



February 10, 2026

ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL No. 1357

DIGEST OF HB 1357 (Updated February 9, 2026 11:40 am - DI 148)

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. Provides that the department of child services may not require an employee to take a separate federally required background check within four years of the employee's most recent federally required background check to provide additional child welfare services.

Effective: July 1, 2026.

Rowray

(SENATE SPONSOR — WALKER G)

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

January 14, 2026, reported — Do Pass.

January 20, 2026, read second time, ordered engrossed.

January 21, 2026, engrossed.

January 22, 2026, read third time, passed. Yeas 88, nays 0.

SENATE ACTION

January 27, 2026, read first time and referred to Committee on Family and Children Services.

February 9, 2026, amended, reported favorably — Do Pass.

EH 1357—LS 7076/DI 119



February 10, 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.

ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL No. 1357

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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- 1 **hire; and**
 2 **(2) one (1) time every four (4) years thereafter.**
 3 SECTION 3. IC 31-27-2-14 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
 4 AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY
 5 1, 2026]: **Sec. 14. If an employee of a:**
 6 **(1) child placing agency (as defined in IC 31-9-2-17.5);**
 7 **(2) home based provider of family preservation services (as**
 8 **defined in IC 31-9-2-44.8);**
 9 **(3) child caring institution (as defined in IC 31-9-2-16.7);**
 10 **(4) private secure facility (as defined in IC 31-9-2-96.5);**
 11 **(5) group home (as defined in IC 31-9-2-48.5); or**
 12 **(6) preventative provider;**
 13 **has completed a federally required background check to provide**
 14 **child welfare services, the department may not require the**
 15 **employee to complete a separate background check for providing**
 16 **additional child welfare services within four (4) years of the date**
 17 **on which the employee's most recent federally required**
 18 **background check to provide child welfare services was completed.**
 19 SECTION 4. IC 31-27-3-3, AS AMENDED BY P.L.81-2025,
 20 SECTION 3, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 21 JULY 1, 2026]: **Sec. 3. (a) An applicant must apply for a child caring**
 22 **institution license on forms provided by the department.**
 23 **(b) An applicant must submit the required information as part of the**
 24 **application.**
 25 **(c) The applicant must submit with the application a statement**
 26 **attesting the following:**
 27 **(1) Whether the applicant has been convicted of:**
 28 **(A) a felony; or**
 29 **(B) a misdemeanor relating to the health and safety of**
 30 **children.**
 31 **(2) Whether the applicant has been charged with:**
 32 **(A) a felony; or**
 33 **(B) a misdemeanor relating to the health and safety of**
 34 **children;**
 35 **during the pendency of the application.**
 36 **(d) The department, on behalf of an applicant, or, at the discretion**
 37 **of the department, an applicant, shall conduct a criminal history check**
 38 **of the following:**
 39 **(1) Each individual who is an applicant.**
 40 **(2) The director or manager of a facility where children will be**
 41 **placed.**
 42 **(3) Each employee or volunteer of the applicant.**



- 1 (4) Each contractor or individual working in the child caring
 2 institution who is likely to have unsupervised contact with
 3 children in the child caring institution.
- 4 (e) If the applicant conducts a criminal history check under
 5 subsection (d), the applicant shall:
- 6 (1) maintain records of the information it receives concerning
 7 each individual who is the subject of a criminal history check; and
 8 (2) submit to the department a copy of the information it receives
 9 concerning each person described in subsection (d)(1) through
 10 (d)(4).
- 11 (f) If the department conducts a criminal history check on behalf of
 12 an applicant under subsection (d), the department shall:
- 13 (1) determine whether the subject of a national fingerprint based
 14 criminal history check has a record of:
- 15 (A) a conviction for a felony;
 16 (B) a conviction for a misdemeanor relating to the health and
 17 safety of a child; or
 18 (C) a juvenile adjudication for a nonwaivable offense, as
 19 defined in IC 31-9-2-84.8 that, if committed by an adult,
 20 would be a felony;
- 21 (2) notify the applicant of the determination under subdivision (1)
 22 without identifying a specific offense or other identifying
 23 information concerning a conviction or juvenile adjudication
 24 contained in the national criminal history record information;
- 25 (3) submit to the applicant a copy of any state limited criminal
 26 history report that the department receives on behalf of any person
 27 described in subsection (d); and
- 28 (4) maintain a record of every report and all information the
 29 department receives concerning a person described in subsection
 30 (d).
- 31 (g) Except as provided in subsection (h) **and section 3.5 of this**
 32 **chapter**, a criminal history check described in subsection (d) is
 33 required only at the time an application for a new license or the renewal
 34 of an existing license is submitted.
- 35 (h) Except as provided in subsection (i), a criminal history check of
 36 each person described in subsection (d)(2), (d)(3), or (d)(4) must be
 37 completed on or before the date the person:
- 38 (1) is employed;
 39 (2) is assigned as a volunteer; or
 40 (3) enters into, or the person's employing entity enters into, a
 41 contract with the applicant.
- 42 (i) An individual may be employed by a child caring institution as



