



Pre-employment screening

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS AND POLICE CHECKS

CFCA Resource sheet — June 2021



Overview

This resource sheet provides an overview of the types of Working with Children Checks (WWCC) and Police Checks in Australia, their requirements and state/territory contact information. This resource is intended for employers, current and prospective employees and volunteers engaging in child-related work in Australia. It provides answers to common questions relating to pre-employment screening checks and provides state and territory requirements for working with children, including contact information for state/territory screening services.

The information provided is to be used as a guide only. Individuals are encouraged to check the currency of any information that is provided by contacting relevant departments or organisations. All enquiries about obtaining WWCCs and Police Checks should be made to the state or territory government department responsible.

Introduction

Each day, children across Australia come into contact with a variety of organisations such as schools, child care centres, hospitals, religious institutions, and sports and recreation clubs. Pre-employment screening for people seeking to engage in child-related work is one measure that contributes to ensuring the safety of children within these organisations. There is no single national framework setting out the requirements for obtaining Working with Children Checks (WWCC) or Police Checks. Instead, all states and territories have legislation providing for child-related employment pre-screening with requirements to be met.



Pre-employment screenings, such as WWCCs and Police Checks, screen for an individual's criminal records and any reports on their professional conduct. They are designed to help ensure that the right people are chosen to work or volunteer with children. They aim to prevent people from working or volunteering with children if records indicate that they may pose a risk. Research has highlighted the advantages of having structured pre-employment screening processes in place (Child Protection Systems Royal Commission, 2016):

- By basing decisions on standardised points of reference, subjective decision making is minimised.
- The use of structured risk assessment approaches is more reliable and valid than the use of professional judgement alone.
- The assumptions on which the risk assessment models are based can be clearly set out and may be tested.
- Information can be dealt with transparently, and the person affected can put forward information as well as correct it.
- Public awareness of the use of structured risk assessment models may deter possible offenders.

This resource sheet is divided into two parts:

- [Common questions about pre-employment screening in relation to working with children and police checks](#)
- [State and territory requirements for working with children, including contact information for state/territory screening services.](#)

Common questions

This section provides an overview of commonly asked questions relating to pre-employment screening checks for employers, current and prospective employees and volunteers engaging in child-related work in Australia.

- [How do Police Checks and child safety screening programs work?](#)
- [Who must undergo pre-employment child safety screening?](#)
- [Are there other child safety requirements for my job?](#)
- [What is the difference between a Police Check and a Working with Children Check?](#)
- [Is my pre-employment screening transferable between jurisdictions?](#)
- [Is criminal history information shared between Australia and New Zealand?](#)
- [What are the limitations of pre-employment screening?](#)
- [What role do organisations have in protecting children?](#)

How do Police Checks and child safety screening programs work?

In Australia, approved agencies are only able to check someone's criminal history or any reports on their professional conduct if they have the informed consent of the individual involved. Police Checks carried out in each state and territory provide a nationwide screening of criminal history information. Throughout this resource, the terminology reflects the language used in each jurisdiction.

Most jurisdictions across Australia offer individual-based certification to engage in child-related work (NSW, NT, Qld, SA,¹ Tas., Vic. and WA); while in the ACT, three types of screening clearance are offered (general, conditional and role-based). All these certifications are valid for a period of time (e.g. three years in WA) and may provide for ongoing monitoring of an individual's suitability for child-related work. This means that if a relevant criminal offence is committed during the validity of the check, or if the individual is subject to relevant work-related disciplinary procedures, the administering authority may inform employers of the offence and alter or withdraw an individual's entitlement to work with children. Individuals can carry their certification between positions (but not between jurisdictions – see '[Is my pre-employment screening transferable between jurisdictions?](#)') and do not have to undergo repeated screening while their WWCC is valid. As of February 2021, all WWCC have continuous monitoring, where relevant new records can lead to the clearance being cancelled. It should be noted that the Working With Vulnerable People (WWVP) scheme operating in ACT is not a registration, licensing or pre-employment screening regime. Due to this, employers should not use the WWVP registration in place of their own employment checks, such as Police Checks, to ensure employees are suitable for a particular role; and there are many roles that are not regulated activities and therefore do not require a WWVP registration.

¹ Note: An employer-driven system previously operated in SA. On 1 July 2019, a Working with Children Check was introduced in SA.



