

ADVISORY: Changes to Payment for Background Study Applications coming in 2024

Significant changes are coming to employment background studies that will impact your organization.

Effective February 1, 2024, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) regulated providers, who do not currently pay for background study fees, will be responsible for paying the Department of Human Services (DHS) directly for all background studies initiated for current or prospective employees.

On that date, the NETStudy 2.0 system will display a payment screen for background study applications submitted. The cost for each background study application is \$44.

Why is this change happening?

Changes to the [Background Studies Act](#) in 2021 made applicants and licensees regulated by MDH responsible for paying all fees associated with the preparation of fingerprints, criminal records check consent form, and criminal background check.

MDH has paid the costs for background studies for some providers for years. However, changes to the Department of Human Services Background Studies Act, Minnesota Statute § 245C.10, were enacted by the legislature in 2021 and 2023, resulting in background study fee increases. The increase in fees has made MDH's continued subsidy of applicant background studies financially and administratively unsustainable.

What does this change mean for providers?

Providers will now be responsible for paying the background study fee directly to DHS for each application submitted into NETStudy 2.0. Providers may also choose to have the study subject pay the fee. Detailed steps for submitting this payment are available as a technical assistance video, [NETStudy 2.0 Background Study Payment](#), or information can be found within the NETStudy 2.0 User Manual available in the help section of NETStudy 2.0.

MDH recommends providers start assessing the number of background study applications they will need to submit on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis to estimate projected background study budgets. Providers should also begin planning for this change by considering how to efficiently navigate the application process to avoid costly resubmissions. The most common reasons for resubmitting a background study are:

1. Individuals do not complete the fingerprint and photo requirements within the 14-day timeframe.
2. Individuals do not complete and submit the consent and disclosure form required by NETStudy 2.0, or if the subject declines the consent and disclosure in error.
3. The provider withdrew the request for a background study after submitting, but later decides it will pursue hiring the individual and submits a new background study application.

How is MDH and/or DHS assisting with the transition?

MDH will be providing additional guidance as the February 1, 2024, transition date approaches. The NETStudy 2.0 User Manual is a great resource for providers to become acquainted with the payment procedure. For technical assistance, or to troubleshoot issues encountered with NETStudy 2.0, call DHS Background Studies Division's Contact Center at (651) 431-6620, or send your questions via email to: dhs.netstudy2@state.mn.us.