



## PUBLIC NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE CHANGES

Pursuant to the Georgia Administrative Procedure Act, Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.) § 50-13-1 et seq., the Georgia Department of Community Health is required to provide public notice of its intent to adopt, amend, or repeal certain rules, other than interpretive rules or general statements of policy. Accordingly, the Department hereby provides notice of its intent to revise its Rules and Regulations for Healthcare Facility Regulation, Nursing Homes, specifically Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. r. 111-8-56-.15, *Health of Employees*, and Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. r. 111-8-56-.26, *Background Screening and Employees*. These proposed changes are needed to update health screening requirements for employees and to provide conformity with the Rules and Regulations for Criminal Background Checks, Chapter 111-8-12. An exact copy of the revised rules and a synopsis of the revisions are attached to this public notice.

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

An opportunity for public comment will be held on May 5, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom. There will be no in-person attendance at the Department of Community Health. The Zoom meeting ID number is 821 9859 0290 and the event password is "548516". Follow these instructions to join the event:

1. Click the link or copy and paste the link text to a browser:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82198590290?pwd=avUbtaGq0sUapm6eJG5DejskysAa1S.1>

2. Click "Join Now"

To join by telephone: One tap mobile

+16465588656,,82198590290#,,, \*548516# US (New York)  
+16469313860,,82198590290#,,, \*548516# US

Oral comments will be limited to ten (10) minutes per person. Individuals who are disabled and require assistance to participate during this meeting should contact the Office of General Counsel at (470) 259-0735 at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting.

Individuals wishing to comment in writing on any of the proposed changes must do so on or before May 7, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Due to reduced physical staffing at the 2 M.L.K., Jr. Drive, SE location, DCH encourages written public comments submitted in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 50-13-4(a)(2) to be submitted via e-mail to the following e-mail address: [Public.Comment@dch.ga.gov](mailto:Public.Comment@dch.ga.gov). *Please note that any comments submitted are subject to open records.*



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT  
OF COMMUNITY HEALTH

Written comments may be submitted via regular mail to the following address:

Attention: Alycia Allgood  
Office of General Counsel  
Georgia Department of Community Health  
2 M.L.K. Jr. Drive, SE, 18<sup>th</sup> Floor, East Tower  
Atlanta, GA 30334

If the proposed changes are presented to the Board for final action, relevant comments from written and public testimony will be provided to the Board. The Board expects to vote on the proposed changes at the Board meeting to be held on June 11, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. at the Department of Community Health unless withdrawn or withheld by the Department for further review.

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THIS 9<sup>th</sup> DAY OF APRIL 2026**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Dean Burke, MD, Commissioner**

**111. RULES OF DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH  
111-8. HEALTHCARE FACILITY REGULATION  
111-8-56. NURSING HOMES**

**AMEND CHAPTER 111-8-56**

**SYNOPSIS OF REVISED RULES**

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**

The Georgia Department of Community Health proposes to amend and update the Rules and Regulations for Healthcare Facility Regulation, Nursing Homes, Ga. Comp. R. & Regs., r. 111-8-56. These rules being proposed pursuant to the authority granted to the Department of Community Health in O.C.G.A. §§ 31-2-4, et seq., 31-7-1, et seq., and 31-7-350, et seq.

**MAIN FEATURES OF THE PROPOSED RULE:**

The purpose of these rule revisions is to update health screening requirements for employees and to provide conformity with the Rules and Regulations for Criminal Background Checks, Chapter 111-8-12.

**111. RULES OF DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH  
111-8. HEALTHCARE FACILITY REGULATION  
111-8-56. NURSING HOMES**

**AMEND CHAPTER 111-8-56**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

111-8-56-.15 Health of Employees  
111-8-56-.26 Background Screening and Employees

## Rule 111-8-56-.15 Health of Employees

~~Each home shall require that each employee receive a physical examination upon employment. The examination shall be in sufficient detail, with pertinent laboratory and X-ray data to insure that the employee is physically and mentally qualified to perform the job to which he is assigned. An annual physical examination thereafter is recommended. However, as a minimum, on an annual basis each employee will have a physical inspection to help insure freedom from communicable disease. As part of the annual examination or inspection a tuberculin skin test will be given to all previous negative reactors. If the skin test is positive, a chest X-ray will be required and the individual referred to his physician or appropriate health authority for possible prophylaxis treatment. Copies or certificates of physical examinations shall be kept in the employee's personnel file.~~

(1) Health Screenings. Each home shall have in place a health screening program designed to identify conditions that may place patients at risk for infection, injury, or improper care. The program shall include requirements and processes for initial, routine, and targeted health screenings of employees and contractors who interact with patients or conduct other activities with environmental impact.

(2) Screening for Tuberculosis (TB). Prior to starting work, all employees must be screened for TB in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for baseline screening and testing for health care personnel.

(3) Records. Copies or certificates of health screenings shall be kept in the employee's personnel file.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 31-2-4 et seq. and 31-7-1 et seq.

## Rule 111-8-56-.26. Background Screening and Employees

~~(1) — Prior to hiring an employment applicant, each nursing home shall first screen the potential employee for a history of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. This includes attempting to obtain information from previous employers and current employers and checking with the applicable licensing boards and registries. The background screenings shall include, but not be limited to:~~

~~(a) — The nursing home shall request a criminal records check from the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC) to determine whether the applicant has a criminal record. In accordance with the provisions of Section 31-7-350, et seq., of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, the nursing home shall make a written determination for each applicant for whom a criminal records check is performed. A nursing home shall not employ a person with an unsatisfactory determination as such term is defined by Section 31-7-350 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated;~~

~~(b) — Before allowing an individual to serve as a nurse aide or a dining assistant, the nursing home shall contact the state's Nurse Aide Registry to determine whether a finding has been entered concerning abuse, neglect, exploitation, or misappropriation of resident property. The nursing home shall also seek information from other state nurse aide registries that the nursing home believes may contain information on the individual, based on the applicant's prior work history; and~~

~~(c) — The nursing home shall not employ individuals who have been:~~

~~1. — Found guilty of abusing, neglecting, or mistreating residents by a court of law; or~~

~~2. — Have had a finding entered into the state Nurse Aide Registry concerning abuse, neglect, exploitation, or misappropriation of resident property.~~

(1) **Criminal History Background Checks for Owners Required.** Prior to the issuance of any new license, the owner of the business or agency applying for the license must comply with the requirements of the Rules and Regulations for Criminal Background Checks, Chapter 111-8-12.

(2) **Criminal History Background Checks for Administrators Required.** The home must obtain a satisfactory fingerprint records check determination for the person being considered for employment as an administrator. The records check determination must be done in compliance with the Rules and Regulations for Criminal Background Checks, Chapter 111-8-12.

(3) **Criminal History Background Checks for Direct Access Employees Required.** Prior to serving as a direct access employee, the home must obtain a satisfactory fingerprint records check determination for the person to be hired in compliance with the Rules and Regulations for Criminal Background Checks, Chapter 111-8-12.

(24) Documentation of the nursing home's background screening shall be maintained for each employee.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 31-2-4, et seq., 31-7-1, et seq., and 31-7-350, et seq.