Who must undergo pre-employment child safety screening?

As of June 2013, all jurisdictions in Australia have some form of child-related employment pre-screening legislation. These laws make it mandatory for certain individuals engaged in occupations such as education and child care, child protection, child and family welfare, health, entertainment and recreation, and religious instruction to meet screening requirements. There are differences across the states and territories about who is required to undergo screening and how different occupations are identified. If you are unsure whether you need to obtain a WWCC, contact the relevant body in your state or territory. State and territory contact details are provided in the following section, with a summary of requirements for each jurisdiction.

Are there other child safety requirements for my job?

In addition to child-related employment pre-screening legislation, all states and territories have legislation that requires people who wish to register in certain occupations (e.g. teachers, doctors or child care workers) to be screened for criminal offences. This means that even if child-related employment pre-screening legislation did not exist, there are still requirements for adults working in certain occupations to undergo screening (e.g. in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic.); *Medical Practitioners Registration Act 2001* (Qld); *Child Care Act 2007* (Tas.)). Where professional registration requirements include screening, certain persons are exempt from the WWCC (e.g. in Victoria, persons registered under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*).

Organisations may also have developed their own policies that require employees and volunteers to undergo National Police Checks. State and territory police provide criminal history checks to individuals and organisations wishing to obtain Police Checks for employment, voluntary work and occupation-related licensing or registration purposes.

What is the difference between a Police Check and a Working with Children Check?

Police Checks identify and release relevant criminal history information relating to convictions, findings of guilt or pending court proceedings. However, due to spent conviction/non-disclosure legislation and information release policies, there are limitations on the information a Police Check can provide (e.g. the Spent Convictions Scheme stipulates that prior convictions are not to be disclosed where 10 years have passed from the date of the conviction).

Working with Children Checks are more extensive but also more targeted than Police Checks, as the purpose of a WWCC is to make an assessment of the level of risk an individual poses to children's safety. For example, WWCCs draw together information from various sources but may include a primary focus on certain types of offences (e.g. sexual offences, offences related to the harm or mistreatment of a child). In general, WWCCs give consideration to:

- convictions – whether or not they are considered spent or were committed by a juvenile
- apprehended violence orders and other orders, prohibitions or reporting obligations
- charges (i.e. where a conviction has not been recorded because, e.g., a proceeding has not been heard or finalised by a court, or where charges have been dismissed or withdrawn)
- relevant allegations or police investigations involving the individual
- relevant employment proceedings and disciplinary information from professional organisations (e.g. organisations associated with teachers, child care service providers, foster carers and health practitioners).

Is my pre-employment screening transferable between jurisdictions?

Working with Children Checks and Working With Vulnerable People (WWVP) checks are **not** transferable between states and territories. Organisations or individuals that work or volunteer with children across state or territory boundaries need to ensure that they have obtained appropriate clearance checks and screenings for each separate jurisdiction. A nationally consistent approach to pre-employment screenings was highlighted as a priority under the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020. However, the 2015 Royal Commission report noted that progress in achieving greater consistency across jurisdictions has been 'slow and inadequate' due to disagreements over implementation and entrenched local practices and definitions (Commonwealth of Australia, 2015, p. 47).

A WWCC Working Group has been formed to inform the national alignment. They have noted that a national approach to legislation will not necessarily protect all children and that such screening practices and processes must sit in a broader organisational environment determined to ensure the safety of children (Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2011).

Exemptions for visitors: In 2012, state and territory governments agreed on a standard exemption that allows people to work interstate for a brief period of time; namely, up to 30 days in a 12-month period, without obtaining a WWCC in the new location (Commonwealth of Australia, 2015).



Is criminal history information shared between Australia and New Zealand?

In February 2015, Australia and New Zealand signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to give employers greater trans-Tasman access to individual criminal history checks for employment, training and registration purposes. Under the MoU, eligible New Zealand agencies have the ability to make requests through New Zealand Police for Australian criminal information from the Australian Crime Commission. Similarly, eligible Australian agencies may request criminal history information from New Zealand Police.

As with existing criminal-record checking arrangements, approved agencies are only able to check someone's criminal history if they have the informed consent of the individual involved.

What are the limitations of pre-employment screening?

