

135B.34 Hospital employees — criminal history and abuse record checks — penalty.

1. *a.* Prior to employment of a person in a hospital, the hospital shall do one of the following:

(1) Request that the department of public safety perform a criminal history check and the record check evaluation system of the department of health and human services perform child and dependent adult abuse record checks of the person in this state.

(2) Access the single contact repository to perform the required record checks.

b. (1) If a hospital accesses the single contact repository to perform the required record checks pursuant to paragraph “*a*”, the hospital may utilize a third-party vendor to perform a comprehensive preliminary background check and provisionally employ a person being considered for employment pending completion of the required record checks through the single contact repository and the evaluation by the record check evaluation system, as applicable, subject to all of the following:

(*a*) If the comprehensive preliminary background check determines that the person being considered for employment has been convicted of a crime, but the crime does not constitute a felony as defined in [section 701.7](#) and is not a crime specified pursuant to [chapter 708](#), [708A](#), [709](#), [709A](#), [710](#), [710A](#), [711](#), or [712](#), or pursuant to [section 726.3](#), [726.27](#), or [726.28](#).

(*b*) If the comprehensive preliminary background check determines the person being considered for employment does not have a record of founded child abuse or dependent adult abuse or if an exception pursuant to [subsection 4](#) is applicable to the person.

(*c*) If the hospital has requested an evaluation in accordance with [subsection 2](#), paragraph “*a*”, to determine whether the crime warrants prohibition of the person’s employment in the hospital.

(2) The provisional employment under this paragraph “*b*” may continue until such time as the required record checks through the single contact repository and the evaluation by the record check evaluation system, as applicable, are completed.

c. A hospital shall inform all persons prior to employment regarding the performance of the record checks and shall obtain, from the persons, a signed acknowledgment of the receipt of the information. A hospital shall include the following inquiry in an application for employment:

Do you have a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse
or have you ever been convicted of a crime, in this state or any other
state?

2. *a.* If it is determined that a person being considered for employment in a hospital has committed a crime, the department of public safety shall notify the hospital that upon the request of the hospital the record check evaluation system will perform an evaluation to determine whether the crime warrants prohibition of the person’s employment in the hospital.

b. (1) If a person being considered for employment, other than employment involving the operation of a motor vehicle, has been convicted of a crime listed in subparagraph (2) but does not have a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse and the hospital has requested an evaluation in accordance with paragraph “*a*” to determine whether the crime warrants prohibition of the person’s employment, the hospital may employ the person for not more than sixty calendar days pending completion of the evaluation.

(2) Subparagraph (1) applies to a crime that is a simple misdemeanor offense under [section 123.47](#), and to a crime that is a first offense of operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated under [section 321J.2](#), [subsection 1](#).

c. If a record check evaluation system child or dependent adult abuse record check shows that the person has a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse, the record check evaluation system shall notify the hospital that upon the request of the hospital the record check evaluation system will perform an evaluation to determine whether the founded child or dependent adult abuse warrants prohibition of the person’s employment in the hospital.

d. An evaluation performed under [this subsection](#) shall be performed in accordance with procedures adopted for this purpose by the department of health and human services.

e. (1) If a person owns or operates more than one hospital, and an employee of one of

such hospitals is transferred to another such hospital without a lapse in employment, the hospital is not required to request additional criminal and child and dependent adult abuse record checks of that employee.

(2) If the ownership of a hospital is transferred, at the time of transfer the record checks required by [this section](#) shall be performed for each employee for whom there is no documentation that such record checks have been performed. The hospital may continue to employ such employee pending the performance of the record checks and any related evaluation.

3. In an evaluation, the record check evaluation system shall consider the nature and seriousness of the crime or founded child or dependent adult abuse in relation to the position sought or held, the time elapsed since the commission of the crime or founded child or dependent adult abuse, the circumstances under which the crime or founded child or dependent adult abuse was committed, the degree of rehabilitation, the likelihood that the person will commit the crime or founded child or dependent adult abuse again, and the number of crimes or founded child or dependent adult abuses committed by the person involved. If the record check evaluation system performs an evaluation for the purposes of [this section](#), the record check evaluation system has final authority in determining whether prohibition of the person's employment is warranted.

