

Division of Specialized Care for Children

Ensuring Safety and Care in the Home Care Program

At the Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC), we are committed to maintaining the health, safety and welfare of your children. To achieve this, we put in place rigorous background checks for nursing staff. We also use a thorough incident reporting process.



Background Checks for Nurses and CNAs

Purpose of Background Checks

We conduct comprehensive background checks on all nurses and certified nursing assistants (CNAs) before they provide care for your family. These background checks then occur annually thereafter.

These checks ensure that all paid caregivers have:

- Valid, unencumbered Illinois licenses
- No sanctions or exclusions from federal or state healthcare programs

Required Checks Include:

- Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) Office of Inspector General
- Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Inspector General
- Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) (for nurses)
- Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Health Care Worker Registry (for CNAs)

Verification Process

1. Initial Verification:

- Nursing agencies submit new hire details to their DSCC Nursing Agency Liaison. These liaisons support assigned agencies, conduct agency staff background checks and review incident reports. They also perform annual (and as needed) quality assurance reviews to ensure compliance with HFS requirements.
- Care Coordinators can also send new hire details to DSCC's Home Care Quality Improvement (HCQI) team when informed by the family/agency, such as for nurse training hours requests.
- The liaison checks existing verifications in our electronic system.
- The liaison conducts an HCQI safety check if no recent verification exists for the new hire.
- The liaison documents the results and informs agencies of eligibility.

2. Annual Verification:

- DSCC's Nursing Agency Liaisons conduct annual verification similarly to the initial verification to ensure ongoing compliance.

Watch List Management

What is the Watch List? The Watch List tracks individuals who may pose a health and safety risk to DSCC participants. The Watch List helps us either monitor them or restrict their involvement in current or future cases. Reasons for adding a nurse or CNA to the Watch List include:

- Instances of professional negligence
- Misconduct
- Neglect
- Abuse
- Criminal activity
- Exploitation
- Medicaid fraud

This process also ensures compliance with reporting requirements. It also tracks healthcare workers who may pose a risk to patients outside the DSCC population and ensures we report them to the appropriate external partners.

To recap, the Watch List operates by:

- **Maintenance:** DSCC's HCQI team maintains the Watch List and reviews it every six months.
- **Placement:** The HCQI team can add individuals for monitoring based on specific incidents.
- **Eligibility Decisions:** The HCQI team makes careful consultations to prioritize participant safety.

Incident Reporting Procedures

Definition of an Incident

An incident is any occurrence that affects or could affect participant safety, categorized as:

- **Critical Incidents:** Significant risks (e.g., abuse, neglect, medical emergencies).
- **Non-Critical Incidents:** Less severe occurrences (e.g., minor accidents).

Purpose of Incident Reporting

1. Communicate risks promptly and guide necessary follow-up actions.
2. Inform stakeholders about actions taken to mitigate risks.
3. Track incidents for analysis and program improvement.

Reporting Process

- **Critical Incidents:**
 1. Immediate hotline reporting, if required.
 2. Notify a manager and HCQI for additional support and tracking. DSCC staff submit an incident report within 24 hours.
 3. The HCQI team reviews the incident to ensure root cause corrective actions are in place.
 4. DSCC staff follow up with the family and adjust person-centered plans as needed.
- **Non-Critical Incidents:**
 1. Report within two days and notify a manager.
 2. The manager reviews the report and ensures proper handling.
 3. The HCQI team reviews to ensure root cause corrective actions are in place.



Timelines for Reporting

- **Critical Incidents:** DSCC staff must report within 24 hours, and a manager must review within two days. DSCC's Quality Improvement Team reviews the incident within five days.
- **Non-Critical Incidents:** DSCC staff must report within two days, and a manager must review within the same timeframe. DSCC's Quality Improvement Team reviews within seven days.

Special Cases

- **Participant Deaths:** DSCC reports all child deaths to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). DSCC reports all adult deaths to Adult Protective Services (APS) only if abuse or neglect is suspected.

Training

All DSCC staff undergo initial and annual training on incident reporting procedures to ensure high standards of safety and care. In addition to manager support and oversight, the HCQI team assigns a dedicated technical assistant to support the care coordination team and reinforce incident training.

Commitment to Safety

At DSCC, we prioritize the well-being of your child through:

- Rigorous background checks on all nursing staff.
- A structured incident reporting system that enhances safety and accountability.
- Continuous training and improvement based on incident analysis. This training happens quarterly by DSCC Quality Improvement Leadership.
- **Filing a grievance:** You can file a grievance at any time. If you have concerns about a specific situation, please notify your Care Coordinator immediately. If you have concerns that are not addressed through your care coordination team, please submit a grievance online through our website at <https://dsc.uic.edu/submit-a-grievance/>.



If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your Care Coordinator.

Your child's safety is our highest priority!

Visit our website at dsc.uic.edu.