Policy and legislation that provide for the pre-employment screening of adults who work or volunteer in child-related organisations are important for creating and maintaining child-safe organisations. However, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has found the schemes operating in Australia to be inconsistent and complex. The Royal Commission report highlights several issues including inadequate information sharing and monitoring of WWCCs across jurisdictions; the non-transferability of WWCCs across jurisdictions; and the inability of screening agencies to access WWCC decisions in other jurisdictions (Commonwealth of Australia, 2015).

In the 2016 South Australian Royal Commission report *The Life They Deserve*, Commissioner Nyland highlighted that pre-employment screening is not intended to be a fail-safe measure in its own right: 'gaining clearance does not mean that a person has been deemed safe or suitable to work with children – it simply means there is no available history to suggest they pose a threat' (Child Protection Systems Royal Commission, 2016, p. 537).

What role do organisations have in protecting children?

Organisations play an important role in protecting children, beyond adhering to pre-employment screening regulations. WWCCs and Police Checks should be implemented in conjunction with other measures to minimise the risk to children's safety. These additional measures may include pre-employment interviews, thorough reference checks, policy development for child-safe environments, and robust accountability frameworks for responding to allegations.

In 2019, the Australian Human Rights Commission released the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Commonwealth of Australia, 2017). These principles are considered fundamental in making an organisation safe and are intended to ensure a nationally consistent approach for all organisations that work or come into contact with children. All organisations working with or coming into contact with children are encouraged to become a child safe organisation (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2018). (For more information on child safe organisations and links to resources for organisations, see the CFCA short article: [Child safe organisations: Information for organisations on how to keep children safe.](#)) WWCCs and Police Checks should be implemented in conjunction with these principles.

In 2020, the Australian National Office for Child Safety released the second edition of the [Commonwealth Child Safe Framework](#). This framework sets out minimum standards for Commonwealth entities to create and maintain behaviours and practices that are safe for children. The framework includes four key requirements and guidance for implementation: conducting an annual risk assessment and mitigation; training and compliance with the framework and relevant legislation (including with WWCC/WWVP legislation); adopting and implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations; and publishing an annual statement of compliance.



State and territory requirements

Across the six jurisdictions that carry out WWCCs (NSW, NT, Qld, SA, Vic., and WA) and the two that carry out WWVP checks (ACT and Tas.), there are differences in what information is considered and what sources of information are used. This section provides an overview for each jurisdiction of the types of screening programs that are in place, what records are checked, and who is required to undergo screening.

[Australian Capital Territory](#)

[New South Wales](#)

[Northern Territory](#)

[Queensland](#)

[South Australia](#)

[Tasmania](#)

[Victoria](#)

[Western Australia](#)

Australian Capital Territory

Legislation	<i>Working With Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 (ACT)</i>
Screening check name	Working with Vulnerable People registration
Valid for?	5 years
Who is required to obtain a check?	People aged 16 years and over who have more than incidental contact with vulnerable people while engaging in regulated activities and services
What services or sectors need to register?	Child protection; justice facilities for children; child care; child education; child accommodation; counselling and support for children; commercial services for children; mental health; migrant/refugee/asylum seekers; homeless; housing and accommodation; justice facilities; prevention of crime; victims of crime; addictions; community; disability; respite care; emergency; transport; coaching and tuition, vocational and educational training; religious organisations; clubs associations and movements. From 1 February 2021, any person who is working or volunteering in an NDIS activity must be registered under the WWVP.
Information considered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> charges and convictions whether committed in the ACT or elsewhere for any: sexual offence; offence against the person; offence involving violence; offence involving dishonesty or fraud; offence relating to property; offence involving possession of or trafficking in a drug of dependence or controlled drug; an offence against an animal; and driving offences non-conviction information in relation to a relevant offence (or an alleged relevant offence) involving the following: where a person has been charged with the offence but a proceeding is not finalised; the charge has lapsed, been withdrawn or discharged, or struck out; the person has been acquitted of an alleged offence; a conviction for an alleged offence has been quashed or set aside; an infringement notice for an alleged offence has been served; or the person has a spent conviction for the offence apprehended violence orders; care and protection orders for a child for whom the person has or had parental responsibility; and professional disciplinary proceedings against the person information in relation to negative decisions recorded in the National Reference Database and National Worker Screening Database
Registration outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive (+/-) NDIS or Working with Children (WWC): An individual can work in all regulated activities, including those involving children. If they have applied to work in an NDIS activity, they may do so. Positive with restrictions (incl. (= +/-) NDIS or WWC): An individual can work in <i>some, but not all</i> regulated activities or a regulated activity involving children. If they have applied to work in an NDIS activity, they may do so. Positive role-based: An individual will receive a WWVP registration but it is restricted to the role that is specified. Negative notice (exclusion): The individual <i>cannot</i> work in any regulated activity.
Worker and employer obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers are required to comply with WWVP requirements by identifying roles within the organisation that may need WWVP registration and ensuring all employees or volunteers have valid registrations. Evidence of WWVP registration including any restrictions is required. <p>Organisations should keep a record of registration details for each worker and set reminders for registration expiry to ensure workers do not continue to work without a valid WWVP registration.</p>
Who applies?	Individuals are responsible for making their own application.



