

Frequently Asked Questions

What does it mean to have a valid Criminal Record Check in North Carolina? The purpose of completing a criminal record check is to determine an employee's fitness to have responsibility for the safety and well-being of children based on their criminal history. Individuals that do not have a criminal history of concern will be issued a Qualification Letter from the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE). All child care employees must have a valid Criminal Records Check Qualification Letter prior to employment and must submit a complete packet for re-qualification every 3 years thereafter while employed in a child care facility.

What does it mean to have a valid qualification letter? This means that you have been approved by the Division to be employed by a child care facility, own or operate a child care facility, or be a household member in a family child care home. The qualification letter is valid for 3 years from the date of issuance. A copy of the qualification letter must be provided to the child care employer upon employment and must remain on file during the individual's employment. DCDEE will accept 3 year re-qualification requests from an individual at any time.

Are local criminal history reports from Clerk of Court still required? Not for a NC resident. For a NC resident, an individual interested in child care employment no longer needs to get a local criminal record check from the County Clerk of Court. DCDEE will conduct the local check at no charge for a NC resident. The individual is now required to make an online payment with a credit card for a federal check conducted by the SBI. The cost for the federal check is \$25.00 plus a \$1.50 service charge. Non-residents are still required to provide a certified local report from the Clerk of Court's office in their county of residence, or the State Repository and submit to the Division with other required items.

Do Substitutes and Volunteers have to obtain a Valid Criminal Background Check? Substitute providers must submit a complete packet of information for a criminal record check. Volunteers counted in the staff/child ratio or who have unsupervised access to children must have a Volunteer Qualification Letter on file at a facility. Volunteers do not have to submit fingerprints, but must submit a **purple** bubble sheet to DCDEE so that a local criminal check can be conducted by DCDEE.

What is the turnaround time for processing criminal record checks? The average turnaround time is approximately 6 to 8 days, including the SBI checks. This does not include mail time, nor does it include packets that are received incomplete or inaccurate. In addition, the turnaround time for individuals who have a criminal record of concern may take much longer because many of these individuals are allowed to provide additional information regarding their crimes to an internal committee for other review.

Can employer request information concerning the qualification status of a potential or a current employee? Yes, an employer may contact the Division to request the qualification status of a potential or current employee.