



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

CALIFORNIA HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.cdss.ca.gov



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

September 16, 2022

PIN 22-06-CCLD

TO: ALL CCLD PROVIDERS AND LICENSEES

FROM: *Original signed by Kevin Gaines*
KEVIN GAINES
Deputy Director
Community Care Licensing Division

SUBJECT: GUARDIAN BACKGROUND CHECK BEST PRACTICES

Provider Information Notice (PIN) Summary

PIN 22-06-CCLD notifies all Community Care Licensing Division licensees, providers, and applicants of best practices when initiating a background check and provide step-by-step instructions on how to navigate the application process in the Guardian system.

This PIN provides the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Community Care Licensing Divisions (CCLD), Care Provider Management Bureau's (CPMB) recommendations and updates on the importance of using Guardian to apply for background checks, upload documents, and access self-serve options.

Since Guardian's implementation in 2021, CPMB has experienced unexpected challenges and delays related to the background check process. The Guardian team has been working diligently to assess business practices and make necessary changes swiftly, as well as work with the vendor to resolve technical challenges and identify areas of improvement. CPMB continues to appreciate everyone's patience and diligence in working in the Guardian system to create the best possible outcomes. Since the implementation of Guardian, CPMB has learned more and would like to share best practices that assists with minimizing unnecessary background check delays. As used in this PIN, the term "agency" refers to licensees and the term "applicant" refers to an individual who is the subject of a background check.

In order to eliminate the opportunity for delays, **it is strongly recommended that an applicant's first step should be to start the application process in Guardian rather than going directly to the Live Scan Vendor and submitting fingerprints.** When an

individual goes directly to a Live Scan Vendor and submits fingerprints without first creating an application in Guardian, vital information, such as, but not limited to, the LIC 508 (Criminal Record Statement and Out-of-State Disclosure) questions, email address, and facility association, is not captured. This missing information requires CPMB to request further information from the applicant and creates delays in the background check process. Creating an application in Guardian prior to submitting fingerprints through a Live Scan vendor allows Department of Justice (DOJ) data to match successfully with an applicant's application in Guardian and assists with eliminating unnecessary delays in the background check process.

In an effort to provide the best customer service possible, CPMB is encouraging licensees, providers, and applicants to use the steps below to help navigate the application process in Guardian more seamlessly.

Application initiated by Applicant

Step 1: The applicant will need to obtain an Applicant Instruction Form from the licensee/provider that will provide a unique PIN code to the applicant. This unique PIN code is required to submit an application in the Guardian system.

Step 2: The applicant can then create a profile in the [Guardian Applicant portal](#) and follow the prompts and enter their personal information into the system. *Note: The applicant must have a valid email address to complete this step.*

Step 3: Once the applicant has submitted their application through the Guardian Applicant portal, the licensee/provider will receive a new application alert. The licensee/provider will retrieve the applicant's application under "Not Yet Submitted" queue and can either resume (continue with the background check process) or withdraw (no longer interested in continuing with the background check process) the application.

Step 4: The licensee/provider may then resume and finalize the application. Guardian will generate a prepopulated Live Scan form for the applicant to use when submitting their fingerprints to a Live Scan Vendor. Using the prepopulated form ensures all information on the form is accurate.

Step 5: The applicant takes the prepopulated Live Scan form to a Live Scan Vendor and submits fingerprints.

Step 6: Applicants are currently clearing within approximately 14 days when ALL the following criteria is met:

- No criminal history reported by California DOJ.
- No criminal history reported by Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI).
- No record of California Child Abuse Central Index (CACI) (if applicable).
- The applicant has not lived Out-of-State within the last five years (Children's Residential Program only).

- No match found in the Administrative Action Records System (AARS).

A Clearance letter will be sent to the applicant and the licensee/provider. The letter is also viewable in the Guardian applicant and licensee/provider profiles. *Note: Please keep in mind, pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 1522(c)(2), DOJ has 14 days to provide criminal record history to CDSS.*

In situations where any of the above is not met, the time to process the application will vary. See [PIN 21-22-CCLD](#) for more detailed information on the background check process and when to expect delays.

Detailed user information for the Guardian system can be found starting on page 48 of the [Agency Guardian User Guide](#).

Application Initiated by Licensee/Provider

Step 1: It is recommended the licensee/provider inquire if the applicant has ever been associated to a CCLD agency and, if so, utilize the applicant's Per ID to search for their profile in Guardian. The applicant may have their Per ID from prior documentation received from CPMB.

Step 2: If applicant does not have a Per ID or is unable to provide their Per ID, the licensee/provider should conduct a thorough person search in Guardian to verify if a profile already exists for the applicant. The licensee/provider would use personal identification information (Name/Date of Birth/Social Security Number/California Driver's License) of the applicant to conduct this applicant search.

Step 3: If the applicant is *not* in Guardian, it is recommended the licensee/provider follow the steps in Guardian to **Add New Applicant**. *Note: The licensee/provider will need the applicant's information to complete and submit the application.*

Step 4: After the application has been submitted, the licensee/provider must visit the Application Administration tab to upload a copy of the applicant's LIC 508 or LIC 508D Criminal Record Statement and respond to all associated questions. *Note: Children's Residential facility types need to visit [PIN 21-28-CRP](#) to determine when the appropriate disclosure forms need to be sent to CPMB.*

Step 5: Once the licensee/provider completes the application, a prepopulated Live Scan Form for the applicant to use when submitting their fingerprints to a Live Scan Vendor will be created. Using the prepopulated form ensures all information on the form is accurate.

Step 6: The applicant takes the prepopulated Live Scan Form to a Live Scan Vendor and submits fingerprints. It is recommended that the applicant ensures the facility/organization number (OCA) is entered correctly by the Live Scan operator to avoid errors that could result in unnecessary delays.

Step 7: Applicants are currently clearing within approximately 14 days when ALL the following criteria is met:

- No criminal history reported by California DOJ.
- No criminal history reported by FBI.
- No record of CACI (if applicable).
- The applicant has not lived Out-of-State within the last five years (Children's Residential Program only).
- No match found in the AARS).

A Clearance letter will be sent to the applicant and the licensee/provider. The letter is also viewable in the Guardian applicant and licensee/provider profiles. *Note: Please keep in mind, pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 1522(c)(2), DOJ has 14 days to provide criminal record history to CDSS.*

In situations where any of the above is not met, the time to process the application will vary. See [PIN 21-22-CCLD](#) for more detailed information on the background check process and when to expect delays.

Detailed information on this process can be found starting on page 18 of the [Agency Guardian User Guide](#).

For those licensees and providers that need to create a Guardian account, please submit a Guardian [Licensee User Access Form \(LIC 9277LUA\)](#) to CDSS at GuardianLoginSupport@dss.ca.gov. Once the form is processed, a licensee/provider account will be created and CPMB will issue a new user notification email with a temporary password and link to the Guardian Agency portal. The licensee/provider account holder should expect a response within seven (7) business days.

CCLD appreciates your hard work and commitment to serving children and adults of California. Please take a moment to visit the updated [CPMB Website](#) for additional information, training videos, and other resources. If you have questions regarding this PIN, contact CPMB at 888-422-5669 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Monday – Friday or email Guardian@dss.ca.gov for assistance.

The Department will convey all new information through PINs. [Please sign up to be notified here](#) and [visit the Department's website for the latest PINs](#).