



January 14, 2026

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## HOUSE BILL No. 1357

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DIGEST OF HB 1357 (Updated January 14, 2026 9:27 am - DI 140)

**Citations Affected:** IC 31-26; IC 31-27.

**Synopsis:** Child services provider background checks. Requires an employee of: (1) a preventative provider that operates a child welfare program; (2) a provider of home based family preservation services; (3) a child caring institution; (4) a group home; or (5) a child placing agency; to undergo a background check once every four years.

**Effective:** July 1, 2026.

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January 8, 2026, read first time and referred to Committee on Family, Children and Human Affairs.

January 14, 2026, reported — Do Pass.

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**HB 1357—LS 7076/DI 119**





January 14, 2026

Second Regular Session of the 124th General Assembly (2026)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2025 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

## HOUSE BILL No. 1357

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A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning family law and juvenile law.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:*

1        SECTION 1. IC 31-26-3.5-5.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA  
2        CODE AS A **NEW** SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS  
3        [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: **Sec. 5.5. An employee of a**  
4        **preventative provider that operates a child welfare program shall**  
5        **undergo a background check to which the employee is required by**  
6        **federal law to submit for purposes of the employee's provision of**  
7        **child welfare services:**

8                **(1) not later than four (4) years after the individual's date of**  
9                **hire; and**  
10                **(2) one (1) time every four (4) years thereafter.**

11        SECTION 2. IC 31-26-5-7 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE  
12        AS A **NEW** SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY  
13        1, 2026]: **Sec. 7. An employee of a provider of home based family**  
14        **preservation services shall undergo a background check to which**  
15        **the employee is required by federal law to submit for purposes of**  
16        **the employee's provision of child welfare services:**

17                **(1) not later than four (4) years after the individual's date of**

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hire; and

**(2) one (1) time every four (4) years thereafter.**

SECTION 3. IC 31-27-3-3, AS AMENDED BY P.L.81-2025, SECTION 3, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 3. (a) An applicant must apply for a child caring institution license on forms provided by the department.

(b) An applicant must submit the required information as part of the application.

(c) The applicant must submit with the application a statement attesting the following:

(1) Whether the applicant has been convicted of:

(A) a felony; or

(B) a misdemeanor relating to the health and safety of children.

(2) Whether the applicant has been charged with:

(A) a felony; or

(B) a misdemeanor relating to the health and safety of children;

during the pendency of the application.

(1) Each individual who is an applicant.

(2) The director or manager of a facility where children will be placed.

(3) Each employee or volunteer of the applicant.

(4) Each contractor or individual working in the child caring institution who is likely to have unsupervised contact with children in the child caring institution.

(e) If the applicant conducts a criminal history check under subsection (d), the applicant shall:

(1) maintain records of the information it receives concerning each individual who is the subject of a criminal history check; and  
(2) submit to the department a copy of the information it receives concerning each person described in subsection (d)(1) through (d)(4).

(f) If the department conducts a criminal history check on behalf of an applicant under subsection (d), the department shall:

(1) determine whether the subject of a national fingerprint based criminal history check has a record of:

(A) a conviction for a felony;

(B) a conviction for a misdemeanor relating to the health and



1 safety of a child; or  
2 (C) a juvenile adjudication for a nonwaivable offense, as  
3 defined in IC 31-9-2-84.8 that, if committed by an adult,  
4 would be a felony;

5 (2) notify the applicant of the determination under subdivision (1)  
6 without identifying a specific offense or other identifying  
7 information concerning a conviction or juvenile adjudication  
8 contained in the national criminal history record information;  
9 (3) submit to the applicant a copy of any state limited criminal  
10 history report that the department receives on behalf of any person  
11 described in subsection (d); and  
12 (4) maintain a record of every report and all information the  
13 department receives concerning a person described in subsection  
14 (d).

15 (g) Except as provided in subsection (h) **and section 3.5 of this**  
16 **chapter**, a criminal history check described in subsection (d) is  
17 required only at the time an application for a new license or the renewal  
18 of an existing license is submitted.

19 (h) Except as provided in subsection (i), a criminal history check of  
20 each person described in subsection (d)(2), (d)(3), or (d)(4) must be  
21 completed on or before the date the person:  
22 (1) is employed;  
23 (2) is assigned as a volunteer; or  
24 (3) enters into, or the person's employing entity enters into, a  
25 contract with the applicant.

