

# Fact Sheet and Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Background Check Requirements

As required by Ohio law, deadlines have been established for licensed educators, professional certificate holders and all non-licensed school employees to complete both an Ohio criminal background check and an FBI criminal background check, conducted by the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII).

## ***Who is affected?***

Please look at the categories below to see how the requirements affect you:

### ***I am a two-year or five-year educator license holder***

Two-year and five-year licensed educators will complete both background checks when they renew their licenses.

### ***I am a professional certificate (eight-year, permanent, or permanent non-tax) holder***

Professional certificate holders, including eight-year, permanent, and permanent non-tax, must have both the BCII and FBI background checks completed by **Sept. 5, 2008**.

### ***I hold both a two-year (or five-year) educator license and a professional certificate (eight-year, permanent or permanent non-tax)***

If you have **both** a certificate and a license but are presently **teaching under** an eight-year or permanent certificate, you need to get the background checks by **Sept. 5**. But if you are **teaching under** the five-year or two-year license, you can wait for the renewal period of your license. **The key is to determine the license under which you are currently teaching.**

### ***I hold a one-year or four-year Educational Aide Permit or one-year Student Monitor Permit***

Permit holders will complete both background checks when they renew their permits.

### ***I hold a one-year or four-year Adult Education Permit***

Permit holders will complete both background checks when they renew their permits

### ***I am a substitute teacher***

As with educators who are employed under a contract with a school district, any substitute teacher who is working under an eight-year or permanent teaching license must complete both the BCI and FBI background check by **Sept. 5, 2008**. If the substitute teacher is working under any other type of teaching license then they would complete the background checks at the time of renewal of the license.

### ***I have a pupil activity permit***

All pupil activity permit holders must have both background checks when they apply for a new or renewal permit. Since background checks are valid for **365 days**, you may be able to use a previous background check that you obtained for another license or application.

### ***I am a non-licensed school employee***

All non-licensed school employees, excluding van and bus drivers, must have both the BCII and FBI background checks by **Sept. 5, 2008**, is the date by which all non-licensed school employees, must have completed the background checks. The checks for non-licensed

employees must be redone every five years. **Non-licensed school employees do not report their results to ODE. Those results should be forwarded to the employing school district.**

### ***I am a school bus or van driver***

School bus and van drivers must complete both BCII and FBI background checks when they renew their six-year certificates. The results of these background checks should be sent to the employer, and not to Teacher Certification. Additional information about driver qualifications and background checks, including frequently asked questions, are available on the pupil transportation page at [www.ode.state.oh.us](http://www.ode.state.oh.us) and searching for keywords: *Pupil Transportation*.

### ***I am a school volunteer***

There is no mandate under HB 190 for school volunteers to complete both the BCII and FBI background checks. The legal requirements for background checks for volunteers are listed in Ohio Revised Code Sections 109.574 to 109.577.

### ***I am a volunteer coach who holds a pupil activity permit***

All individuals who coach for an Ohio school need to have a Pupil Activity permit and to receive this permit you need to complete BCII and FBI background checks.

### ***I am a private contractor hired by a school***

Private contractors hired by school districts, educational service centers, community schools, STEM schools, and chartered nonpublic schools must request background checks for employees who will work in the schools.

### ***I am a physical therapist, occupational therapist, nurse or speech therapist in a school***

These individuals follow the same process as licensed educators. Those with a permanent or eight-year certificate must have the BCII and FBI checks by **Sept. 5, 2008**. Those working under a five-year or temporary license must have the checks at time of license renewal. As with educators, those with multiple licenses or certificates must obtain the background checks dependent on which license or certificate they are currently **working under**.

## ***Process***

### **Where can I go to complete the BCII and FBI background check requirement?**

It is recommended that you first check with your local school district, then neighboring school districts or your region's Educational Service Center. If none of these have the ability to electronically complete both background checks, then check with your local law enforcement agencies or use the Ohio Attorney General's website: [www.webcheck.ag.state.oh.us](http://www.webcheck.ag.state.oh.us) .

### **How do I have the background checks done?**

ODE requests that both background checks (BCII and FBI) be completed **electronically** through WebCheck so the fingerprints will be sent immediately to BCII. This allows for a much quicker processing of the prints and results reported to ODE. Please ask the agency you use if they have both Ohio and National WebCheck machines.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Beginning **June 1, 2008**, everyone in Ohio must use WebCheck **unless:**

1. The individual lives 75 miles away from the nearest WebCheck facility; or
2. The individual has a history of 'bad quality prints' that cannot be captured on a WebCheck screen.

