

National Background Check Program State of Minnesota

Program Abstract

Minnesota implemented a background study system in 1991 for certain employees who work with children and vulnerable adults. The Department of Human Services (department) is the lead agency in the state for background study determinations related to health and human services programs, including child day care centers. The scope of the program has grown considerably and includes completing background studies on individuals who wish to work in licensed health care facilities such as nursing homes and hospitals to those who wish to provide services to people in their homes. The department conducts over 270,000 background studies per year.

The grant would support five goal areas:

- Collect fingerprints on all subjects of background studies and transmit electronically for processing.
- Use fingerprints to match subjects with state criminal records via the state Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). This replaces matching subjects using name and date of birth.
- Design and automate a process by which the department is notified when a previous subject of a background study commits a crime in Minnesota that may disqualify them. The current process is automated for the maltreatment registry, but is a manual process for criminal records.
- Expand the number of subjects required to undergo a record check through the Federal Bureau of Investigation. This expansion is initially limited to personal care assistants (PCAs).
- Expand state background checks to include state's predatory offender registry reviews. An amendment to current law is required to provide authority for the department to access the predatory offender registry for purposes of conducting background studies. In addition, include registry checks of nurse aide abuse and neglect registries, professional licensure and disciplinary databases and other misconduct databases such as the Office of Inspector general exclusion database and national sex offender registry.

The changes in the background study system realized through these goals will result in about 3,000 more disqualifications each year. Additionally, the goals achieved through the grant will strengthen the state's infrastructure for completing background studies and can be sustained after the conclusion of the grant. The department also intends to seek legislative approval to continue the enhanced checks on all PCAs and expand the enhanced checks to include additional provider

types. Approval from the legislature will be required to approve a fee increase or a funding appropriation in order for the department to continue and expand the enhanced background studies after the grant funding ends.