

 <b>VERMONT</b> DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		<h1 style="font-size: 2em;">222</h1>
Chapter:	Residential Licensing	
Subject:	Background Checks: Family Foster Care, Kinship Care and Adoption	Page 1 of 2
Approved:	Cynthia Walcott, Deputy Commissioner	Effective: 1/11/06 FINAL
Supersedes:	Licensing Policy 222	Dated: 7/22/98

## Purpose

To assist licensing and adoption social workers in the interpretation of background checks for foster, adoptive and kinship care providers.

## Policy

The Residential Care Licensing Unit will obtain the following background checks during the licensing or approval process. The Adoption Social Worker will obtain the same checks for adopting parents prior to finalization if it has been more than one year since they were last obtained.

### **For all Applicants and Household Members Age Sixteen or Older**

- Vermont Crime Information Center;
- Child Abuse Registry checks;
- Adult Abuse Registry checks;
- Vermont Case Access System (VCAS);
- Department of Corrections database;
- Motor Vehicle record checks; and
- History of Abuse Prevention Orders.

### **Additional Check for Applicants Only**

- Child Support Arrearage

Any history of problematic behavior revealed by these checks will be evaluated with regard to its impact on:

- The physical safety of children;
- The emotional well-being of children; and
- Appropriate role modeling.

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Among the factors considered are:

- The nature of the offense;
- How recent the offense;
- Number or frequency of offenses;
- Age of the offender at the time;
- Attitude of the offender and the applicant or licensee towards the offense; and
- Evidence of rehabilitation.

When the offender is not the applicant or licensee, the ability and willingness of the licensee or applicant to provide appropriate protection and supervision to foster children may also be relevant.

Overall, offenses against people are considered more serious than offenses against property. Offenses that reflect violence or any offense against a child will be explored, no matter how long ago they occurred. All such offenses will be identified and discussed in the licensing process and the Residential Licensing Unit Director or Supervisor must grant approval.

As provided in 42 U.S.C. § 671, an applicant for foster care, kinship care or adoption may not be approved if the applicant has a history of:

- felony conviction for child abuse or neglect, spousal abuse, a crime against children (including child pornography), or a crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide, but not including other physical assault or battery; or
- felony conviction for physical assault, battery, or a drug-related offense within the past 5 years.