

Policy: Screening and Assessment of Caregivers in Contracted Agencies	
Effective Date of Policy: April 1, 2018	Amendment Date of Policy:

Policy Statement:

Contracted agencies hire or retain caregivers who have been screened and assessed in accordance with the requirements of this policy.

Definitions

“Child” means a person under 19 years of age who is in the care of the Director.

“Contracted agency” means an agency that has a contract with a director under the *Child, Family and Community Services Act* to provide residential services to children in care.

“Sub-contracted family care home caregiver” means a caregiver who has a contract with a contracted agency, to provide day to day care and control of children in care in their own home. This includes those who do so on a relief basis.

“Staffed residential resource caregiver” means a caregiver who provides day to care and control of children in care, in a residential facility managed by the contracted agency.

“Significant and unsupervised time with a child” includes:

- o visiting/staying overnight in the family care home provider’s residence for more than 30 consecutive days, and
- o being in an intimate relationship with the family care home provider and regularly visiting and/or staying overnight in the family care home provider’s residence.

Outcomes

- Contracted agencies consistently follow the appropriate screening and assessment processes prior to hiring or retaining caregivers.
- Caregivers are competent and well-suited to caring for children in care.

Standards

- 1.1 The contracted agency considers a prospective caregiver for screening by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) only if the individual is:
 - 19 years or older, and
 - a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada.
- 1.2 MCFD screens all prospective contracted agency caregivers. Additionally, MCFD screens any other adult who will have significant and unsupervised time with a child in the residence of a prospective sub-contracted family care home caregiver. Screening includes the following:
 - Completion of an initial record review and detailed record review to obtain information about prior child protection involvement, and;
 - Completion of a consolidated criminal record check.
 - If a prospective caregiver or anyone 19 years and older, who lives in the home, or who has significant and unsupervised time with a child in care placed in the home, has resided in a jurisdiction outside of Canada for six months or more within the past five years, review of a verifiable criminal record check from that jurisdiction, provided by the individual to MCFD through the contracted agency.
- 1.3 MCFD determines whether the contracted agency can complete its assessment of a prospective caregiver.
- 1.4 The contracted agency conducts a thorough assessment of a prospective caregiver which must include:
 - three reference checks;
 - a medical opinion; and
 - a thorough interview.
- 1.5 The contracted agency complies with the *Criminal Record Review Act*.
- 1.6 The contracted agency requires all of its caregivers to undergo a new consolidated criminal record check through MCFD every three years, and a new *Criminal Record Review Act* check every five years.

- 1.7 The contracted agency requires caregivers to report any criminal charges while employed or retained as a caregiver and undergo additional criminal record screening by MCFD.
- 1.8 The contracted agency requires that all caregivers hired prior to MCFD conducting the screening process, undergo an initial record review and detailed record review search when their consolidated criminal record check is due for renewal.

Procedures

Screening by MCFD

- The contracted agency provides MCFD consent forms on behalf of all prospective caregivers. Consent forms are also provided for any adult who will have significant and unsupervised time with a child in the residence of a prospective sub-contracted family care home caregiver. Consent forms include the following:
 - completed Consent for Disclosure of Criminal Record Information Form (CF0622B) for a consolidated criminal record check;
 - verified criminal record check from any jurisdiction outside of Canada, in which the individual resided for six months or more, within the past five years; and
 - a completed Consent for Prior Contact Check: Initial Record Review and Detailed Record Review (Form CF0623B).
- MCFD reviews the results of the consolidated criminal record check, criminal record checks from outside Canada, the initial record review and the detailed record review. After reviewing the results, a determination is made whether:
 - a prospective caregiver may pose a risk to children in care, and, if applicable;
 - any adult who will have significant and unsupervised time with a child in the residence of a sub-contracted family care home caregiver may pose a risk to children in care.
- If a relevant record exists for a prospective caregiver, or, if applicable, an adult who will have significant and unsupervised time with a child in the residence of a sub-contracted family care home caregiver, MCFD conducts an adjudication process in accordance with the *Guidelines for Centralized Services Hub Screening of Caregivers in Contracted*

Agencies.

