

## BONA FIDE MENTORING ORGANIZATIONS

1351

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For the purposes of implementing the provisions of Executive Order W-132-96, CDF identifies a bona fide mentoring organization as that which may generally be defined as an organization whose function includes mentoring services for children and youth. "Mentoring services" include but are not limited to structured, one-to-one relationships which are caring and supportive and which are focused on the needs of the mentored participant.

One of the most important services provided by a bona fide mentoring organization is that it conducts an eligibility screening for prospective mentors that includes an application process and a face-to-face interview. **Thorough background checks for all potential mentors should be conducted by the bona fide mentoring organization (not CDF) through methods that should include some of the following: character references, child abuse registry checks, driving record checks and where legally permissible, fingerprinting and criminal background checks.**

There are many community based and school based mentoring programs that exist throughout California. To be eligible for the "mentor leave" provision an employee must participate as a mentor in a bona fide mentoring organization.

To qualify as a bona fide mentoring organization, the organization must meet the following criteria:

- Provides guidance and support to at-risk children and youth (grades K-12) through structured, one-to-one mentoring relationships. Other forms of mentoring such as "team mentoring," will be considered on a case by case basis.
- Conducts eligibility screening for prospective mentors that includes an application process, a face-to-face interview and thorough background checks, or requires that mentoring activities are supervised. Typically, such organizations also provide mentor orientation, training and mentor/mentee matching.

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