

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: March 17, 2023

Subject: **Updated Employee Onboarding Requirements**

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. This process was extended several times and was scheduled to expire on March 31, 2023.

Update

With an increased availability of fingerprinting appointments, OPIA will be returning to normal onboarding requirements effective May 15, 2023. OPIA will continue the temporary clearance process until then. Effective May 15, 2023, 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 prior to May 15, 2023, employers will have until June 15, 2023, to complete criminal background checks via fingerprinting.

Guidelines Effective May 15, 2023

All new employees shall be cleared by OPIA through a criminal history background check via fingerprinting prior to employment.

All new employee names shall be checked against the Central Registry of Offenders prior to employment.

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.

Random drug testing shall be completed quarterly.

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