4. a. Except as provided in [subsection 1](#), paragraph "b", [subsection 2](#), and paragraph "b" of [this subsection](#), a person who has committed a crime or has a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse shall not be employed in a hospital licensed under [this chapter](#) unless an evaluation has been performed by the record check evaluation system.

b. A person with a criminal or abuse record who is or was employed by a hospital licensed under [this chapter](#) and is hired by another hospital shall be subject to the criminal history and abuse record checks required pursuant to [subsection 1](#). However, if an evaluation was previously performed by the record check evaluation system concerning the person's criminal or abuse record and it was determined that the record did not warrant prohibition of the person's employment and the latest record checks do not indicate a crime was committed or founded abuse record was entered subsequent to that evaluation, the person may commence employment with the other hospital in accordance with the record check evaluation system's evaluation and an exemption from the requirements in paragraph "a" for reevaluation of the latest record checks is authorized. Otherwise, the requirements of paragraph "a" remain applicable to the person's employment. Authorization of an exemption under this paragraph "b" from requirements for reevaluation of the latest record checks by the record check evaluation system is subject to all of the following provisions:

(1) The position with the subsequent employer is substantially the same or has the same job responsibilities as the position for which the previous evaluation was performed.

(2) Any restrictions placed on the person's employment in the previous evaluation by the record check evaluation system shall remain applicable in the person's subsequent employment.

(3) The person subject to the record checks has maintained a copy of the previous evaluation and provides the evaluation to the subsequent employer or the previous employer provides the previous evaluation from the person's personnel file pursuant to the person's authorization. If a physical copy of the previous evaluation is not provided to the subsequent employer, the record checks shall be reevaluated.

(4) Although an exemption under this lettered paragraph "b" may be authorized, the subsequent employer may instead request a reevaluation of the record checks and may employ the person while the reevaluation is being performed.

5. a. If a person employed by a hospital that is subject to [this section](#) is convicted of a crime or has a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse entered in the abuse registry after the person's employment application date, the person shall inform the hospital of such information within forty-eight hours of the criminal conviction or entry of the record of founded child or dependent adult abuse. The hospital shall act to verify the information within seven calendar days of notification. If the information is verified, the requirements of [subsections 2, 3, and 4](#) regarding employability and evaluations shall be applied by the hospital to determine whether or not the person's employment is continued. The hospital

may continue to employ the person pending the performance of an evaluation by the record check evaluation system to determine whether prohibition of the person's employment is warranted. A person who is required by [this subsection](#) to inform the person's employer of a conviction or entry of an abuse record and fails to do so within the required period commits a serious misdemeanor.

b. If a hospital receives credible information, as determined by the hospital, that a person employed by the hospital has been convicted of a crime or a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse has been entered in the abuse registry after employment from a person other than the employee and the employee has not informed the hospital of such information within the period required under paragraph "a", the hospital shall act to verify the credible information within seven calendar days of receipt of the credible information. If the information is verified, the requirements of [subsections 2, 3, and 4](#) regarding employability and evaluations shall be applied by the hospital to determine whether or not the person's employment is continued.

c. The hospital may notify the county attorney for the county where the hospital is located of any violation or failure by an employee to notify the hospital of a criminal conviction or entry of an abuse record within the period required under paragraph "a".

6. A hospital licensed in this state may access the single contact repository established by the department pursuant to [section 135C.33](#) as necessary for the hospital to perform record checks of persons employed or being considered for employment by the hospital.

7. For the purposes of [this section](#):

a. "*Comprehensive preliminary background check*" means the same as defined in [section 135C.1](#).

b. "*Hospital*" means a hospital or rural emergency hospital licensed under this chapter.

c. "*Record check evaluation system*" means the same as defined in [section 135C.1](#).

[2002 Acts, ch 1034, §1](#); [2008 Acts, ch 1187, §111](#); [2013 Acts, ch 21, §1, 2, 6, 7](#); [2014 Acts, ch 1026, §31](#); [2014 Acts, ch 1040, §1, 2](#); [2020 Acts, ch 1029, §1 – 3](#); [2021 Acts, ch 80, §68](#); [2023 Acts, ch 16, §18, 20, 21](#); [2023 Acts, ch 19, §166](#); [2023 Acts, ch 119, §19](#)

Department of inspections, appeals, and licensing to post list of third-party vendors eligible to conduct comprehensive preliminary background checks; [2020 Acts, ch 1029, §7](#)

[2023 amendment to subsection 7, by 2023 Acts, ch 16, §18](#), applies to a facility or, due to change in ownership, a successor facility that was, on or before December 27, 2020, a general hospital with no more than fifty licensed beds, located in a county in a rural area as specified in [section 135B.3A](#) with a specified population, and operating on and prior to a specified date under a valid certificate of need; [2023 Acts, ch 16, §20](#)

See Code editor's note on simple harmonization at the beginning of this Code volume

Section amended