



Screening and Assessment of Caregivers and Care Providers in Contracted Care Settings Policy (SA Policy) Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: Where do I find the policy?

Contracted agencies and SHSS service providers can find the policy on MCFD's [Information for Child & Family Service Providers](#) web page under Policies for Contracted Agencies or the [Resources iConnect page](#).

Q2: Who should I contact with questions about the screening process?

Liaison workers at MCFD's Centralized Services Hub (the Hub) are available to answer questions about the screening process. Each agency has a designated liaison worker who can explain how the screening process works and how to submit Service Requests using the [Service Provider Portal](#). Please contact the Centralized Services Hub at 250-356-6085 or CSH.HUC.General.Enquiries@gov.bc.ca.

Q3: What is the combined criminal record check? How is it done?

The new combined criminal record check merges the consolidated criminal record check (CCRC) and the *Criminal Records Review Act* check (CRRRA). It is completed by the HUB using the revised Consent for Disclosure of Criminal Record Information Form (CF0622B).

During the screening process, the Hub conducts the combined criminal record check, along with an initial record review and detailed record review (IRR/DRR) of past child protection reports, and provides contracted agencies or SHSS service providers with either:

- A "screened in" response advising that the contracted agency or Specialized Homes and Support Services (SHSS) service provider may proceed in assessing an applicant to provide care to children/youth in a contracted care setting; or
- A "screened out" response advising that the contracted agency or SHSS service provider may not hire the applicant to provide care to children/youth in a contracted care setting.

MCFD covers the costs of combined criminal record checks for applicants and renewals of current caregivers and SHSS care providers.

Q4: How long is a "screened in" response valid for during the hiring process?

A screened in response is valid for the length of time needed by the contracted agency or SHSS service provider to conclude the assessment of the applicant.

Q5: When does the combined criminal record check have to be renewed for a caregiver or SHSS care provider?

Contracted agencies and SHSS service providers must renew the combined criminal record check every three years during a caregiver or care provider's term of employment or for as long as the contracted agency or SHSS service provider has a contract with the caregiver or care provider, and they are providing care to a child/youth in a contracted care setting.

To renew the combined criminal record check, the caregivers or care providers must complete the [Consent for Disclosure of Criminal Record Information \(CF0622B\) form](#), which is available through the Service Provider Portal.

Please contact your designated liaison worker at the Hub if there are any questions about this process.

Q6: Do I have to screen and assess my re-hired caregiver or care provider?

Yes, re-hired caregivers and care providers are considered to be new applicants. Therefore, they must be rescreened by the Hub with new assessments and references required by the contracted agency or SHSS service provider in order to comply with policy.

Q7: Do I have to screen and assess a caregiver or care provider returning from medical or parental leave?

No, as long as the caregiver or care provider is still employed by the contracted agency or SHSS service provider, they are only required to adhere to the combined criminal records check renewal requirements in the SA policy (formerly SACCA). However, the caregiver or care provider is still required to report any changes in their criminal record or MCFD involvement to the contracted agency or SHSS service provider throughout their employment.

Q8: Does this policy apply to everyone working at, or contracted by, an agency or SHSS service provider?

No, not everyone will necessarily require screening, only caregivers and care providers. Please see the SA policy for the definition of a caregiver/care provider. The SA policy applies to anyone working for a contracted agency or SHSS service provider that may be required to provide care for children/youth in a contracted care setting.

If you have staff in adult programs who may take on a position as a caregiver or care provider in a child/youth program as relief, part-time, or full-time, they will need to be screened and assessed according to SA policy prior to working as a caregiver or care provider for children/youth in a contracted care setting. It is important that your staff in adult programs who will also be working as caregivers or care providers for children/youth in contracted care settings have three references regarding their ability to care for children/youth.

Q9: Does this policy apply to caregivers hired by other caregivers (subcontracted caregivers) to provide care to children/youth in care?

Yes.

Q10: Does this policy apply to “respite” and “relief” care for contracted agencies or subcontracted family care homes? What is the difference between these two types of care?

Respite is in-home or out-of-home care overnight or daytime care for a child/youth who is living with a parent (or other care provider) for the majority of the time and is not in the care or custody of a Director under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* (CFCSA). A support agreement between the Director and the parent provides only an intermittent break for the parent (or other care provider) regarding the respite care for the child/youth. The SA policy does not apply to those providing solely respite care.

Relief is in-home or out-of-home daytime or overnight care for a child/youth in the care or custody of a Director under the CFCSA to provide the caregiver periods of rest from giving daily care to the child/youth. This includes relief care provided to a sub-contracted family care home caregiver. The SA policy does apply to those providing relief care. The relief caregiver would need to be screened and assessed as a contracted agency caregiver and an SRAT questionnaire must be completed.

Care provided to a child/youth for less than 4 hours in a week is not considered to be respite or relief care and the provider would not be considered a caregiver.

Some contracted agencies use the terms relief and respite interchangeably. The SA policy applies to any caregiver who provides day-to-day and/or overnight care for children/youth in the care or custody of a director.