26 (i) An individual may be employed by a child caring institution as  
27 an employee, volunteer, or contractor before a criminal history check  
28 of the individual is completed as required under subsection (h) if all of  
29 the following conditions are satisfied:  
30 (1) The following checks have been completed regarding the  
31 individual:  
32 (A) A fingerprint based check of national crime information  
33 data bases under IC 31-9-2-22.5(1).  
34 (B) A national sex offender registry check under  
35 IC 31-9-2-22.5(3).  
36 (C) An in-state local criminal records check under  
37 IC 31-9-2-22.5(4).  
38 (D) An in-state child protection index check under  
39 IC 31-33-26.  
40 (2) If the individual has resided outside Indiana at any time during  
41 the five (5) years preceding the individual's date of hiring by the  
42 child caring institution, the following checks have been requested



regarding the individual:

(A) An out-of-state child abuse registry check under IC 31-9-2-22.5(2).

(B) An out-of-state local criminal records check under IC 31-9-2-22.5(4).

(3) The individual's employment before the completion of the criminal history check required under subsection (h) is limited to training during which the individual:

(A) does not have contact with children who are under the care and control of the child caring institution; and

(B) does not have access to records containing information regarding children who are under the care and control of the child caring institution.

(4) The individual completes an attestation, under penalty of perjury, disclosing:

(A) any abuse or neglect complaints made against the individual with the child welfare agency of a state other than Indiana in which the individual resided within the five (5) years preceding the date of the attestation; and

(B) any contact the individual had with a law enforcement agency in connection with the individual's suspected or alleged commission of a crime in a state other than Indiana in which the individual resided within the five (5) years preceding the date of the attestation.

(j) The applicant or facility is responsible for any fees associated with a criminal history check.

(k) The department shall, at the applicant's request, inform the applicant whether the department has or does not have a record of the person who is the subject of a criminal history check and if the department has identified the person as an alleged perpetrator of abuse or neglect. The department may not provide to the applicant any details or personally identifying information contained in any child protective services investigation report.

(l) A person who is the subject of a criminal history check conducted in accordance with this section may request the state police department to provide the person with a copy of any state or national criminal history report concerning the person.

SECTION 4. IC 31-27-3-3.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: **Sec. 3.5. An employee of a child caring institution shall undergo a background check to which the employee is required by federal law to submit for purposes of the employee's provision of**



1                   **child welfare services:**

2                   **(1) not later than four (4) years after the individual's date of**  
3                   **hire; and**  
4                   **(2) one (1) time every four (4) years thereafter.**

5                   SECTION 5. IC 31-27-5-4, AS AMENDED BY P.L.81-2025,  
6                   SECTION 5, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE  
7                   JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 4. (a) An applicant must apply for a group home  
8                   license on forms provided by the department.

9                   (b) An applicant must submit the required information as part of the  
10                   application.

11                   (c) An applicant must submit with the application a statement  
12                   attesting the following:

13                   (1) Whether the applicant has been convicted of:

14                   (A) a felony; or  
15                   (B) a misdemeanor relating to the health and safety of  
16                   children.

17                   (2) Whether the applicant has been charged with:

18                   (A) a felony; or  
19                   (B) a misdemeanor relating to the health and safety of  
20                   children;

21                   during the pendency of the application.

22                   (d) The department on behalf of an applicant, or, at the discretion of  
23                   the department, an applicant, shall conduct a criminal history check of  
24                   the following:

25                   (1) Each individual who is an applicant.

26                   (2) The director or manager of a facility where children will be  
27                   placed.

28                   (3) Each employee or volunteer of the applicant.

29                   (4) Each contractor or individual working in the group home who  
30                   is likely to have unsupervised contact with children in the group  
31                   home.

32                   (e) If the applicant conducts a criminal history check under  
33                   subsection (d), the applicant shall:

34                   (1) maintain records of the information it receives concerning  
35                   each individual who is the subject of a criminal history check; and  
36                   (2) submit to the department a copy of the information the  
37                   applicant receives concerning each person described in subsection  
38                   (d)(1) through (d)(4).

39                   (f) If the department conducts a criminal history check on behalf of  
40                   an applicant under subsection (d), the department shall:

41                   (1) determine whether the subject of a national fingerprint based  
42                   criminal history check has a record of a:



(A) conviction for a felony;  
(B) conviction for a misdemeanor relating to the health and safety of a child; or  
(C) juvenile adjudication for a nonwaivable offense, as defined in IC 31-9-2-84.8 that, if committed by an adult, would be a felony;

(2) notify the applicant of the determination under subdivision (1) without identifying a specific offense or other identifying information concerning a conviction or juvenile adjudication contained in the national criminal history record information;

(3) submit to the applicant a copy of any state limited criminal history report that the department receives on behalf of any person described in subsection (d); and

(4) maintain a record of every report and all information it receives concerning a person described in subsection (d).

(g) Except as provided in subsection (h) **and section 4.5 of this chapter**, a criminal history check described in subsection (d) is required only at the time an application for a new license or the renewal of an existing license is submitted.

(h) Except as provided in subsection (i), a criminal history check of each person described in subsection (d)(2), (d)(3), or (d)(4) must be completed on or before the date the person:

(1) is employed;  
(2) is assigned as a volunteer; or  
(3) enters into, or the person's employing entity enters into, a contract with the applicant.

(i) An individual may be employed by a group home as an employee, volunteer, or contractor before a criminal history check of the individual is completed as required under subsection (h) if all of the following conditions are satisfied:

(1) The following checks have been completed regarding the individual:

(A) A fingerprint based check of national crime information data bases under IC 31-9-2-22.5(1).  
(B) A national sex offender registry check under IC 31-9-2-22.5(3).  
(C) An in-state local criminal records check under IC 31-9-2-22.5(4).  
(D) An in-state child protection index check under IC 31-33-26.

(2) If the individual has resided outside Indiana at any time during the five (5) years preceding the individual's date of hiring by the



1 group home, the following checks have been requested regarding  
2 the individual:

3 (A) An out-of-state child abuse registry check under  
4 IC 31-9-2-22.5(2).

5 (B) An out-of-state local criminal records check under  
6 IC 31-9-2-22.5(4).

7 (3) The individual's employment before the completion of the  
8 criminal history check required under subsection (h) is limited to  
9 training during which the individual:

10 (A) does not have contact with children who are under the care  
11 and control of the group home; and

12 (B) does not have access to records containing information  
13 regarding children who are under the care and control of the  
14 group home.

15 (4) The individual completes an attestation, under penalty of  
16 perjury, disclosing:

17 (A) any abuse or neglect complaints made against the  
18 individual with the child welfare agency of a state other than  
19 Indiana in which the individual resided within the five (5)  
20 years preceding the date of the attestation; and

21 (B) any contact the individual had with a law enforcement  
22 agency in connection with the individual's suspected or alleged  
23 commission of a crime in a state other than Indiana in which  
24 the individual resided within the five (5) years preceding the  
25 date of the attestation.

26 (j) The applicant is responsible for any fees associated with a  
27 criminal history check.

28 (k) The department shall, at the applicant's request, inform the  
29 applicant as to whether the department has or does not have a record of  
30 the person who is the subject of a criminal history check and whether  
31 the department has identified the person as an alleged perpetrator of  
32 abuse or neglect. The department may not provide to the applicant any  
33 details or personally identifying information contained in any child  
34 protective services investigation report.

35 (l) A person who is the subject of a criminal history check  
36 conducted in accordance with this section may request the state police  
37 department to provide the person with a copy of any state or national  
38 criminal history report concerning the person.

39 SECTION 6. IC 31-27-5-4.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE  
40 AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY  
41 1, 2026]: **Sec. 4.5. An employee of a group home shall undergo a**  
42 **background check to which the employee is required by federal law**



1       **to submit for purposes of the employee's provision of child welfare**  
2       **services:**

3           **(1) not later than four (4) years after the individual's date of**  
4           **hire; and**  
5           **(2) one (1) time every four (4) years thereafter.**

6       SECTION 7. IC 31-27-6-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.173-2022,  
7       SECTION 3, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE  
8       JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. (a) An applicant must apply for a child placing  
9       agency license on forms provided by the department.

10      (b) An applicant must submit the required information as part of the  
11     application.

12      (c) The applicant must submit with the application a statement  
13     attesting the following:

14           (1) Whether the applicant has been convicted of:

15              (A) a felony; or  
16              (B) a misdemeanor relating to the health and safety of  
17              children.

18           (2) Whether the applicant has been charged with:

19              (A) a felony; or  
20              (B) a misdemeanor relating to the health and safety of  
21              children;

22              during the pendency of the application.

23      (d) The department on behalf of an applicant, or, at the discretion of  
24     the department, an applicant, shall conduct a criminal history check of  
25     the following:

26              (1) Each individual who is an applicant.