1 an employee, volunteer, or contractor before a criminal history check
2 of the individual is completed as required under subsection (h) if all of
3 the following conditions are satisfied:

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

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

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

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

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

14 (2) If the individual has resided outside Indiana at any time during
15 the five (5) years preceding the individual's date of hiring by the
16 child caring institution, the following checks have been requested
17 regarding the individual:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

12 SECTION 5. IC 31-27-3-3.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
 13 AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY
 14 1, 2026]: **Sec. 3.5. An employee of a child caring institution shall
 15 undergo a background check to which the employee is required by
 16 federal law to submit for purposes of the employee's provision of
 17 child welfare services:**

18 (1) not later than four (4) years after the individual's date of
 19 hire; and

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

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

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

27 (c) An applicant must submit with the application a statement
 28 attesting the following:

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

30 (A) a felony; or

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

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

34 (A) a felony; or

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

37 during the pendency of the application.

38 (d) The department on behalf of an applicant, or, at the discretion of
 39 the department, an applicant, shall conduct a criminal history check of
 40 the following:

41 (1) Each individual who is an applicant.

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



- 1 placed.
- 2 (3) Each employee or volunteer of the applicant.
- 3 (4) Each contractor or individual working in the group home who
- 4 is likely to have unsupervised contact with children in the group
- 5 home.
- 6 (e) If the applicant conducts a criminal history check under
- 7 subsection (d), the applicant shall:
- 8 (1) maintain records of the information it receives concerning
- 9 each individual who is the subject of a criminal history check; and
- 10 (2) submit to the department a copy of the information the
- 11 applicant receives concerning each person described in subsection
- 12 (d)(1) through (d)(4).
- 13 (f) If the department conducts a criminal history check on behalf of
- 14 an applicant under subsection (d), the department shall:
- 15 (1) determine whether the subject of a national fingerprint based
- 16 criminal history check has a record of a:
- 17 (A) conviction for a felony;
- 18 (B) conviction for a misdemeanor relating to the health and
- 19 safety of a child; or
- 20 (C) juvenile adjudication for a nonwaivable offense, as defined
- 21 in IC 31-9-2-84.8 that, if committed by an adult, would be a
- 22 felony;
- 23 (2) notify the applicant of the determination under subdivision (1)
- 24 without identifying a specific offense or other identifying
- 25 information concerning a conviction or juvenile adjudication
- 26 contained in the national criminal history record information;
- 27 (3) submit to the applicant a copy of any state limited criminal
- 28 history report that the department receives on behalf of any person
- 29 described in subsection (d); and
- 30 (4) maintain a record of every report and all information it
- 31 receives concerning a person described in subsection (d).
- 32 (g) Except as provided in subsection (h) **and section 4.5 of this**
- 33 **chapter**, a criminal history check described in subsection (d) is
- 34 required only at the time an application for a new license or the renewal
- 35 of an existing license is submitted.
- 36 (h) Except as provided in subsection (i), a criminal history check of
- 37 each person described in subsection (d)(2), (d)(3), or (d)(4) must be
- 38 completed on or before the date the person:
- 39 (1) is employed;
- 40 (2) is assigned as a volunteer; or
- 41 (3) enters into, or the person's employing entity enters into, a
- 42 contract with the applicant.



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

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

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

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

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

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

15 (2) If the individual has resided outside Indiana at any time during
16 the five (5) years preceding the individual's date of hiring by the
17 group home, the following checks have been requested regarding
18 the individual:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

42 (j) The applicant is responsible for any fees associated with a



1 criminal history check.

