



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL RETARDATION**



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***Individual and Family Fact Sheet – CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND CHECK  
Making Good Hiring Decisions***

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***What Is A Criminal History Background Check?***

DMR policy requires all employees receiving DMR funding to conduct criminal background checks on persons who will work directly with individuals with mental retardation.

If you receive money from DMR to hire staff, you must get completed criminal background checks on all people you want to hire before they can start working for you. If you hire your supports through a private provider agency, that agency is required to follow this policy for its employees. All employers must comply with this policy no later than October 1, 2002.

State of Connecticut criminal background checks can be done using name and date of birth only or they can include a fingerprint check as well. DMR policy does not require that the background check include a fingerprint check.

The Department of Public Safety State Police Bureau of Identification in Middletown keeps records of criminal convictions in Connecticut. A person’s criminal record can be found on the state’s database by looking up a name and birth date. Fingerprint-based checks generally provide a more thorough and accurate check of a person’s criminal conviction record.

***Why Is A Criminal Background Check A Good Idea?***

Self Determination and Individual Supports provide you with increased control and choice in your life. Hiring your own staff is one way to get the support you need and to have control over how and when you receive these supports. Completing a background check is one way you can get more information about the people you want to hire.

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**There are options to consider when conducting a criminal background check.**

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## How Do I Check To Find Out If Someone Has A Criminal Record?

First, you must make a formal job offer to the person you want to hire. Let the person know you want to offer him or her a job, but first the person must complete a criminal background check.

There are a few different options you can consider to conduct criminal background checks. You can use the DMR Criminal Background Check Unit, the Department of Public Safety (DPS), or a private company.

The DMR system, called CTSAFEHIRE, is available to you at no charge and uses the fingerprint-based system. The person you want to hire must complete the “applicant identification letter.” You can get an application from your case manager/support broker. He or she will refer you to the DMR Human Resources staff who will fax the completed application to the DMR Criminal Background Check Unit in Hartford. The person you want to hire must then go to the Department of Public Safety State Police Bureau of Identification in Middletown for fingerprinting.

You can also use the Department of Public Safety in Middletown (DPS) without going through the DMR CTSAFEHIRE system. Your case manager/support broker will refer you to the Human Resources staff who will send DPS the name and date of birth of the person you want to hire. This background check cost \$25 and, for an additional \$5, can include a fingerprint check.

In addition, there are several private companies that can conduct criminal history background checks using the person’s name, date of birth and social security number (these do not include fingerprint checks). These companies can be found in the yellow pages or on the Internet. They charge a fee that ranges from \$5 to \$70. The Human Resources staff can assist you with this option also. Your fiscal intermediary may also be able to assist you to do this type of background check.



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## ***How Long Does A Criminal Background Check Take?***

The background check is usually completed in approximately five to 10 business days. Fingerprint-based checks may take longer to complete than background checks that use only the person's name and date of birth. Fingerprints must be taken by trained, qualified individuals, usually the police.

You will need to give your fiscal intermediary a copy of the Criminal Background Check Report as proof it has been completed before you can make a final offer of employment and the person can begin working for you.



**I would like to offer you the job. We will need to complete a criminal history background check before we can have you start working.**

## ***What If I Need To Hire Someone Immediately Because Of An Emergency Situation?***

If you have an emergency hiring situation, you should notify your case manager/support broker and he or she will help you get high priority treatment for completing the criminal background check of the person you would like to hire.

***IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT  
Criminal History Background Checks  
Call your Case Manager/Support Broker***

## ***What If The Person I Want To Hire Has A Criminal Background?***

If someone you want to hire has a criminal background, you should carefully consider the type of crime he or she has been convicted of, when it happened and what the sentence was. Once you have carefully reviewed this information, you can decide if you should hire this person.



**Consider all available information before you hire.**