Australian Capital Territory (cont.)

Do I also need a Police Check?	Yes
Where to apply?	<p>Working With Vulnerable People registration</p> <p>Access Canberra Ph: 13 22 81 Chat support available</p> <p>National Police Check Australian Federal Police Ph: (02) 6140 6502</p>

New South Wales

Legislation	<p><i>Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012</i> (NSW)</p> <p><i>Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013</i> (NSW)</p> <p><i>Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment (Statutory Review) Act 2018</i> (NSW)</p>
Screening check name	Working with Children Check (WWCC)
Valid for?	<p>5 years</p> <p>Renew your check</p>
Who is required to obtain a check?	All employees and volunteers over the age of 18 working in child-related roles, where contact with children is a usual part of the work, and not just incidental
Exemptions	<p>Employers should check the legislation for any exemptions that apply to their situation. Details of whether a check is required are available on the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) website.</p> <p>Exemptions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • under 18s • visiting NSW for a short time • close relatives volunteering at their children's usual school and extracurricular activities. <p>There are three specific instances when close relatives do need a Check when they are volunteering at school or activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing personal care for a child with disability • participating in a formal mentoring program • at an overnight camp for kids. <p>The OCG has the discretion to grant a 'continuing residence approval' to a person who turns 18 while residing with an authorised carer and has been refused a WWCC clearance. The OCG must be satisfied that an appropriate risk mitigation plan is in place. The approval will allow the person to continue residing with the authorised carer in that placement.</p>
What services or sectors need to register?	<p>Child development, mentoring or counselling services; child protection; children's health services, including in wards of hospitals where children are treated; clubs, associations, movements or other bodies (including cultural, recreational or of a sporting nature) providing programs or services for children; respite care or other support services for children with a disability; early education and child care services, including nanny services; education services such as provided by schools and other education institutions, including private coaching or tuition of children; sporting, cultural or other entertainment venues used primarily by children and entertainment services for children; detention centres and juvenile correctional centres; any religious organisation; residential services including refuges used by children, long-term home stays, boarding houses and overnight camps; transport services for children, including school bus services and taxi services used for children with disabilities; supervision of school road crossings; school cleaners; and youth workers.</p> <p>In addition, the following child-related roles are defined as child-related work: an approved provider or manager of education and care services; a certified supervisor of education and care services; an authorised carer (foster carers and other authorised carers of children in statutory and supported out-of-home care); an assessment officer; the Principal Officer of a designated agency; and the Principal Officer of an accredited adoption service provider. Prospective adoptive parents and adults who reside for longer than three weeks at the home of an authorised carer, family day care service providers or home-based education and care service providers also require a WWCC.</p>



New South Wales (cont.)

