



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Division of Social Services

2408 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2408

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Sherry S. Bradsher, Director
(919) 733-3055

January 5, 2007

Dear County Director of Social Services

ATTENTION: Child Welfare Supervisors and Program Administrators

SUBJECT: Criminal Record Checks for Adoptive Parents

Since 2005, the Division of Child Development has been identified as the entity to hold responsibility for the consolidated Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) criminal record check processing. The criminal record check processing functions for foster and adoptive families were moved to the DHHS Criminal Record Checks Unit (CRC Unit). County Departments of Social Services (DSS) have been submitting the fingerprints and the required releases of information for all applicants for adoption and foster care and for individuals 18 years old or older who are to be living in the home to the CRC Unit.

When the CRC Unit receives the fingerprints, they process them through North Carolina's database and then send them to the FBI for their processing. When the results are completed, the SBI returns the results to the CRC Unit, who then sends the results to the requesting DSS for adoptive applicants and their adult household members. Results for foster care applicants and their adult household members are sent to the Division of Social Services, Foster Care Licensing Team in Black Mountain. For adoptive applicants and their adult household members where there is a criminal record, the county Department of Social Services holds the responsibility for determining whether to proceed with approving the family for adoption or not.

The CRC Unit asked a year ago that county Departments of Social Services send back to them the final decision for whether the adoptive families were approved for adoption in spite of an individual in the family with a criminal record. This reporting by Departments of Social Services to the CRC Unit has been done as requested in many cases. However, it has come to our attention that this reporting is not done consistently across the state. It is important for the CRC Unit to get these results for a number of reasons. It assists the Unit in tracking unit activity and production through the use of Performance Based Management techniques outlined by DHHS. Such reporting allows for accurate accounting of all applicants that are processed by the Unit. One of the most important reasons for the Unit to have the final decisions is that the Unit would have confirmation that an applicant's information had been received by the county DSS. In an effort to provide continued excellent customer service, it would be beneficial to all entities involved if the Unit had confirmation that the applicant's information had been received

and a final decision had been made. Another important aspect of a final decision notification is to allow the Unit to have a complete accounting of an applicant's information in the data base. Finally, the Unit is asked to report data to the DHHS and on occasion, to representatives of the Governor. It is critical that the Unit is able to provide reliable statistical information on qualified with record/disqualified adoptive applicants and adult family members. Accurate data also allows the Unit to report accurate turnaround times on a monthly and quarterly basis. This type of Performance Based Management data tracking is an important management tool used monthly, quarterly and yearly to assess the Unit's effectiveness.

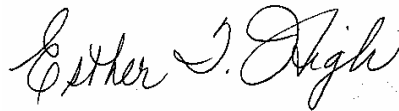
At the request of the CRC Unit, we have agreed to remind county Departments of Social Services of the importance of notifying the CRC Unit when a final decision is made on adoptive applicants and their adult household members who have criminal records. Please use the attached form for this notification. If you have any questions regarding this request, you may contact Sara Anderson Mims with the Division of Social Services at (919) 733-4622.

You may submit the notifications to the following:

NC Department of Health and Human Services
Criminal Record Check Unit
2201 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2201
Tel. # (919) 773-2856 or (800) 859-0829 (in state only)
Fax: (919) 661-6167
Unit E-mail: DHHS.CRC.UNIT@ncmail.net

Contacts:
Sheryl McNeill sheryl.mcneill@ncmail.net
Melynda Swindells melynda.swindells@ncmail.net

Sincerely,



Esther T. High, Acting Chief
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Section

[Attachment](#)

cc: Sherry Bradsher
Jo Ann Lamm
Sarah Barham
Local Business Liaisons Managers
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Team Leaders
Children's Services Programs Representatives
Rob Kindsvatter
Kathy Shepherd
Melynda Swindells
Sheryl McNeill

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