



HHS TRUSTED EXCHANGE FRAMEWORK

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has released the [draft Trusted Exchange Framework](#), an interoperability framework, according to [McKnight's Long-Term Care News](#). The intent behind the framework is to allow providers to provide and receive information, regardless of the software platform. This is a solution to tackle technical problems that have long restricted data-sharing across the healthcare industry, especially in long-term care.

Don Rucker, M.D., national coordinator for health information technology said, "The principles and direction we released today, combined with the support of providers, existing health information networks, health IT developers, and federal agencies, are designed to help improve patient care, care coordination, and the overall health of the nation." Comments for the draft can be submitted at exchangeframework@hhs.gov.

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CLEAN SLATE CLEARINGHOUSE

The [Clean Slate Clearinghouse](#) is a project funded and developed in partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to help support juvenile and adult criminal record clearance. The Clearinghouse provides "people with criminal records and non-legal service providers with accurate information on record clearance and mitigation, in addition to contact information for legal service providers in U.S. States and territories."

The project's work is currently focusing on record clearance work and providing new legal service providers with the resources and means to develop record clearance programs. The Clearinghouse also provides information for policymakers to evaluate their respective State record clearance policies against those of other States.

The Clean Slate Clearinghouse is a collaboration of the Council of State Governments Justice Center, Community Legal Services of Philadelphia, the National Juvenile Defender Center, the National Association of Counties, and the National League of Cities.

NBCP ANNOUNCEMENTS

NBCP Grant Application

On September 29, 2017 CMS posted a memorandum to their State Survey Agency Directors providing advance notice that the NBCP grant solicitation would be removed from www.grants.gov on Friday, December 15, 2017. CMS encouraged States to take advantage of the notice to participate and apply for the grant. As a result, three States provided applications before the deadline. CMS is currently conducting its review process of those applications.

Voluntary Submission of the Grantee Data File by Graduated States

On September 29, 2016, as the first NBCP grantee States prepared to graduate from the NBCP, CMS sent a memo to these States asking graduating States to consider voluntary submission of the [NBCP Grantee Data File](#) after their grant period ended. An important component of the NBCP is data which allows the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG), charged with evaluating the NBCP, to evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, and economic impact of the NBCP. All States in the program have dedicated an enormous amount of time and resources to develop their background check programs and to submit data through the quarterly reports over the past eight years. Having continued access to that data, especially as programs mature and show more results, is critical to the overall story of all your hard work.

In addition to the OIG using voluntarily submitted data in its final evaluation of the NBCP, graduated States submitting the data file will receive quarterly data analysis from CNA's quarterly Cross-State Comparison Report. This includes data tables showing the status of State program data files (for all States), program outcomes across States, and an analysis of the State's own data (in the form of program outcome tables) for States whose data is not included in the comparison tables.

To date, nine graduated States have agreed to voluntarily submit NBCP Grantee Data File. For more information, contact stateliasion@cna.org.



CRIMINAL HISTORY PARSER FOR RAP SHEET SERVICE

The International Justice and Public Safety Network ([Nlets](#)), which is owned by the States, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was created over 50 years ago by the principal law enforcement agencies of the States. In December 2014, Nlets completed its Criminal History Parser Pilot in partnership with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). As a result, standardized criminal history data for all States is now available to Nlets members.

Background:

All criminal history information in the United States is provided individually by each State, federal agency or territory's repository. Criminal histories are queried one of two ways. Either the request is sent to the FBI to launch an Interstate Identification Index (III) query or the request is sent directly to the State via the Nlets IQ/FQ message keys. Regardless of the query method, all criminal history responses are returned via the Nlets network and system. A national effort is underway to provide this data in a standardized format. Nlets has managed several Bureau of Justice Statistic grants to facilitate work with-in State repositories to accept and return the standardized XML formats created by the Nlets Joint Task Force (JTF) which are based on National Information Exchange Model (NIEM). Currently 25 of the States plus the FBI are transmitting their records using this format. Through Nlets, consumers of the rap sheet can choose to receive the response records in XML or in text with a standardized stylesheet applied. More information can be found on the [Nlets website](#).

WVCARES EXPANDS USE TO INCLUDE CHILD CARE

West Virginia Clearance for Access: Registry & Employment Screening (WVCARES), was originally developed to conduct background screenings of long term care employees. In the last two years, WVCARES has taken on the screening for additional provider types to include Medicaid High Risk, foster care, emergency shelters and other programs related to children. With the added checks, WVCARES averaged 4,000 screenings monthly and boasts an average turnaround time of five days from the time of fingerprinting to making a final determination, with only a staff of four.

On January 1, 2018, without the benefit of any additional resources, WVCARES expanded the screening services to include child day care and Head Start programs. The addition of child care has expanded the number of providers in WVCARES to over 4,000 and potentially increased the number of screenings processed to over 60,000 annually. Many of these agencies are licensed in ways that already require screenings through WVCARES. By transitioning in all centers, programs required to conduct multiple screenings for varying program types are able to follow one process in one system, saving time and money. Meghan Shears, the Director of WVCARES states, "the secret to our success is to require the same screening standards across provider types. Consistent screening criteria allows for expedited hiring for those who have already received clearance. Providers also benefit from the Rap Back program that allows WVCARES to monitor employees for potential changes in eligibility after the initial clearance."

QUARTERLY REPORTS DUE JANUARY 31, 2018

Reports for the quarter ending December 31, 2017, are due by close of business on **January 31, 2018**. Please be sure to use the new Cost Report that includes your State's name. The report templates are available on the [NBCP BGCheckInfo](#) website. Requests for extensions should be submitted to your CMS project officer at least **two weeks** before the due date.

Reminder!
Graduating States must complete [grant closeout](#) in addition to final quarterly reports.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- Association for Health Facility Survey Agencies Annual Conference,
 - September 23—36, 2018, Tigard, OR

The Forum continues in its efforts to be a resource for current, graduated, and non-grantee States. One of the most valuable services the Forum provides is the ability to quickly share a question through the email distribution list. Questions are shared with all member States and a rapid response is generally available from those States that have experience regarding the question. Questions can then be followed up with particular States as needed. Send an [email](#) to subscribe to this State initiated and supported activity.

The Forum has been invited back to the Association of Health Facility Survey Agencies (AHFSA) Conference. The 2018 conference will be held in Tigard, Oregon, from September 23 – 26, 2018. While conference registration has not opened yet, you can reserve your room through AHFSA. The Forum track at the conference is open to anyone registering to attend the conference. Attendance by NBCP program staff working in the State Survey and Certification Agency can be supported in the agency Medicare appropriation. Current grantee States should be able to expense the conference under their award.

The Forum is developing topics for the conference such as Criminal History Report Information (CHRI) research techniques and tools, program performance and data reporting, and facility survey and screening program coordination. If you have ideas about these or other topics, please send an [email](#).

The Forum holds monthly webinar calls to discuss emerging questions and to share best practices and strategies. For more information about the Forum you can visit our new web page on the [AHFSA website](#).