Information considered?	<p>The Act outlines the type of records that require further assessment (see Schedule 1 of the <i>Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012</i>) or will result in an automatic bar (see Schedule 2). Information considered in these Schedules includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> national criminal history: charges (including those that may not have been heard or finalised by a court; are proven but have not led to a conviction; or have been dismissed, withdrawn or discharged by a court), convictions (spent or unspent) and juvenile records for: any sexual offence (including but not limited to, sexual assault, acts of indecency, child pornography, child prostitution and carnal knowledge); any assault, ill treatment, neglect of or psychological harm to a child; any registrable offence; and any offences of attempting, or of conspiracy or incitement, to commit any of the above offences whether any of the above offences were: committed in NSW and were punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more; or committed elsewhere and would have been an offence punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more if the offence had been committed in NSW findings of misconduct including sexual misconduct or serious physical assault of a child committed by an employee in the course of employment or in the presence of a child any other matters deemed relevant to the safety of children. <p>Factors that are considered during a risk assessment include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> seriousness of the records time and conduct since age and vulnerability of the victims relationship between offender and victim(s) any current orders likelihood of the offences being repeated impact of the offences being repeated. <p>Additionally, reasonable person and public interest tests have been introduced in NSW. This means that a WWCC cannot be granted unless the OCG is satisfied that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a reasonable person would allow his or her child to have direct contact with the affected person who was not directly supervised it is in the public interest to make the determination.
Worker and employer obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals are required to provide original, current proof-of-identity documents when applying or renewing their WWCC. Individuals are legally required to update their contact details within 3 months of changes being made. Penalties can apply. Employers operating within a child-related industry are required to register online with the OCG and are required to subsequently conduct online verification of the new paid employees' clearance. Employers must verify that their workers or volunteers who work with children have had a check or applied for one. Organisations are required to provide information relevant to an assessment of whether a person poses a risk to the safety of children in response to a request from the OCG.
Who applies?	Individuals are responsible for their own application for certification.
Do I also need a Police Check?	Yes
Where to apply?	<p>Working with Children Check Office of the Children's Guardian Ph: (02) 8219 3777 Email enquiry form</p>



Northern Territory

Legislation	<i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2007</i> (NT)
Screening check name	Working with Children Clearance, through the application for an 'Ochre Card'
Valid for?	2 years
Who is required to obtain a check?	Employees and volunteers in child-related employment settings over the age of 14
Exemptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • short-term volunteer work, i.e. less than 30 days in a period of 12 months, only if you are not a resident of the Territory • voluntary work (not including overnight stay) where you are a parent of at least one of the children you will be working with, AND you are working under the direct supervision of an Ochre Card holder AND your employer does not require you to have a clearance • workers or volunteers for a children's entertainment or party service that provides food, equipment or a venue, if you have no contact with children
What services or sectors need to register?	<p>Child protection services; education or care services; education facilities for children; juvenile detention centres; refuges or other residential facilities used by children; wards of hospitals or any other facilities for health services in which children are ordinarily patients; clubs, associations or movements (including those that are of a cultural, recreational or sporting nature) with significant child membership or involvement, religious organisations, babysitting or childminding services, fostering of children, transportation of children, private tuition, counselling, overnight camps, road crossing services for school children, sports coaching or sports lessons for children, accommodation services for children in private residential premises. Other services that provide activities for children including gym/play facilities, photography, talent/beauty competitions, entertainment or party services.</p> <p>In addition, members of boards, management committees and partners in businesses that perform work with children (e.g. members of school councils or basketball associations); or a student conducting practical training for an education or training course.</p>
Information considered?	National Police history is considered initially, and any relevant offences investigated further. Other information can also be considered, including employment disciplinary records, matters not yet finalised at Court, character references and submissions from you or professionals who are working with you.
Worker and employer obligations	Employers or volunteer coordinators are responsible for making sure their relevant employees or volunteers have a valid WWCC and for maintaining records that show compliance with the WWCC scheme.
Who applies?	Individuals are responsible for their own application and clearance.
Do I also need a Police Check?	The risk assessment involves a National Police history check.
Where to apply?	<p>Working with Children Check</p> <p>Northern Territory Government</p> <p>Ph: 1800 72 33 68</p> <p>Email: safent.police@pfes.nt.gov.au</p>
How to apply?	Applications can be made online, in person or by post. Application forms are available on the Northern Territory Government website, at any Northern Territory police station or from Territory Business Centres in Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek or Alice Springs.



