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HOUSE BILL NO. 2517

Offered January 10, 2007

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A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 19.2-389, 63.2-901.1, and 63.2-1505 of the Code of Virginia, relating to investigations of child abuse or neglect; criminal history records; dissemination of such information.

Patrons—Iaquinto, Athey, Cosgrove, Landes and Welch

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 19.2-389, 63.2-901.1, and 63.2-1505 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 19.2-389. Dissemination of criminal history record information.

A. Criminal history record information shall be disseminated, whether directly or through an intermediary, only to:

1. Authorized officers or employees of criminal justice agencies, as defined by § 9.1-101, for purposes of the administration of criminal justice and the screening of an employment application or review of employment by a criminal justice agency with respect to its own employees or applicants, and dissemination to the Virginia Parole Board, pursuant to this subdivision, of such information on all state-responsible inmates for the purpose of making parole determinations pursuant to subdivisions 1, 2, 3, and 5 of § 53.1-136 shall include collective dissemination by electronic means every 30 days;

2. Such other individuals and agencies that require criminal history record information to implement a state or federal statute or executive order of the President of the United States or Governor that expressly refers to criminal conduct and contains requirements or exclusions expressly based upon such conduct, except that information concerning the arrest of an individual may not be disseminated to a noncriminal justice agency or individual if an interval of one year has elapsed from the date of the arrest and no disposition of the charge has been recorded and no active prosecution of the charge is pending;

3. Individuals and agencies pursuant to a specific agreement with a criminal justice agency to provide services required for the administration of criminal justice pursuant to that agreement which shall specifically authorize access to data, limit the use of data to purposes for which given, and ensure the security and confidentiality of the data;

4. Individuals and agencies for the express purpose of research, evaluative, or statistical activities pursuant to an agreement with a criminal justice agency that shall specifically authorize access to data, limit the use of data to research, evaluative, or statistical purposes, and ensure the confidentiality and security of the data;

5. Agencies of state or federal government that are authorized by state or federal statute or executive order of the President of the United States or Governor to conduct investigations determining employment suitability or eligibility for security clearances allowing access to classified information;

6. Individuals and agencies where authorized by court order or court rule;

7. Agencies of any political subdivision of the Commonwealth for the conduct of investigations of applicants for public employment, permit, or license whenever, in the interest of public welfare or safety, it is necessary to determine under a duly enacted ordinance if the past criminal conduct of a person with a conviction record would be compatible with the nature of the employment, permit, or license under consideration;

8. Public or private agencies when ~~and as authorized or~~ required by federal or state law or interstate compact to investigate (i) applicants for foster or adoptive parenthood or (ii) any individual, ~~and the adult members of that individual's household~~, with whom the agency is considering placing a child or from whom the agency is considering removing a child due to abuse or neglect, on an emergency, temporary, or permanent basis pursuant to §§ 63.2-901.1 and 63.2-1505, subject to the restriction that the data shall not be further disseminated ~~by the agency~~ to any party other than a federal or state authority or court as may be required to comply with an express requirement of law ~~for such further dissemination~~; or as admissible evidence during the civil or criminal prosecution of child abuse, neglect, or related crimes;

9. To the extent permitted by federal law or regulation, public service companies as defined in § 56-1, for the conduct of investigations of applicants for employment when such employment involves personal contact with the public or when past criminal conduct of an applicant would be incompatible

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59 with the nature of the employment under consideration;

60 10. The appropriate authority for purposes of granting citizenship and for purposes of international
61 travel, including but not limited to, issuing visas and passports;

62 11. A person requesting a copy of his own criminal history record information as defined in
63 § 9.1-101 at his cost, except that criminal history record information shall be supplied at no charge to a
64 person who has applied to be a volunteer with (i) a Virginia affiliate of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of
65 America; (ii) a volunteer fire company or volunteer rescue squad; (iii) the Volunteer Emergency
66 Families for Children; (iv) any affiliate of Prevent Child Abuse, Virginia; (v) any Virginia affiliate of
67 Compeer; or (vi) any board member or any individual who has been offered membership on the board
68 of a Crime Stoppers, Crime Solvers or Crime Line program as defined in § 15.2-1713.1;

69 12. Administrators and board presidents of and applicants for licensure or registration as a child
70 welfare agency as defined in § 63.2-100 for dissemination to the Commissioner of Social Services'
71 representative pursuant to § 63.2-1702 for the conduct of investigations with respect to employees of and
72 volunteers at such facilities, caretakers, and other adults living in family day-care homes or homes
73 approved by family day-care systems, and foster and adoptive parent applicants of private child-placing
74 agencies, pursuant to §§ 63.2-1719 through 63.2-1721, subject to the restriction that the data shall not be
75 further disseminated by the facility or agency to any party other than the data subject, the Commissioner
76 of Social Services' representative or a federal or state authority or court as may be required to comply
77 with an express requirement of law for such further dissemination;

