

Department of Human Services Information Bulletin

To: Licensed Providers, Medicaid-Approved Providers, and Fiscal Intermediaries

From: Lauri Woodward, Director Office of Program Integrity and Accountability

Date: April 5, 2021

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. Likewise, OPIA allowed drug testing and Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) checks for new hires to be completed within 120 days of employment and temporarily suspended random drug testing requirements.

Update

With an increased availability of fingerprinting and drug testing appointments, OPIA will be returning to normal onboarding requirements. Effective May 3, 2021, 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 60 days from the date of this bulletin to complete all pending onboarding requirements, including criminal background checks via fingerprinting, pre-employment drug testing, and CARI checks.

Guidelines Effective May 3, 2021

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.

Random drug testing resumed January 1, 2021.

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