Queensland

Legislation	<i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</i> (Qld)
Screening check name	Working with Children Check, known as a 'Blue Card'
Valid for?	3 years
Who is required to obtain a check?	Individuals engaged in child-related occupations and individuals over 18 years volunteering for more than 7 days in a calendar year
Exemptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working alongside a person who is under 18 (e.g. if you supervise a 17-year-old colleague) • participating in a team, club or group activity that also has members under 18 (e.g. if you play in an under-20s sports group with a member who is 17) • supervising a student while they do work experience (including school students) <p>Check the Queensland government ‘Do you need a blue card?’ website for a full list of exemptions.</p>
What services or sectors need to register?	Residential facilities; child accommodation services funded by the Commonwealth or under the <i>Education (General Provisions) Act 2006</i> ; school boarding facilities; schools; child care; education and care services; churches, clubs and associations involving children; health, counselling and support services that come into contact with children; disability work, private teaching, coaching or tutoring; education programs conducted outside of school; child accommodation services including home stays; religious representatives; sport and active recreation activities directed towards or mainly involving children; emergency services cadet program; school crossing supervisors; and the care of children under the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> (Qld)
Information considered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a National Police Check • any charge or conviction for an offence, whether or not a conviction is recorded • whether a person is a respondent to or subject to an application for a child protection prohibition or disqualification order; or whether a person is subject to reporting obligations under the <i>Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004</i> or <i>Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003</i> • disciplinary information from professional organisations associated with teachers, child care service providers, foster carers, nurses, midwives and certain health practitioners • information from police investigations into allegations of serious child-related offences even if no charges were laid because the child was unwilling or unable to proceed
Worker and employer obligations	<p>Individuals must report any changes to police information. Work cannot be initiated prior to the Blue Card being issued and if the card expires, work cannot continue until the card is renewed.</p> <p>Employers must link Blue Card holders to their organisation upon hiring, and update employee information when they leave the organisation. Employers and businesses providing child-related services must have a child and youth risk management strategy in place (Chapter 8, Part 3, <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</i> (Qld)). The Blue Card Services website provides information about what an organisation's risk management strategy should contain, as well as training on organisational risk management.</p>
Who applies?	Individuals are responsible for their own application for certification.
Do I also need a Police Check?	Yes
Where to apply?	<p>Working with Children Check</p> <p>Blue Card Services</p> <p>Freecall: 1800 113 611 Ph: (07) 3211 6999</p> <p>Send email enquiry</p>



South Australia

Legislation	<i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 (SA), Children's Protection Law Reform (Transitional Arrangements and Related Amendments) Act 2017 (SA) and Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Regulations 2019 (SA)</i>
Screening check name	Working with Children Check
Valid for?	5 years
Who is required to obtain a check?	<p>Legislatively, all persons holding <i>prescribed positions</i>* including those <i>working with children</i> by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing/undertaking <i>child-related work</i> • carrying on a business where an employee <i>works with children</i> • residing in prescribed premises <p>and those working in positions prescribed as <i>prescribed positions</i>. Employers may, in addition, contractually require a Working with Children Check.</p> <p>*A <i>prescribed position</i> includes a position in which a person works with children, or during the ordinary course of their duties may work with children, or a position under the Prohibited Persons Regulations.</p>
Exemptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subject to conditions, persons who work or volunteer with children on 7 or less days in a calendar year • persons under 14 years of age • subject to conditions, parents or guardians involved in voluntary work involving their own child (check SA Screening Unit for more details) • subject to conditions, non-residents of South Australia who hold a WWCC from another jurisdiction, as long as child-related work is provided in the course of an <i>organised event</i> and does not exceed 10 consecutive days
Examples of sectors in scope	Teachers, child care or child-minding services and child-protection services. Also the following services for children: coaching or tuition; disability; health; education; commercial; accommodation and residential; justice and detention; and transport. In addition, clubs or associations that may include the involvement of children, and services provided by religious organisations
Information considered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • criminal history released under the Intergovernmental Agreement for a National Exchange of Criminal History Information for People Working with Children including national convictions (withdrawn, spent and non-convictions), national charges (pending, withdrawn, dismissed and acquitted), police apprehension reports and more • information provided by relevant Court/s • information related to child protection matters • information related to intervention orders • information related to guardianship and custody order/s • information provided by the applicant including declarations • information from SA government databases, such as Care Concern investigations
Worker and employer obligations	<p>Employers must not employ or continue to employ a person in a <i>prescribed position</i> unless they verify that their employee has had a SA WWCC conducted within the previous/every 5 years.</p> <p>Employees must not work with children unless they have had a SA WWCC conducted within the previous 5 years.</p> <p>Employers and persons holding WWCCs are required to inform the Screening Unit of prescribed information.</p>
Who applies?	<p>The WWCC can be initiated by the person who requires the check or by an organisation on behalf of the employee or volunteer.</p> <p>Note: An <i>employer-driven</i> system previously operated in SA. SA organisations can still initiate a WWCC on behalf of an individual but the individual continues to be required to complete the application.</p>
Do I also need a Police Check?	Depends on the employee's employment contract requirements.
Where to apply?	<p>Working with Children Check</p> <p>Department of Human Services Ph: 1300 32 15 92</p> <p>National Police Check</p> <p>ACIC Accredited Bodies Australian Police Agencies</p>



