

First Time Applicant Information

Criminal History Investigation

Under W. Va. Code section 18A-3-10, applicants for initial licensure in the state of West Virginia are required to undergo a criminal history investigation completed by both the West Virginia State Police and Federal Bureau of Investigation. **It is necessary for ALL first time applicants to complete a fingerprint/background check as part of the initial application process.**

- When seeking employment within the West Virginia public school system, individuals must work closely with their potential employer(s) to receive detailed instructions on how one may meet this requirement (process may or may not be as described below).

A first time applicant is an individual who has never applied for licensure and/or certification or was never issued a certificate, license, authorization or permit from the West Virginia Department of Education. If you are a first time applicant, you must complete a fingerprinting/background check process in the state of WV to be eligible for any license, certificate, authorization, or permit. Individuals who apply for a clinical experience permit must complete an additional background check after completion of the experience, upon applying for additional licensure to work in West Virginia public schools. Background checks performed for other agencies, states, or conducted outside of the required WV process will NOT be accepted. A **Form 7 (notarized)** must also be included with your application submitted to the WV Department of Education.

If you are located in WV, you may schedule an appointment for a background check with MorphoTrust (formerly L1 Solutions) online at <http://www.identogo.com> or you may schedule via telephone at (855) 766-7746. Use the following step-by-step directions to schedule an appointment online:

- Visit <http://www.identogo.com>
- Choose West Virginia under “Search for Service by State” and then click the “Go” button
- Under “Enrollment Services” select “State Fingerprinting”
- Select “Make a New Appointment” to start the appointment process
- Under the “Type of Background Check” select “Education” and then click “Continue”
- Select “(WVDE) Certification/Licensure – Applicant Pays” as the reason for fingerprinting and click “Continue”
- Confirm that you wish to send your State Police and FBI fingerprint results to WV Department of Education by selecting “Yes” and clicking “Continue”
- Under “Services” the screen should identify the WV Department of Education Certification, click “Continue”
- Complete the details section information, set an appointment, review and confirm your request and submit to establish your appointment.

If you are located outside of WV or will not be able to appear in person at one of the LiveScan fingerprint locations, you may request fingerprint cards from our office via our website

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/certification/forms/fingerprint.html>. Two cards will be mailed to you. You must complete all necessary information and have your prints inked on the cards and send to MorphoTrust (L1) to Springfield, IL along with a completed Hard Card form and payment.

This form may be downloaded at

http://wvde.state.wv.us/certification/forms/documents/WV_Card_Scan_Form.pdf

Please note that for both options listed above payment must be made directly to MorphoTrust. The cost for fingerprinting for licensure purposes is \$44.50. If you are asked to pay a different amount, you are selecting the wrong process. **Do not include** the fingerprint fee with your application to the WVDE. As a reminder, background checks are non-refundable. If you select the incorrect process, you will be required to do be printed again and repay the necessary fees. If you are not applying for first-time licensure DO NOT select any of the above options. If we receive background results and those results were not for licensure application purposes the WVDE will not be able to share those or provide those to you or the school county of employment.

There may be reason(s) for the fingerprints as part of a background check to be rejected by the WV state police or FBI. All fingerprints are first evaluated by the WV state police and then sent to the FBI for evaluation once initially approved by the WV state police. When fingerprints are rejected a first time, it may be necessary for an applicant to resubmit their fingerprints either in-person or if fingerprints were submitted by a fingerprint card, the second card submitted will be used automatically. You will receive notification and detailed instructions from the Office of Certification and Professional Preparation if action is required on your part about how to proceed and meet complete background check requirements. If the fingerprints continue to be rejected additional times by either the WV state police or FBI, the organization may request completion of the requirement by using an alternative search at no additional cost. The Office of Certification and Professional Preparation will continue to notify applicants of any required actions until the background check process has concluded.

Service personnel (except first-time ECCAT applicants), professional personnel transferring between counties, and all others required by a WV county board to complete a fingerprint/background check, should not select the options listed above. You must check with your county of employment to designate the county as the recipient of the results.

As per Title 28.CFR, 16.34, you have the right to challenge the completeness or accuracy of your criminal history record by contacting the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) directly. To challenge your WV State Police Criminal History Record, please visit <https://www.wvsp.gov> and complete a WVSP 136A form.

Form 4B

If you are currently employed in the WV school system, you will need to acquire the appropriate signature(s) from your employer. If you are employed in an educational setting other than a WV public school, please obtain the recommendation of your immediate supervisor. If you are not currently employed by in the WV school system, application Form 4B may be used to obtain a **character recommendation**.