27              (2) The director or manager of a facility where children will be  
28              placed.

29              (3) Each employee, volunteer, or contractor of the applicant.

30      (e) If the applicant conducts a criminal history check under  
31     subsection (d), the applicant shall:

32              (1) maintain records of the information it receives concerning  
33              each individual who is the subject of a criminal history check; and  
34              (2) submit to the department a copy of the information it receives  
35              concerning each person described in subsection (d)(1) through  
36              (d)(3).

37      (f) If the department conducts a criminal history check on behalf of  
38     an applicant under subsection (d), the department shall:

39              (1) determine whether the subject of a national fingerprint based  
40              criminal history check has a record of a:

41                  (A) conviction for a felony;

42                  (B) conviction for a misdemeanor relating to the health and



safety of a child; or

(C) juvenile adjudication for a nonwaivable offense, as defined in IC 31-9-2-84.8 that, if committed by an adult, would be a felony;

- (2) notify the applicant of the determination under subdivision (1) without identifying a specific offense or other identifying information concerning a conviction or juvenile adjudication contained in the national criminal history record information;
- (3) submit to the applicant a copy of any state limited criminal history report that the department receives on behalf of any person described in subsection (d); and
- (4) maintain a record of every report and all information the

(d) maintain a record of every report and all information the department receives concerning a person described in subsection (d).

(g) Except as provided in subsection (h) **and section 2.5 of this chapter**, a criminal history check described in subsection (d) is required only at the time an application for a new license or the renewal of an existing license is submitted.

(h) Except as provided in subsection (i), a criminal history check of each person described in subsection (d)(2) or (d)(3) must be completed on or before the date the person:

(1) is employed;

(2) is assigned as a volunteer; or

(3) enters into, or the person's employing entity enters into, a contract with the applicant.

(i) An individual may be employed by a child placing agency as an employee, volunteer, or contractor before a criminal history check of the individual is completed as required under subsection (h) if all of the following conditions are satisfied:

(1) The following checks have been completed regarding the individual:

(A) A fingerprint based check of national crime information data bases under JC 31-9-2-22.5(1).

(B) A national sex offender registry check under IC 31-9-2-22.5(3).

(C) An in-state local criminal records check under IC 31-9-2-22.5(4).

(D) An in-state child protection index check under IC 31-33-26.

(2) If the individual has resided outside Indiana at any time during the five (5) years preceding the individual's date of hiring by the child placing agency, the following checks have been requested



regarding the individual:

(A) An out-of-state child abuse registry check under IC 31-9-2-22.5(2).

(B) An out-of-state local criminal records check under IC 31-9-2-22.5(4).

(3) The individual's employment before the completion of the criminal history check required under subsection (h) is limited to training during which the individual:

(A) does not have contact with children who are under the care and control of the child placing agency; and

(B) does not have access to records containing information regarding children who are under the care and control of the child placing agency.

(4) The individual completes an attestation, under penalty of perjury, disclosing:

(A) any abuse or neglect complaints made against the individual with the child welfare agency of a state other than Indiana in which the individual resided within the five (5) years preceding the date of the attestation; and

(B) any contact the individual had with a law enforcement agency in connection with the individual's suspected or alleged commission of a crime in a state other than Indiana in which the individual resided within the five (5) years preceding the date of the attestation.

(j) The applicant or facility is responsible for any fees associated with a criminal history check.

(k) The department shall, at the applicant's request, inform the applicant whether the department has or does not have a record of the person who is the subject of a criminal history check and if the department has identified the person as an alleged perpetrator of abuse or neglect. The department may not provide to the applicant any details or personally identifying information contained in any child protective investigation report.

(l) A person who is the subject of a criminal history check conducted in accordance with this section may request the state police department to provide the person with a copy of any state or national criminal history report concerning the person.

SECTION 8. IC 31-27-6.2.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: **Sec. 2.5. An employee of a child placing agency shall undergo a background check to which the employee is required by federal law to submit for purposes of the employee's provision of**



1       **child welfare services:**  
2           (1) not later than four (4) years after the individual's date of  
3           hire; and  
4           (2) one (1) time every four (4) years thereafter.



COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Speaker: Your Committee on Family, Children and Human Affairs, to which was referred House Bill 1357, has had the same under consideration and begs leave to report the same back to the House with the recommendation that said bill do pass.

(Reference is to HB 1357 as introduced.)

DEVON

Committee Vote: Yeas 11, Nays 0

**HB 1357—LS 7076/DI 119**

