

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2000 SESSION

CHAPTER 860

An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 23 of Title 19.2 a section numbered 19.2-392.02, relating to national criminal background checks by businesses and organizations regarding employees and volunteers providing care to children, the elderly and disabled.

[S 603]

Approved April 9, 2000

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 23 of Title 19.2 a section numbered 19.2-392.02 as follows:

§ 19.2-392.02. National criminal background checks by businesses and organizations regarding employees or volunteers providing care to children, the elderly and disabled.

A. For purposes of this section:

"Barrier crime" means any offense set forth in § 63.1-198.1 or § 63.1-248.7:2.

"Barrier crime information" means the following facts concerning a person who has been arrested for, or has been convicted of, a barrier crime, regardless of whether the person was a juvenile or adult at the time of the arrest or conviction: full name, race, sex, date of birth, height, weight, fingerprints, a brief description of the barrier crime or offenses for which the person has been arrested or has been convicted, the disposition of the charge, and any other information that may be useful in identifying persons arrested for or convicted of a barrier crime.

"Care" means the provision of care, treatment, education, training, instruction, supervision, or recreation to children, the elderly or disabled.

"Department" means the Department of State Police.

"Employed by" means any person who is employed by, volunteers for, seeks to be employed by, or seeks to volunteer for a qualified entity.

"Identification document" means a document made or issued by or under the authority of the United States government, a state, a political subdivision of a state, a foreign government, political subdivision of a foreign government, an international governmental or an international quasi-governmental organization that, when completed with information concerning a particular individual, is of a type intended or commonly accepted for the purpose of identification of individuals.

"Provider" means a person who (i) is employed by a qualified entity, and has, seeks to have, or may have unsupervised access to a child or to an elderly or disabled person to whom the qualified entity provides care or (ii) owns, operates or seeks to own or operate a qualified entity.

"Qualified entity" means a business or organization that provides care to children, the elderly or disabled, whether governmental, private, for profit, nonprofit or voluntary, except organizations exempt pursuant to subdivision A 10 of § 63.1-196.001.

B. Notwithstanding §§ 63.1-198.1 and 63.1-198.2, a qualified entity may request the Department of State Police to conduct a national criminal background check on any provider who is employed by such entity. No qualified entity may request a national criminal background check on a provider until such provider has:

1. Been fingerprinted at any local or state law-enforcement agency and provided two sets of the fingerprints to the qualified entity; and

2. Completed and signed a statement, furnished by the entity, that includes (i) his name, address, and date of birth as it appears on a valid identification document, (ii) a disclosure of whether or not the provider has ever been convicted of or is the subject of pending charges for a criminal offense within or outside the Commonwealth, and if the provider has been convicted of a crime, a description of the crime and the particulars of the conviction, (iii) a notice to the provider that the entity may request a background check, (iv) a notice to the provider that he is entitled to obtain a copy of any background check report, to challenge the accuracy and completeness of any information contained in any such report, and to obtain a prompt determination as to the validity of such challenge before a final determination is made by the Department, and (v) a notice to the provider that prior to the completion of the background check the qualified entity may choose to deny the provider unsupervised access to children, the elderly or disabled for whom the qualified entity provides care.

C. Upon receipt of (i) a qualified entity's written request to conduct a background check on a provider, (ii) the provider's fingerprints, and (iii) a completed, signed statement as described in subsection B, the Department shall make a determination whether the provider has been convicted of or is the subject of charges of a barrier crime. To conduct its determination regarding the provider's barrier crime information, the Department shall access the national criminal history background check system, which is maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and is based on fingerprints and

other methods of identification, and shall access the Central Criminal Records Exchange maintained by the Department. If the Department receives a background report lacking disposition data, the Department shall conduct research in whatever state and local record-keeping systems are available in order to obtain complete data. The Department shall make reasonable efforts to respond to a qualified entity's inquiry within fifteen business days.

D. Any background check conducted pursuant to this section for a provider employed by a private entity shall be screened by the Department of State Police. If the provider has been convicted of or is under indictment for a barrier crime, the qualified entity shall be notified that the provider is not qualified to work or volunteer in a position that involves unsupervised access to children, the elderly or disabled.

E. Any background check conducted pursuant to this section for a provider employed by a governmental entity shall be provided to that entity.

F. In the case of a provider who desires to volunteer at a qualified entity and who is subject to a national criminal background check, the Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation may each charge the provider the lesser of eighteen dollars or the actual cost to the entity of the background check conducted with the fingerprints.

G. The failure to request a criminal background check pursuant to subsection B shall not be considered negligence per se in any civil action.

2. That the Department of State Police shall promulgate such regulations as are necessary to comply with the provisions of this act.

3. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on January 1, 2001.