- MCFD makes a screening decision for each prospective caregiver, documents its decision in the MCFD ICM System, and informs the contracted agency by providing a “yes” or “no” response. The contracted agency can complete its thorough assessment of a prospective caregiver only after MCFD provides a “yes” screening response*.

Assessment Conducted by the Contracted Agency

- The contracted agency completes its assessment process once MCFD has provided a “yes” response (note: the agency may choose to begin its assessment activities while MCFD is engaged in the screening process, but approves the caregiver only after a successful screening by MCFD).

Prospective Sub-Contracted Family Care Home Caregivers

- If the agency worker completing the assessment has received training in using the Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE) assessment framework, they use SAFE for the assessment (involving a home visit, interviews, and reference requirements specific to SAFE). SAFE includes consideration of the prospective family care home provider’s children and any other person residing in the family care home.
- If the agency worker completing the assessment is not trained in SAFE, they conduct a home visit to ensure the physical environment adheres to the environment of care requirements in the [Standards for Foster Homes](#), and explore the following areas in the interviews:
 - family relationships and history (e.g. extended family, current and/or ex-spouse, children);
 - family dynamics (e.g. parenting styles, communication patterns, discipline, difficulties with applicant’s children);
 - finances and housing history;
 - physical and social environment;
 - social supports and community involvement;
 - personal history (including childhood) and life changes;
 - approach to caregiving (e.g. communication style, conflict resolution skills and appropriate discipline techniques);
 - resilience and ability to manage transitions;
 - emotional and psychological health;
 - education and employment history;
 - history of any type of violence, abuse and criminal activity;
 - health, mental health and addictions;

- motivation for caregiving and availability;
- knowledge of and attitudes towards cultural, social and spiritual diversity, especially related to Indigenous people and their distinct history; and
- previous care giving experience.

Prospective Staffed Residential Resource Caregivers

The agency worker completing the assessment explores the following areas in the interview:

- personal history (including childhood) and life changes;
- approach to caregiving (e.g. communication style, conflict resolution skills and appropriate discipline techniques);
- resilience and ability to manage transitions;
- emotional and psychological health;
- education and employment history;
- history of any type of violence, abuse and criminal activity;
- health, mental health and addictions;
- motivation for caregiving and availability;
- knowledge of and attitudes towards cultural, social and spiritual diversity, especially related to Indigenous people and their distinct history; and
- previous care giving experience.

References

- The contracted agency obtains three separate references. One reference must be from the prospective caregiver's most recent employer. Other references should be able to speak to the prospective caregiver's suitability in providing care to children.
- References may be checked via telephone with written documentation of the discussion, or in letter format.

Medical Opinion

- The contracted agency provides the prospective caregiver with a medical assessment form to be completed by their physician.
- The form should ask the physician to provide an opinion on whether there are any health related issues that could impact the prospective caregiver's ability to provide safe and appropriate care to children in care.
- If concerns are noted by the physician, the agency requests further information from the physician if required, and discusses the concerns

with the prospective caregiver.

Contracted Agency Decision to Hire or Retain a Caregiver

- After reviewing all of the information gathered from the assessment process the agency determines whether to hire or retain the caregiver.
- If the contracted agency decides to hire or retain a prospective caregiver, the agency complies with the *Criminal Record Review Act* and receives confirmation from the deputy registrar under that Act that there is no finding of risk prior to allowing the prospective caregiver to fulfill any duties as a caregiver.
- The contracted agency ensures that its caregiver's are aware of their obligation to report any criminal charges, in relation to themselves or, if applicable, adults who reside in a sub-contracted family care home, to the contracted agency while employed or retained as caregivers.
- If the contracted agency becomes aware that a caregiver or an adult, who lives in the home or who has significant and unsupervised time with children within the home, has an outstanding charge for or has been convicted of a crime, the contracted agency will submit a new completed Consent for Disclosure of Criminal Record Information Form (CF0622) for a consolidated criminal record check of that individual to MCFD.
- MCFD will conduct a new consolidated criminal record check and an adjudication process, if a relevant record is found, in accordance with the *Practice Guidelines for Centralized Services Hub Screening of Caregivers in Contracted Agencies*.