78 13. The school boards of the Commonwealth for the purpose of screening individuals who are
79 offered or who accept public school employment and those current school board employees for whom a
80 report of arrest has been made pursuant to § 19.2-83.1;

81 14. The State Lottery Department for the conduct of investigations as set forth in the State Lottery
82 Law (§ 58.1-4000 et seq.), and the Department of Charitable Gaming for the conduct of investigations as
83 set forth in Article 1.1:1 (§ 18.2-340.15 et seq.) of Chapter 8 of Title 18.2;

84 15. Licensed nursing homes, hospitals and home care organizations for the conduct of investigations
85 of applicants for compensated employment in licensed nursing homes pursuant to § 32.1-126.01, hospital
86 pharmacies pursuant to § 32.1-126.02, and home care organizations pursuant to § 32.1-162.9:1, subject to
87 the limitations set out in subsection E;

88 16. Licensed homes for adults, licensed district homes for adults, and licensed adult day-care centers
89 for the conduct of investigations of applicants for compensated employment in licensed homes for adults
90 pursuant to § 63.2-1720, in licensed district homes for adults pursuant to § 63.1-189.1, and in licensed
91 adult day-care centers pursuant to § 63.2-1720, subject to the limitations set out in subsection F;

92 17. The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board for the conduct of investigations as set forth in
93 § 4.1-103.1;

94 18. The State Board of Elections and authorized officers and employees thereof in the course of
95 conducting necessary investigations with respect to registered voters, limited to any record of felony
96 convictions;

97 19. The Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse
98 Services for those individuals who are committed to the custody of the Commissioner pursuant to
99 §§ 19.2-169.2, 19.2-169.6, 19.2-176, 19.2-177.1, 19.2-182.2, 19.2-182.3, 19.2-182.8 and 19.2-182.9 for
100 the purpose of placement, evaluation, and treatment planning;

101 20. Any alcohol safety action program certified by the Commission on the Virginia Alcohol Safety
102 Action Program for (i) assessments of habitual offenders under § 46.2-360, (ii) interventions with first
103 offenders under § 18.2-251, or (iii) services to offenders under § 18.2-51.4, 18.2-266 or 18.2-266.1;

104 21. Residential facilities for juveniles regulated or operated by the Department of Social Services, the
105 Department of Education, or the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse
106 Services for the purpose of determining applicants' fitness for employment or for providing volunteer or
107 contractual services;

108 22. The Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services and
109 facilities operated by the Department for the purpose of determining an individual's fitness for
110 employment pursuant to departmental instructions;

111 23. Pursuant to § 22.1-296.3, the governing boards or administrators of private or religious
112 elementary or secondary schools which are accredited by a statewide accrediting organization
113 recognized, prior to January 1, 1996, by the State Board of Education or a private organization
114 coordinating such records information on behalf of such governing boards or administrators pursuant to
115 a written agreement with the Department of State Police;

116 24. Public and nonprofit private colleges and universities for the purpose of screening individuals
117 who are offered or accept employment;

118 25. Executive directors of community services boards or the personnel director serving the
119 community services board for the purpose of determining an individual's fitness for employment
120 pursuant to §§ 37.2-506 and 37.2-607;

26. Executive directors of behavioral health authorities as defined in § 37.2-600 for the purpose of determining an individual's fitness for employment pursuant to §§ 37.2-506 and 37.2-607;

27. The Commissioner of the Department of Social Services for the purpose of locating persons who owe child support or who are alleged in a pending paternity proceeding to be a putative father, provided that only the name, address, demographics and social security number of the data subject shall be released;

28. Authorized officers or directors of agencies licensed pursuant to Article 2 (§ 37.2-403 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 37.2 by the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services for the purpose of determining if any applicant who accepts employment in any direct consumer care position has been convicted of a crime that affects their fitness to have responsibility for the safety and well-being of persons with mental illness, mental retardation and substance abuse pursuant to §§ 37.2-416, 37.2-506 and 37.2-607;

29. The Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles, for the purpose of evaluating applicants for a motor carrier certificate or license subject to the provisions of Chapters 20 (§ 46.2-2000 et seq.) and 21 (§ 46.2-2100 et seq.) of Title 46.2;

30. The chairmen of the Committees for Courts of Justice of the Senate or the House of Delegates for the purpose of determining if any person being considered for election to any judgeship has been convicted of a crime;

