond to your request as soon as possible.

Drug Testing

1. Is pre-employment drug testing required during the current health emergency?

DHS has temporarily modified the pre-employment drug-testing requirement to allow drug testing to be completed within 120 days of employment.

2. Is it safe to get a drug test during the current health emergency?

Quest Diagnostics strengthened existing rigorous safety procedures in its patient service centers. New precautions include:

- Providing gloves to patients to use in touchscreen kiosks
- Disinfecting all surfaces more frequently
- Enhanced COVID-19 safety training for employees
- Frequent hand washing

Quest Diagnostics medical staff are wearing protective clothing and masks—this is an extra safeguard recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to protect healthcare professionals and patients.

Additionally, patients who suspect they have COVID-19 are directed NOT to come to Quest patient service centers and to contact their doctor or an authorized healthcare provider.

3. Is quarterly random drug testing required during the current health emergency?

DHS is allowing, at provider discretion, the suspension of random drug-testing requirements for the first and second quarters (January –March 2020) and (April –June 2020). In situations where random drug testing is suspended, residential providers should complete their quarterly random sample for first and second quarters as soon as possible.

Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) Check

1. Are CARI checks required during the current health emergency?

DHS has temporarily modified CAR check requirement to allow the CARI check to be completed within 120 days of employment.