



Nathan Deal, Governor

Keith Horton, Commissioner

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Child Placing Agencies

FROM: Dianne Kelly, Foster Care Services Director *D Kelly*

DATE: December 9, 2013

Re: CPS Screening and Information Disclosure Statement for Caregivers

This memorandum is to announce changes in the safety screening process for foster and adoptive caregivers and a new document and requirement regarding the collection, use and sharing of caregiver information.

CPS Screening of Prospective Caregivers

Effective 12/2/2013, the State Special Investigations Unit (SSIU) is responsible for obtaining out-of-state CPS checks (Adam Walsh requirements) for Child Placing Agency (CPA) caregivers. Additionally, SSIU will screen prospective caregivers through the DFCS Office of Financial Independence (OFI) SUCCESS system and Accurint. SUCCESS is an internal data system used by OFI to screen and register clients for the SNAP, Medicaid and TAN-F programs. Accurint (a LexisNexis brand) is a comprehensive subscription database used to verify personal information using public and proprietary information.

For CPS screening requests received since 12/2/2013, there will be a three-part screening response. The response documents are as follows:

1. The CPS response letter which includes any Adam Walsh check results, as applicable;
2. Accurint results; and
3. SUCCESS results.

Sample Accurint and SUCCESS report results¹ are included in this memorandum for informational purposes only. CPAs will not complete Accurint and SUCCESS screenings themselves. Please note that results for prospective caregivers who require Adam Walsh checks will not be returned until the out-of-state clearances are obtained.

A new CPS screening request process has been developed in order to support these new screening processes. The CPS screening application is now a package. **The package consists of the Prior Service Report², CPS Screening Request Form (Agency Page and Applicant(s) Page(s)) and the Financial Statement or Form 44.**

To submit a CPS screening request package, the steps are as follows:

1. Obtain the completed forms from the prospective caregiver(s) and adult household member(s), as applicable.
2. Upload the documents to GA SCORE under the prospective caregivers Initial Approval tab. The “required documents” drop-down menu has been expanded to accept each form type.
3. Email SSIU at cpsscreening@dhr.state.ga.us to request the CPS screening. Confirm in the email that the packet has been uploaded to GA SCORE, identify the prospective caregiver’s name, GA SCORE Foster Home ID and the CPA agency name.
 - a. SSIU will acknowledge receipt of the email request and follow existing processes regarding

¹ The results from Accurint and SUCCESS will be provided via a standardized form to CPAs from SSIU.
² The Prior Service Report is a new form designed to capture a prospective caregiver’s current or previous foster or adoptive service.

notification of results. Timeframes for requests that require Adam Walsh checks are contingent on the other state's response time. SSIU will send screening requests to the other state within three (3) business days of receipt of the CPS screening request.

4. The CPS, Accurant and SUCCESS results will be uploaded directly into the GA SCORE record by SSIU. The CPS result will be uploaded under the Safety tab and the Accurant and SUCCESS results will be uploaded in the Initial Approval information under "required documents".
 - a. SSIU will notify the CPA via email that the CPS results are ready for review.

Annual CPS Screening for Existing Caregivers

As a reminder, annual CPS screenings are required at each reevaluation beginning January 2014. In order to complete reevaluations timely, it is recommended that CPS screenings are requested 30-60 days in advance of the foster home approval expiration. The process for requesting reevaluation CPS screenings is as follows:

1. Obtain the completed CPS form from the caregiver(s) and adult household member(s), as applicable.
2. Upload the CPS form to GA SCORE under the Reevaluation tab. The "required documents" drop-down menu has been expanded to accept the CPS form.
3. Email SSIU at cpsscreening@dhr.state.ga.us to request the CPS reevaluation screening. Confirm in the email that the form has been uploaded to GA Score; identify the caregiver's name, GA SCORE Foster Home ID and the CPA agency name.
4. SSIU will acknowledge receipt of the request and follow existing processes regarding notification of results.
5. The CPS results will be uploaded directly into the GA SCORE record by SSIU. The CPS result will be uploaded under the Safety tab.
 - a. SSIU will notify the CPA via email that the results are ready for review.

Note: Accurant, SUCCESS and Adam Walsh are not applicable to reevaluation CPS requests.

Information Disclosure and DHS HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices

Effective immediately, all existing caregivers and those approved in the future must be provided with the DHS Information Collection, Use and Disclosure Statement. This document explains how caregiver information is shared, stored and subject to Open Records requests. Additionally, the DHS HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices must be signed by the caregiver(s). The HIPAA document is now required at initial approval for new caregivers and must be signed by all existing caregivers by March 1, 2014. It must be included in the reevaluation documentation uploaded for existing caregivers during 2014 and for new caregivers, upload it with the Initial Approval documents.

Thorough safety screening of foster and adoptive caregivers is a critical key to ensuring the well-being of children placed with them. These new changes will assist CPAs with having more complete information upon which to make caregiver approval decisions, streamline the process for requesting CPS screens and documentation in GA SCORE and also provide CPA caregivers with full disclosure regarding use of their personal information.

Thank you for your continued service to children and families. If you have any questions regarding these changes, please contact the Office of Provider Management at opmrequests@dhr.state.ga.us.

Attachments:

Prior Service Report Form
Accurant Sample Results Report
SUCCESS Sample Results Report
Information Disclosure Statement
DHS HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices