



FDLE VECHS ELIGIBILITY GUIDE

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Volunteer and Employee Criminal History System (VECHS) program is intended for entities designed for and/or providing services specifically focused on the vulnerable population(s). The qualified entity is able to screen employees and/or volunteers providing services as described in the application's summary of services, as well as individuals who have access within the entity to the vulnerable population. VECHS is authorized under the National Child Protection Act (NCPA), as amended, and is administered under [Florida Statute 943.0542](#).

To be approved as a qualified entity, an applicant:

- Must be an organization, not an individual;
- Must screen current or prospective employees and/or volunteers performing services to a vulnerable population in Florida;
- Cannot utilize VECHS as a replacement to any legal requirement to perform state and national criminal history record checks on employees or volunteers;
- And must offer a program/programs
 - Providing services such as:
 - Care/Treatment
 - Care placement
 - Education/Training/Instruction
 - Supervision
 - Recreation
 - To one or more of the vulnerable populations:
 - Children
 - The Elderly
 - The Disabled

IMPORTANT

To be approved as a qualified entity, the applying organization, either as a whole or with a specifically defined program, must offer services geared toward members of the vulnerable populations. The VECHS program is not for organizations providing services to the general population. The services must be rendered within Florida, with a Florida operating address.

Contracts, agreements, or requirements by other agencies or entities do not guarantee eligibility or approval for the VECHS program. Entities must qualify for VECHS participation through the criteria above by offering services or specific programs for children, the elderly, or the disabled.

Effective July 1, 2026, Florida Statute 943.0542 allows qualified entities the option to initiate background screenings using the Agency for Health Care Administration's (AHCA) Care Provider Background Screening Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse provides a single data source for background screening results of individuals providing services to children, the elderly, and disabled. For more information on the Clearinghouse please refer to page 3.



VECHS ELIGIBILITY GUIDE DEFINITIONS

Qualified Entity	A business or organization, whether public, private, for profit, not-for-profit, or voluntary, that provides care or placement services for children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities, including a business or organization that licenses or certifies others to provide care or placement services.
Covered Individual (Employee/Volunteer)	"Covered Individual" is an NCPA definition that refers to the person the qualified entity will screen/conduct the criminal history record check on and is defined as any person who: • Has, seeks to have, or may have access to children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities, served by a qualified entity; AND ○ Is employed by or volunteers with, or seeks to be employed by or volunteer with, a qualified entity; OR ○ Owns or operates, or seeks to own or operate, a qualified entity
Care	The provision of one or more of the following to children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities: • Care • Treatment • Education • Training • Instruction • Supervision or • Recreation
Child	Any person who: • Is unmarried and less than 18 years of age • Has not been emancipated by order of the court
Elderly Person	Any person who is over 60 years old
Disabled Person	Any person who has a mental or physical impairment who requires assistance to perform one or more daily living tasks, defined as: • An activity required on a frequent basis that permits an individual to secure or maintain independence. Such activities include, but are not limited to, personal home care, transportation, personal assistance services, housekeeping, shopping, attending school, communication, and employment.



Clearinghouse Background Screening Process for VECHS Qualified Entities

Florida Statute 943.0542 allows those meeting the criteria of a “[qualified entity](#)” under the National Child Protection Act to conduct fingerprint-based state and national criminal history record checks (i.e., level 2 background checks) through the Care Provider Background Screening Clearinghouse (Clearinghouse) administered by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) effective July 1, 2026. If you are determined by FDLE to meet the criteria of a qualified entity and elect to process your level 2 background checks through the Clearinghouse, AHCA will be the agency responsible for reviewing the screening results and determining if your employee or volunteer is eligible or ineligible to work or volunteer with your organization, based on the standards under [s. 435.04, Florida Statutes](#).

If you elect to initiate your background checks through AHCA’s Clearinghouse, the following will apply:

- AHCA will be the agency responsible for reviewing the screening results and determining if your employee or volunteer is eligible or ineligible to work or volunteer with your organization, based on the standards in [s. 435.04, Florida Statutes](#).
- At this time, statute will not allow qualified entities screening through the Clearinghouse access to view the national portion of the criminal history record. You will only have the ability to view the Florida public record version of applicant’s records, if one exists. Independent Sanctioning Authorities (ISA) and Schools are an exception; please see more information below.
- The Clearinghouse allows the results of criminal history checks to be shared among participants when a person has applied to volunteer, be employed, be licensed, or enter into a contract that requires a state and national fingerprint-based criminal history check. This system helps reduce duplicative fingerprinting, as once an individual is screened through the Clearinghouse, the results can be used by multiple agencies. This could result in cost savings for the applicant and the participating entities.
- Fingerprint retention is required. All applicants screened through the Clearinghouse are retained for five years. The fee for retention (an additional \$24) must be paid upfront at the time of the initial screening. The total cost for an applicant will be \$60.

How To Process Screenings Through the Clearinghouse:

New entities applying to FDLE’s VECHS program will need to indicate on the VECHS Application if you would like to screen employees or volunteers through the Clearinghouse. This will allow FDLE to notify AHCA so that access to the Clearinghouse can be requested once you are approved as a qualified entity. Existing entities currently participating in FDLE’s VECHS program will also need to notify FDLE if you would like to begin processing screenings through the Clearinghouse.

The VECHS ORI provided to you by FDLE will be disabled and cannot be used to conduct screenings through the Clearinghouse. One business day after you are approved by FDLE as a qualified entity, you will then be able to request access to the Care Provider Background Screening Clearinghouse Results Website (CRW). Follow the [instruction guides](#) provided by AHCA to register for access to the CRW. Once approved, AHCA will provide your entity with the statewide ORI for employees and volunteers, and you will be able to initiate your background screenings and view the background screening eligibility results.

Schools:

Public school districts, charter schools, specialty schools, and private schools accepting School Choice scholarship funding regulated by Department of Education (DOE) are [required by Florida Statute 435.12](#) to participate in the Clearinghouse. The School will have access to the national criminal history records and is required to remain a qualified entity through VECHS. The School must maintain an updated Specified Agency User Agreement, Agency Contact Form, and required annual training with VECHS.

Athletic Coaches / Independent Sanctioning Authorities:

“Athletic coaches” working or volunteering with an Independent Sanctioning Authority (ISA) as defined in [s. 943.0438, Florida Statutes](#), can be screened through the Clearinghouse effective July 1, 2026. The ISA will have access to view the state and national criminal history records. These will be provided along with the determination of eligibility for the applicant. While using the Clearinghouse, all ISAs must continue to qualify through VECHS for the duration of the organization’s operation. ISAs are required to maintain an updated User Agreement, Agency Contact Form, and required annual training with VECHS.



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AUTHORITY

NCPA of 1993
[COMPS-12610.pdf](#)

Amended by Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/103rd-congress/house-bill/3355/text>

Volunteers for Children Act
<https://www.congress.gov/105/plaws/publ251/PLAW-105publ251.pdf>

Child Protection Improvements Act
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/1625/text>

Florida Law
http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0900-0999/0943/Sections/0943.0542.html

FDLE Rule
<https://www.flrules.org/gateway/RuleNo.asp?title=CRIMINALHISTORYRECORDSDISSEMINATIONPOLICY&ID=11C-6.004>