Q11: What is SHSS respite care and how is it different from respite care for contracted agencies or subcontracted family care homes?

SHSS respite care is a short-term service that is aligned to the parents/Guardians', caregivers' and/or out-of-care providers' planned or emergent needs and is part of a family's overall support plan. However, there may be circumstances where the service is delivered as part of a longer-term plan to support ongoing family preservation.

SHSS services are accessible to all children/youth based on their needs, regardless of whether they are in care, in an out-of-care arrangement, or living at home with their parents. Services are overnight and provided outside of the parents/Guardians', caregivers' and/or out-of-care providers' home. Respite can be planned or offered during emergencies or times of crisis.

For initial implementation, eligibility for SHSS Respite is limited to:

- Children/youth who are in-care; and
- Children/youth who are eligible for CYSN Disability Services and not in care (including those residing with their parent or in an out-of-care arrangement)

Q12: An applicant for a caregiver or care provider position has lived in another country for more than 6 months; does the screening differ for them?

If an applicant has lived outside of Canada and in another country for more than 6 months since they became an adult (age 18*) they will be subject to an out of jurisdiction criminal record check (*Note: Prior to 2021, the out of jurisdiction check looked back 5 years). The applicant must provide the out of jurisdiction criminal record check. The HUB will complete the International Social Service Check (ISSC).

Q13: Can my caregiver or care provider applicant participate in orientation, training, and job shadowing before they receive a “screened in” response on their combined criminal record check?

The applicant must first receive a “screened in” response from MCFD before being hired as a caregiver or care provider.

Once the contracted agency or SHSS care provider receives a letter from MCFD indicating a “screened in” decision and the applicant obtains clearance to work with children/youth from the result of their combined criminal record check, these individuals may be hired to participate in activities such as orientation, training, and job shadowing for becoming a caregiver or care provider.

Q14: Who is included in the definition of “adult with significant and unsupervised access to a child/youth” for whom a combined criminal record check and IRR/DRR must be conducted?

Significant and unsupervised access applies to anyone 19 years of age and over who visits/stays overnight for more than 30 days in the home where the child/youth in care lives, and anyone who is in an intimate partner relationship with the caregiver who visits regularly/stays in the home overnight for extended periods of time. This includes roommates of the caregiver, tenants, or other family members.

Q15: What is an SRAT Questionnaire?

The Self-Report Audit Tool (SRAT) is an online questionnaire that a contracted agency or SHSS service provider must complete and submit to MCFD for individuals they hire or sub-contract as a caregiver or care provider for a child/youth. The SRAT collects and tracks caregiver and care provider screening and assessment information. The SRAT is accessed through the BC Service Provider Portal. By completing the SRAT questionnaire, the contracted agency and SHSS service provider affirm they have followed the ministry’s standards for screening and assessment of caregivers and care providers.

Q16: For whom must the SRAT be completed?

Contracted agencies and SHSS service providers must complete the questionnaire for each caregiver, care provider and sub-contracted family care home caregiver that they hire to work with children/youth in a contracted care setting. If the contract with the subcontractor includes their partner, then the partner must also complete their own questionnaire and any caregiver that the subcontractor hires as relief care.

Q17: How long do I have to complete the SRAT?

The SRAT must be completed within 30 days of the caregiver or care provider's start date. The start date refers to the caregiver or care provider's first unsupervised shift working with children/youth in a contracted care setting. This is not the hire date, orientation shift, or job-shadowing/training shift date.

Q18: Is it necessary to address the full list of topic areas in the policy when completing an assessment of an applicant applying to work in a contracted care setting?

Yes, all of the topic areas identified in the policy must be covered. The requirements are set out in the SA policy for applicants applying to work in contracted care settings.

Q19: Is it necessary to visit the home of an applicant if they will not be caring for children/youth in their own home (i.e., only working in a contracted care setting)?

No. Visits to the applicant's home are **not** necessary if they work exclusively in a contracted care setting, or if they only provide hourly respite/relief in the child/youth's home.

Q20: Do applicants applying to work in a contracted care setting obtain a medical opinion as part of their assessment prior to being hired?

No. The requirement to obtain a medical opinion as part of the assessment process is only for applicants who will be providing care in the home where the caregiver or care provider also resides.

Q21: What is the policy regarding pets in the home?

When interviewing an applicant and conducting a home visit (when required), the contracted agency or SHSS service provider is asked to ensure that the applicant has the ability to respond to a child/youth's health and behavioural needs by providing a safe, nurturing, respectful, and healthy environment for the child/youth. This includes ensuring that there are no animals in the home that could pose a risk to the child/youth's safety or health due to the animal's behaviour or characteristics (e.g., dangerous breeds or exotic pets), and/or by aggravating a child/youth's health condition.

Q22: Who should I contact if I have questions about the screening and assessment policy or the SRAT?

- For the screening and assessment policy: Operational Child Welfare Policy at MCF.StandardsPolicy@gov.bc.ca
- For the SRAT: Quality Assurance Analysts at MCF.AuditUC@gov.bc.ca