31. Heads of state agencies in which positions have been identified as sensitive for the purpose of determining an individual's fitness for employment in positions designated as sensitive under Department of Human Resource Management policies developed pursuant to § 2.2-1201.1. Dissemination of criminal history record information to the agencies shall be limited to those positions generally described as directly responsible for the health, safety and welfare of the general populace or protection of critical infrastructures;

32. The Office of the Attorney General, for all criminal justice activities otherwise permitted under subdivision A 1 and for purposes of performing duties required by the Civil Commitment of Sexually Violent Predators Act (§ 37.2-900 et seq.);

33. Shipyards, to the extent permitted by federal law or regulation, engaged in the design, construction, overhaul, or repair of nuclear vessels for the United States Navy, including their subsidiary companies, for the conduct of investigations of applications for employment or for access to facilities, by contractors, leased laborers, and other visitors;

34. Any employer of individuals whose employment requires that they enter the homes of others, for the purpose of screening individuals who apply for, are offered, or have accepted such employment; and

35. Other entities as otherwise provided by law.

Upon an ex parte motion of a defendant in a felony case and upon the showing that the records requested may be relevant to such case, the court shall enter an order requiring the Central Criminal Records Exchange to furnish the defendant, as soon as practicable, copies of any records of persons designated in the order on whom a report has been made under the provisions of this chapter.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, upon a written request sworn to before an officer authorized to take acknowledgments, the Central Criminal Records Exchange, or the criminal justice agency in cases of offenses not required to be reported to the Exchange, shall furnish a copy of conviction data covering the person named in the request to the person making the request; however, such person on whom the data is being obtained shall consent in writing, under oath, to the making of such request. A person receiving a copy of his own conviction data may utilize or further disseminate that data as he deems appropriate. In the event no conviction data is maintained on the data subject, the person making the request shall be furnished at his cost a certification to that effect.

B. Use of criminal history record information disseminated to noncriminal justice agencies under this section shall be limited to the purposes for which it was given and may not be disseminated further.

C. No criminal justice agency or person shall confirm the existence or nonexistence of criminal history record information for employment or licensing inquiries except as provided by law.

D. Criminal justice agencies shall establish procedures to query the Central Criminal Records Exchange prior to dissemination of any criminal history record information on offenses required to be reported to the Central Criminal Records Exchange to ensure that the most up-to-date disposition data is being used. Inquiries of the Exchange shall be made prior to any dissemination except in those cases where time is of the essence and the normal response time of the Exchange would exceed the necessary time period. A criminal justice agency to whom a request has been made for the dissemination of criminal history record information that is required to be reported to the Central Criminal Records Exchange may direct the inquirer to the Central Criminal Records Exchange for such dissemination. Dissemination of information regarding offenses not required to be reported to the Exchange shall be made by the criminal justice agency maintaining the record as required by § 15.2-1722.

E. Criminal history information provided to licensed nursing homes, hospitals and to home care

182 organizations pursuant to subdivision 15 of subsection A shall be limited to the convictions on file with
183 the Exchange for any offense specified in §§ 32.1-126.01, 32.1-126.02 and 32.1-162.9:1.

184 F. Criminal history information provided to licensed assisted living facilities, licensed district homes
185 for adults, and licensed adult day-care centers pursuant to subdivision 16 of subsection A shall be
186 limited to the convictions on file with the Exchange for any offense specified in § 63.1-189.1 or
187 63.2-1720.

188 § 63.2-901.1. Criminal history and central registry check for placements of children.

189 A. Each local board and licensed child-placing agency shall obtain and consider, in accordance with
190 regulations adopted by the Board, criminal history record information from the Central Criminal Records
191 Exchange and the Federal Bureau of Investigation through the Central Criminal Records Exchange and
192 the results of a search of the child abuse and neglect central registry of any individual with whom the
193 local board or agency is considering placing a child on an emergency, temporary or permanent basis,
194 including the birth parent of a child in foster care placement. The local board or agency may also obtain
195 such a criminal records or registry search on all adult household members residing in the home of the
196 individual with whom the child is to be placed. The local board or child placing agency shall require the
197 individual for whom a criminal history record information check was requested to submit to
198 fingerprinting and provide personal descriptive information to be forwarded along with the fingerprints
199 through the Central Criminal Records Exchange to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the purpose
200 of obtaining criminal record history information. Such state criminal records or registry search shall be
201 at no cost to the individual. The local board or child placing agency will be required to pay for the
202 national fingerprint criminal history record check or may require such individual to pay the cost of the
203 fingerprinting or the national fingerprinting criminal history record check or both. If the placement is not
204 made because of information obtained through a national fingerprint criminal history or registry search
205 or both, the local board or agency, upon request, shall provide a copy of the information obtained to the
206 individual who is the subject of the search. Further dissemination of the information provided to the
207 local board or agency is prohibited.

