

## Report in Brief

Date: April 2020

Report No. A-05-19-00016

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**



### Why OIG Did This Audit

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (CCDBG Act) of 2014 added new requirements for States that receive funding from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) to conduct comprehensive criminal background checks on staff members and prospective staff members of childcare providers every 5 years. Criminal background check requirements apply to any staff member who is employed by a childcare provider for compensation or whose activities involve the care or supervision of children or unsupervised access to children.

Our objective was to determine whether Illinois' monitoring of childcare providers ensured provider compliance with State requirements related to criminal background checks established under the CCDBG Act.

### How OIG Did This Audit

We analyzed and tested a population of 4,817 licensed childcare centers and family homes that received CCDF funding from July through December 2018. We used geographic area and total CCDF funding received to select 15 childcare center providers and 15 family home providers. In total, we reviewed supporting documentation for 327 individuals who were current employees or household members at 30 different childcare provider locations.

## Illinois' Monitoring Did Not Ensure Childcare Provider Compliance With State Criminal Background Check Requirements at 12 of 30 Providers Reviewed

### What OIG Found

Illinois' monitoring of childcare providers did not ensure provider compliance with State requirements related to criminal background checks at 12 of 30 childcare provider locations we reviewed. We found that 2 of 327 individuals did not obtain 1 or more of the required criminal background checks. Specifically, we found that the in-State criminal registry check was not conducted for one individual and all required background checks were not conducted for the second individual. In addition, 47 of 327 individuals had obtained all initial criminal background checks, but the required recurring checks were not conducted within the last 5 years. These errors occurred because Illinois did not effectively monitor the childcare provider criminal background checks. By not ensuring that all childcare staff members who supervised or had routine unsupervised contact with children passed all initial or recurring criminal background checks within the last 5 years, Illinois potentially jeopardized the safety of children in its care.

### What OIG Recommends and Illinois Comments

We recommend that Illinois (1) conduct all required criminal background checks for the 2 individuals we reviewed who did not have all required checks at the time of our data requests and site visits, (2) conduct all required criminal background checks for the 47 individuals we reviewed who did not have all recurring checks conducted within the last 5 years, (3) ensure that childcare providers notify the State when a new employee is hired or a new household member is added so that the State may conduct the required criminal background checks, and (4) work with the State licensing agency to address staff and funding challenges to ensure that background checks are conducted on all licensed providers' employees or household members at least once every 5 years.

In written comments on our draft report, Illinois partially agreed with our findings. Illinois said that the new requirements in the CCDBG Act were a huge undertaking and that the State licensing agency worked understaffed but diligently to ensure that childcare staff remained in compliance. The State licensing agency assured Illinois that all childcare employees across the State will have complete comprehensive background checks by December 2022. In addition, Illinois described the corrective actions it has taken or plans to take to address our recommendations.