### **Where do I send the results of the background check?**

**Licensed educators** need to have the results sent to the Ohio Department of Education. Please be sure to check **Teacher Certification** on the section of the form that asks where you want the

results to be sent. That will tell the agency you use to send those results to ODE. **Non-licensed school employees** should have results sent to their **employing school districts**.

#### **How long does it take to complete the background checks?**

Completing the fingerprinting process should take no longer than five minutes.

#### **How long does it take for ODE to receive my background checks results?**

The time is dependent on the results of the background check. If you have the results sent to **Teacher Certification**, it will help shorten the processing time. ODE should receive the results within 48 hours. Results may take longer as BCII processing time varies and/or if a record is found during the course of the criminal background check. If a record is found it could lengthen the process to several weeks.

#### **How long does it take for ODE to receive my background checks results?**

The time is dependent on the results of the background check. If you have the results sent to **Teacher Certification**, it will help shorten the processing time. ODE should receive the results within 48 hours. **\*[Please see next question and answer.]** Results may take longer as BCII processing time varies and/or if a record is found during the course of the criminal background check. If a record is found it could lengthen the process to several weeks.

#### **\*How is ODE addressing the reported backlog of processing background checks at BCII?**

As a result of the significant increase in the number of teacher background checks, BCII is experiencing some delays in processing these requests. To accommodate BCII's increased timeline, the ODE's Office of Educator Licensure is extending the length of time the office will hold an application while waiting for the background check. In the past, applications were held for 90 days while awaiting background check results. This timeframe has been increased to **180 days** to accommodate the BCII delays. Teachers are encouraged to have their prints done as soon as possible, even if they need to complete coursework this summer. In that case, the print results can be held at ODE and matched up with the teacher's application when it arrives. **Remember: electronic prints are processed much faster, as a rule, than "inked" or "rolled" prints.**

#### **Can I send ODE a hard copy of my background check?**

ODE does not accept background checks from individuals. We only use the background checks that BCII send and report to us.

### ***Validity period for background checks***

#### **How long are the background checks valid?**

Background check information is valid for one year, or **365 days**, from the date that the background check was completed.

#### **I had my background checks done recently for another job; can I have those results sent to you?**

If the results are less than one year old, you may have them sent by the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation to ODE for use in considering your initial or renewal application.

#### **Do I need to do the background checks every time I send in an application to ODE for a license?**

Current BCII and FBI reports are necessary each time an application for a license or permit is submitted to ODE. Since background checks are valid for 365 days, depending on when you reapply you may still be able to use a previous background check for the newer application, if it is less than 365 days old.

#### **Can I use my background check from another state?**

No, due to differences in state statutes regarding the scope of educator criminal background checks, a clear criminal background check from another state would not necessarily be an indicator that a person would pass the Ohio criminal background checks.

## **Cost**

### **How much should I expect to pay for the background checks?**

The Attorney General's office has established the cost of the BCII background report as \$22 and the FBI report as \$24. **Please note: BCII only accepts certified checks, business checks or money orders, payable to Treasurer-State of Ohio.**

### **Who is responsible for paying for these background checks?**

Unless a local district has made provisions to pay for the background checks, the licensed educator or school employee will be responsible for this cost.

## ***Related questions and contact information***

### **Who can I contact regarding the status of my background checks?**

You can contact BCII at 740-845-2375 or P.O. Box 365, London, OH 43140. You also may check the ODE Educator Profile on the ODE Web site ([www.ode.state.oh.us](http://www.ode.state.oh.us)). (You must establish a SAFE account – look for the gray “Sign in” button on the home page.) You then will be able to see if ODE has a valid background check (BCII and FBI) on file for you. If you cannot find the information you need on Educator Profile, you may call the Office of Educator Licensure at 1-877-644-6338 (toll free) or (614) 466-3593 for assistance.

## ***Special circumstances***

### **My application is on hold for BCII results; do I need to do the FBI background check now?**

If ODE received your application prior to Nov. 14, 2007, you do not have to complete the FBI background check to fulfill your obligation on this application unless it would have required an FBI check prior to HB 190 due to the applicant living outside the state of Ohio within the past five years. If an application submitted prior to Nov. 14, 2007, was declined due to incompleteness or not meeting requirements, a new application would need to be submitted and would require both criminal background checks.

### **Am I notified if my application is on hold for a background check?**

Yes, if your application is on hold pending receipt of the BCII and FBI background checks, you should receive a letter from ODE.

### **What if my fingerprints cannot be taken electronically or by ink?**

You should contact BCII at 740-845-2375 to learn the specifics regarding this and what needs to be done in order to have criminal background checks reported.