208 B. *Each local board also may obtain and consider, in accordance with regulations adopted by the*
209 *Board, the same type of criminal history and central registry check on individuals and all adult*
210 *household members subject to an investigation of child abuse or neglect pursuant to § 63.2-1505.*

211 BC. In emergency circumstances, each local board or licensed child-placing agency may obtain, from
212 a criminal justice agency, criminal history record information from the Central Criminal Records
213 Exchange and the Federal Bureau of Investigation through the Virginia Criminal Information Network
214 (VCIN) for the criminal records search authorized by this section. Within three days of placing a child,
215 the local board or child placing agency shall require the individual for whom a criminal history record
216 information check was requested to submit to fingerprinting and provide personal descriptive information
217 to be forwarded along with the fingerprints through the Central Criminal Records Exchange to the
218 Federal Bureau of Investigation for the purpose of obtaining criminal record history information. The
219 child shall be removed from the home immediately if any adult resident fails to provide such
220 fingerprints and written permission to perform a national criminal history record check when requested.
221 Such state criminal records or registry search shall be at no cost to the individual. The local board or
222 child placing agency will be required to pay for the national fingerprint criminal history record check or
223 may require such individual to pay the cost of the fingerprinting or the national fingerprint criminal
224 history record check or both.

225 CD. A child-placing agency may approve as a foster parent an applicant convicted of not more than
226 one misdemeanor as set out in § 18.2-57 not involving abuse, neglect, moral turpitude, or a minor,
227 provided 10 years have elapsed following the conviction.

228 § 63.2-1505. Investigations by local departments.

229 A. An investigation requires the collection of information necessary to determine:

- 230 1. The immediate safety needs of the child;
- 231 2. The protective and rehabilitative services needs of the child and family that will deter abuse or
232 neglect;
- 233 3. Risk of future harm to the child;
- 234 4. Alternative plans for the child's safety if protective and rehabilitative services are indicated and the
235 family is unable or unwilling to participate in services;
- 236 5. Whether abuse or neglect has occurred;
- 237 6. If abuse or neglect has occurred, who abused or neglected the child; and
- 238 7. A finding of either founded or unfounded based on the facts collected during the investigation.

239 B. If the local department responds to the report or complaint by conducting an investigation, the
240 local department shall:

- 241 1. Make immediate investigation and, if the report or complaint was based upon one of the factors
242 specified in subsection B of § 63.2-1509, the local department may file a petition pursuant to
243 § 16.1-241.3;

244 2. Complete a report and transmit it forthwith to the Department, except that no such report shall be
245 transmitted in cases in which the cause to suspect abuse or neglect is one of the factors specified in
246 subsection B of § 63.2-1509 and the mother sought substance abuse counseling or treatment prior to the
247 child's birth;

248 3. Consult with the family to arrange for necessary protective and rehabilitative services to be
249 provided to the child and his family;

250 4. Petition the court for services deemed necessary including, but not limited to, removal of the child
251 or his siblings from their home;

252 5. Determine within forty-five days if a report of abuse or neglect is founded or unfounded and
253 transmit a report to such effect to the Department and to the person who is the subject of the
254 investigation. However, upon written justification by the local department, such determination may be
255 extended, not to exceed a total of sixty days. If through the exercise of reasonable diligence the local
256 department is unable to find the child who is the subject of the report, the time the child cannot be
257 found shall not be computed as part of the forty-five-day or sixty-day period and documentation of such
258 reasonable diligence shall be placed in the record; and

259 6. If a report of abuse or neglect is unfounded, transmit a report to such effect to the complainant
260 and parent or guardian and the person responsible for the care of the child in those cases where such
261 person was suspected of abuse or neglect.

262 *C. Subject to § 63.2-901.1, each local board may obtain and consider, in accordance with*
263 *regulations adopted by the Board, statewide criminal history record information from the Central*
264 *Criminal Records Exchange and results of a search of the child abuse and neglect central registry of*
265 *any individual who is the subject of a child abuse or neglect investigation conducted under this section*
266 *when there is evidence of child abuse or neglect and the local board is evaluating the safety of the*
267 *home and whether removal will protect a child from harm. The local board also may obtain such a*
268 *criminal records or registry search on all adult household members residing in the home where the*
269 *individual who is the subject of the investigation resides and the child resides or visits. If the child is*
270 *removed from the home, and information obtained through the criminal history record information or*
271 *registry search or both is a factor in such removal, the local board shall provide a copy of that*
272 *information to the individual who is the subject of the search. If a child abuse or neglect petition is filed*
273 *in connection with such removal, a court may admit such information as evidence. Further*
274 *dissemination of the information provided to the local board is prohibited, except as authorized by law.*