

RCW 43.43.830 Background checks—Access to children or vulnerable persons—Definitions. Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this section and RCW 43.43.832 through 43.43.845.

(1) "Agency" means any person, firm, partnership, association, corporation, or facility which receives, provides services to, houses or otherwise cares for vulnerable adults, juveniles, or children, or which provides child day care, early learning, or early childhood education services.

(2) "Applicant" means:

(a) Any prospective employee, volunteer, or contractor who will or may have supervised or unsupervised access to children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities during the course of his or her employment or involvement with the business or organization;

(b) Any prospective volunteer who will have regularly scheduled unsupervised access to children under sixteen years of age, developmentally disabled persons, or vulnerable adults during the course of his or her employment or involvement with the business or organization under circumstances where such access will or may involve groups of (i) five or fewer children under twelve years of age, (ii) three or fewer children between twelve and sixteen years of age, (iii) developmentally disabled persons, or (iv) vulnerable adults;

(c) Any prospective adoptive parent, as defined in RCW 26.33.020; or

(d) Any prospective custodian in a nonparental custody proceeding under *chapter 26.10 RCW.

(3) "Business or organization" means a person, business, or organization licensed in this state, any agency of the state, or other governmental entity, that educates, trains, treats, supervises, houses, or provides recreation to developmentally disabled persons, vulnerable adults, or children under sixteen years of age, or that provides child day care, early learning, or early learning childhood education services, including but not limited to public housing authorities, school districts, and educational service districts.

(4) "Care" means the provision of care, treatment, education, training, instruction, supervision, or recreation to children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities.

(5) "Civil adjudication proceeding" is a judicial or administrative adjudicative proceeding that results in a finding of, or upholds an agency finding of, domestic violence, abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, abandonment, violation of a professional licensing standard regarding a child or vulnerable adult, or exploitation or financial exploitation of a child or vulnerable adult under any provision of law, including but not limited to chapter 13.34, 26.44, or 74.34 RCW, or rules adopted under chapters 18.51 and 74.42 RCW. "Civil adjudication proceeding" also includes judicial or administrative findings that become final due to the failure of the alleged perpetrator to timely exercise a legal right to administratively challenge such findings.

(6) "Client" or "resident" means a child, person with developmental disabilities, or vulnerable adult applying for housing assistance from a business or organization.

(7) "Conviction record" means "conviction record" information as defined in RCW 10.97.030 and **10.97.050 relating to a crime committed by either an adult or a juvenile. It does not include a conviction for an offense that has been the subject of an expungement, pardon,

annulment, certificate of rehabilitation, or other equivalent procedure based on a finding of the rehabilitation of the person convicted, or a conviction that has been the subject of a pardon, annulment, or other equivalent procedure based on a finding of innocence. It does include convictions for offenses for which the defendant received a deferred or suspended sentence, unless the record has been expunged according to law.

(8) "Covered individual" means an individual:

(a) Who has, seeks to have, or may have access to children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities, served by a qualified entity; and

(b) Who:

(i) Is employed by, volunteers with, or contracts with, or seeks to be employed by or volunteer or contract with a qualified entity; or

(ii) Owns or operates or seeks to own or operate, a qualified entity.

(9) "Crime against children or other persons" means a conviction of any of the following offenses: Aggravated murder; first or second degree murder; first or second degree kidnapping; first, second, or third degree assault; fourth degree assault (if a violation of RCW 9A.36.041(3)); first, second, or third degree assault of a child; first, second, or third degree rape; first, second, or third degree rape of a child; first or second degree robbery; first degree arson; first degree burglary; first or second degree manslaughter; first or second degree extortion; indecent liberties; incest; vehicular homicide; first degree promoting prostitution; communication with a minor; unlawful imprisonment; simple assault; sexual exploitation of minors; first or second degree criminal mistreatment; endangerment with a controlled substance; child abuse or neglect as defined in RCW 26.44.020; first or second degree custodial interference; first or second degree custodial sexual misconduct; hate crime; first, second, or third degree child molestation; first or second degree sexual misconduct with a minor; commercial sexual abuse of a minor; child abandonment; promoting pornography; selling or distributing erotic material to a minor; custodial assault; violation of child abuse restraining order; child buying or selling; prostitution; felony indecent exposure; criminal abandonment; or any of these crimes as they may be renamed in the future.

(10) "Crimes relating to drugs" means a conviction of a crime to manufacture, delivery, or possession with intent to manufacture or deliver a controlled substance.

(11) "Crimes relating to financial exploitation" means a conviction for first, second, or third degree extortion; first, second, or third degree theft; first or second degree robbery; forgery; or any of these crimes as they may be renamed in the future.

(12) "Elderly" means a person 60 years of age or older.

(13) "Financial exploitation" means "financial exploitation" as defined in RCW 74.34.020.

(14) "Health care facility" means a nursing home licensed under chapter 18.51 RCW, an assisted living facility licensed under chapter 18.20 RCW, or an adult family home licensed under chapter 70.128 RCW.

(15) "Individuals with disabilities" means persons with the functional, mental, or physical inability to care for themselves, individuals with developmental disabilities, or individuals subject to a conservatorship or guardianship.

(16) "Peer counselor" means a nonprofessional person who has equal standing with another person, providing advice on a topic about

which the nonprofessional person is more experienced or knowledgeable, and who is a counselor for a peer counseling program that contracts with or is otherwise approved by the department, another state or local agency, or the court.

(17) "Qualified entity" means a business or organization, whether public, private, for profit, not for profit, or voluntary, that provides care or care placement services, including a business or organization that licenses or certifies others to provide care or care placement services.

(18) "Unsupervised" means not in the presence of:

(a) Another employee or volunteer from the same business or organization as the applicant; or

(b) Any relative or guardian of any of the children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities to which the applicant has access during the course of his or her employment or involvement with the qualified entity, business, or organization.

With regard to peer counselors, "unsupervised" does not include incidental contact with children under age sixteen at the location at which the peer counseling is taking place. "Incidental contact" means minor or casual contact with a child in an area accessible to and within visual or auditory range of others. It could include passing a child while walking down a hallway but would not include being alone with a child for any period of time in a closed room or office.

(19) "Vulnerable adult" means "vulnerable adult" as defined in chapter 74.34 RCW, except that for the purposes of requesting and receiving background checks pursuant to RCW 43.43.832, it shall also include adults of any age who lack the functional, mental, or physical ability to care for themselves. [2025 c 60 s 1; 2019 c 271 s 10; 2017 c 272 s 5; 2012 c 44 s 1. Prior: 2011 c 253 s 5; 2007 c 387 s 9; 2005 c 421 s 1; 2003 c 105 s 5; 2002 c 229 s 3; 1999 c 45 s 5; 1998 c 10 s 1; 1996 c 178 s 12; 1995 c 250 s 1; 1994 c 108 s 1; 1992 c 145 s 16; prior: 1990 c 146 s 8; 1990 c 3 s 1101; prior: 1989 c 334 s 1; 1989 c 90 s 1; 1987 c 486 s 1.]

Reviser's note: *(1) Chapter 26.10 RCW, with the exception of RCW 26.10.115, was repealed by 2020 c 312 s 905. RCW 26.10.115 was repealed by 2021 c 215 s 170, effective July 1, 2022.

** (2) RCW 10.97.050 was amended by 2012 c 125 s 2, eliminating the limitation on what may be included in a conviction record.

Effective date—2002 c 229: See note following RCW 9A.42.100.

Effective date—1996 c 178: See note following RCW 18.35.110.

At-risk children volunteer program: RCW 43.150.080.

State hospitals: RCW 72.23.035.