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

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

13 SECTION 7. IC 31-27-5-4.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
14 AS A **NEW** SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY
15 1, 2026]: **Sec. 4.5. An employee of a group home shall undergo a
16 background check to which the employee is required by federal law
17 to submit for purposes of the employee's provision of child welfare
18 services:**

19 **(1) not later than four (4) years after the individual's date of
20 hire; and**

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

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

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

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

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

31 (A) a felony; or

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

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

35 (A) a felony; or

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

38 during the pendency of the application.

39 (d) The department on behalf of an applicant, or, at the discretion of
40 the department, an applicant, shall conduct a criminal history check of
41 the following:

42 (1) Each individual who is an applicant.



- 1 (2) The director or manager of a facility where children will be
 2 placed.
 3 (3) Each employee, volunteer, or contractor of the applicant.
 4 (e) If the applicant conducts a criminal history check under
 5 subsection (d), the applicant shall:
 6 (1) maintain records of the information it receives concerning
 7 each individual who is the subject of a criminal history check; and
 8 (2) submit to the department a copy of the information it receives
 9 concerning each person described in subsection (d)(1) through
 10 (d)(3).
 11 (f) If the department conducts a criminal history check on behalf of
 12 an applicant under subsection (d), the department shall:
 13 (1) determine whether the subject of a national fingerprint based
 14 criminal history check has a record of a:
 15 (A) conviction for a felony;
 16 (B) conviction for a misdemeanor relating to the health and
 17 safety of a child; or
 18 (C) juvenile adjudication for a nonwaivable offense, as defined
 19 in IC 31-9-2-84.8 that, if committed by an adult, would be a
 20 felony;
 21 (2) notify the applicant of the determination under subdivision (1)
 22 without identifying a specific offense or other identifying
 23 information concerning a conviction or juvenile adjudication
 24 contained in the national criminal history record information;
 25 (3) submit to the applicant a copy of any state limited criminal
 26 history report that the department receives on behalf of any person
 27 described in subsection (d); and
 28 (4) maintain a record of every report and all information the
 29 department receives concerning a person described in subsection
 30 (d).
 31 (g) Except as provided in subsection (h) **and section 2.5 of this**
 32 **chapter**, a criminal history check described in subsection (d) is
 33 required only at the time an application for a new license or the renewal
 34 of an existing license is submitted.
 35 (h) Except as provided in subsection (i), a criminal history check of
 36 each person described in subsection (d)(2) or (d)(3) must be completed
 37 on or before the date the person:
 38 (1) is employed;
 39 (2) is assigned as a volunteer; or
 40 (3) enters into, or the person's employing entity enters into, a
 41 contract with the applicant.
 42 (i) An individual may be employed by a child placing agency as an



1 employee, volunteer, or contractor before a criminal history check of
 2 the individual is completed as required under subsection (h) if all of the
 3 following conditions are satisfied:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

12 SECTION 9. IC 31-27-6-2.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
13 AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY
14 1, 2026]: **Sec. 2.5. An employee of a child placing agency shall
15 undergo a background check to which the employee is required by
16 federal law to submit for purposes of the employee's provision of
17 child welfare services:**

18 (1) not later than four (4) years after the individual's date of
19 hire; and

20 (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

COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. President: The Senate Committee on Family and Children Services, to which was referred House Bill No. 1357, has had the same under consideration and begs leave to report the same back to the Senate with the recommendation that said bill be AMENDED as follows:

Page 2, between lines 2 and 3, begin a new paragraph and insert:

"SECTION 3. IC 31-27-2-14 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: **Sec. 14. If an employee of a:**

- (1) child placing agency (as defined in IC 31-9-2-17.5);
- (2) home based provider of family preservation services (as defined in IC 31-9-2-44.8);
- (3) child caring institution (as defined in IC 31-9-2-16.7);
- (4) private secure facility (as defined in IC 31-9-2-96.5);
- (5) group home (as defined in IC 31-9-2-48.5); or
- (6) preventative provider;

has completed a federally required background check to provide child welfare services, the department may not require the employee to complete a separate background check for providing additional child welfare services within four (4) years of the date on which the employee's most recent federally required background check to provide child welfare services was completed."

Re-number all SECTIONS consecutively.

and when so amended that said bill do pass.

(Reference is to HB 1357 as printed January 14, 2026.)

EH 1357—LS 7076/DI 119



WALKER G, Chairperson

Committee Vote: Yeas 8, Nays 0.

