

**2026 -- S 2173**

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**S T A T E   O F   R H O D E   I S L A N D**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026**

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**A N   A C T**

**RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES -- CERTIFICATION OF CHILDCARE AND YOUTH-SERVING WORKERS AND OPERATORS**

Introduced By: Senators Acosta, DiMario, DiPalma, Mack, Lawson, Felag, Quezada, Zurier, Valverde, and McKenney

Date Introduced: January 16, 2026

Referred To: Senate Labor & Gaming

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1        SECTION 1. Section 40-13.2-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 40-13.2 entitled  
2        "Certification of Childcare and Youth-Serving Workers and Operators" is hereby amended to read  
3        as follows:

4        **40-13.2-5. Criminal records check — Employees of child day care, daycare centers, family daycare homes, group family daycare homes, child-placing agencies and residential childcare facilities that must be licensed by the department.**

7        (a) Any person seeking employment in a "child day care" program, a "family daycare home," "group family daycare home," or in a "child daycare center" as defined in § 42-12.5-2, if  
8        that employment involves supervisory or disciplinary power over a child or children or involves  
9        routine contact with a child or children without the presence of other employees, or any adult  
10      household member of any operator of a "family daycare home" and "group family daycare home,"  
11      or seeking that employment or to volunteer at the training school for youth, shall, after acceptance  
12      by the employer of the affidavit required by § 40-13.2-3, apply to the bureau of criminal  
13      identification of the state police or the local police department, or the office of the attorney general,  
14      or the department of children, youth and families, for a nationwide criminal records check. The  
15      check will conform to applicable federal standards including the taking of fingerprints to identify  
16      the applicant. Further, any person seeking employment in a "child day care" program, in a "child  
17      daycare center," and/or in a "child daycare provider" as defined in § 42-12.5-2, if that employment  
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1 involves supervisory or disciplinary power over a child or children or involves routine contact with  
2 a child or children without the presence of other employees shall apply to the bureau of criminal  
3 identification of the state police or the local police department or the office of the attorney general  
4 to conduct all necessary criminal background checks as required by the Child Care and  
5 Development Block Grant of 2014 (CCDBG), Pub. L. No. 113-186. The criminal record checks  
6 as required by this section shall be conducted for every five (5) years of continuous childcare  
7 employment from the date of the previous criminal background check.

8 (b) Any person seeking employment in a “child-placing agency” as defined in § 42-72.1-  
9 2, if that employment involves supervisory or disciplinary power over a child or children or  
10 involves routine contact with a child or children without the presence of other employees, shall,  
11 after acceptance by the employer of the affidavit required by § 40-13.2-3, apply to the bureau of  
12 criminal identification of the state police or the local police department, or the office of the attorney  
13 general or the department of children, youth and families, for a nationwide criminal records check.  
14 The check will conform to applicable federal standards including the taking of fingerprints to  
15 identify the applicant.

16 (c) Any person seeking employment in a “childcaring agency,” “children’s behavioral  
17 health program,” or in a “foster and adoptive home” as defined in § 42-72.1-2, that is, or is required  
18 to be, licensed or registered with the department of children, youth and families, shall, after  
19 acceptance by the employer of the affidavit required by § 40-13.2-3, apply to the bureau of criminal  
20 identification of the state police or the local police department, or the office of the attorney general,  
21 or the department of children, youth and families, for a nationwide criminal records check. The  
22 check will conform to applicable federal standards including the taking of fingerprints to identify  
23 the applicant.

24 (d) [Deleted by P.L. 2019, ch. 88, art. 3, § 8.]

25 (e) Upon the discovery of any disqualifying information as defined in accordance with the  
26 rule promulgated by the director, the bureau of criminal identification of the state police or the local  
27 police department or the office of the attorney general or the department of children, youth and  
28 families will inform the applicant, in writing, of the nature of the disqualifying information. In  
29 addition, the bureau of criminal identification of the state police or the office of the attorney general,  
30 or department of children, youth and families, or the local police department will inform the  
31 relevant employer, in writing, without disclosing the nature of the disqualifying information, that  
32 an item of disqualifying information has been discovered.

33 (f) In those situations in which no disqualifying information has been found, the bureau of  
34 criminal identification of the state police or the local police department or the office of the attorney

1 general, or the department of children, youth and families will inform both the applicant and the  
2 employer, in writing, that no disqualifying information has been found.

3 (g) Failure to show proof that the employer has initiated requests for background checks  
4 required by this section will be *prima facie* grounds to revoke the license or registration of the  
5 operator of the facility.

6 (h) It will be the responsibility of the bureau of criminal identification of the state police  
7 or the office of the attorney general, or ~~the~~ every local police department, or the department of  
8 children, youth and families, to conduct the comprehensive nationwide criminal records check  
9 pursuant to this section. The comprehensive nationwide criminal records check will be provided to  
10 the applicant for employment. Any expense associated for providing the criminal records check to  
11 an existing employee shall be paid by the applicant and/or the requesting agency. Effective July 1,  
12 2026, any new applicant, which shall include any person who has submitted an application for  
13 employment to any agency or entity regulated by this section, shall be exempt from the payment  
14 provisions of this section and the nationwide criminal records check shall be conducted at no  
15 charge.

16 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES -- CERTIFICATION OF CHILDCARE AND YOUTH-SERVING WORKERS AND OPERATORS

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- 1        Commencing July 1, 2026, this act would eliminate the provision of this section that
- 2        requires new applicants for employment under this section to pay the expense for their criminal
- 3        background checks.
- 4        This act would take effect upon passage.

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