Tasmania

Legislation	<i>Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (Tas.)</i>
Screening check name	Working With Vulnerable People check
Valid for?	5 years
Who is required to obtain a check?	Individuals aged 16 years of age and over who work or volunteer with children under 18 years of age and have more than incidental contact with children
Exemptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individuals working or volunteering with children for 7 days or less per calendar year • individuals doing the same activity as the child (playing together in a sporting team) • individuals where working with a child's record is their only contact <p>Please refer to the Working with Vulnerable People Tasmania website for further detail about exemptions - Exemptions from registration (cbos.tas.gov.au)</p>
What services or sectors need to register?	Child education (government and non-government schools) including teachers, vocational education and training, state library, adoption, guardianship, child protection, child accommodation, child mentoring, child health, child disability, youth justice, child transport, child care, child-related religious activity, clubs or associations, coaching or tuition, legal practitioners, child-related commercial services including sporting, cultural and other entertainment venues. For examples of roles where registration is likely, visit the Consumer, Building and Occupational Services website.
Information considered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • convictions for all criminal offences the person may have • all spent convictions (convictions that don't ordinarily need to be declared) • any pending charges (charges that have not yet been decided by the court) • all non-conviction charges (those that have been finalised by the court but didn't result in a conviction) <p>Please refer to the Working with Vulnerable People Tasmania website for further detail about the risk assessment process The risk assessment process (cbos.tas.gov.au)</p>
Types of registration issued?	<p>From 1 February 2021, registrations include a National Disability Insurance Scheme endorsement if nominated. An applicant is required to nominate whether the NDIS endorsement is required for their registration, and their employment will then be verified with the NDIS prior to their application progressing further. Paid roles will require an Employment registration and unpaid roles require a Volunteer registration. There are five categories of registration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. child-related activity 2. vulnerable adult-related activity 3. child and vulnerable adult-related activity 4. child and vulnerable adult-related (NDIS endorsed) activity 5. a category of activity or service prescribed by the regulations as a category of registration.
Worker and employer obligations	<p>Changes to criminal history must be self-reported by individuals registered.</p> <p>Employers are required to check the status of employees and volunteers online before they start working or volunteering at the organisation and also check organisation details have been added to the employee/volunteer's registration. Employers are now required to, within 10 working days after an employee or volunteer commences or ceases to be engaged in a regulated activity for that employer, notify the Registrar of the commencement or cessation of work. This can be achieved through the employer portal that is linked on the Working with Vulnerable People Check Tasmania website - www.cbos.tas.gov.au</p>
Who applies?	Individuals are responsible for their own application for certification.
Do I also need a Police Check?	Yes - A national criminal history check forms part of the application. Individuals are not required to supply this - this will be requested via the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) when application for registration is made.
Where to apply?	<p>Working with Vulnerable People Registration Consumer, Building and Occupational Services (Division of the Department of Justice) Ph: 1300 65 44 99</p> <p>National Police Check Tasmania Police Ph: (03) 6173 2928</p>



Victoria

Legislation	<i>Worker Screening Act 2020</i> (Vic.)
Screening check name	Working with Children Check
Valid for?	5 years
Who is required to obtain a check?	<p>All individuals engaged in 'child-related work' as defined by the <i>Worker Screening Act 2020</i> (the Act) require a WWC Check if they meet all of the following five conditions of 'child-related work':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are an adult who 'works' with children aged under 18 years of age. The term 'work' includes engaging in voluntary work and providing practical training as well as paid employment. • They are working with children at or for one of the services, places, or bodies, or in one of the activities listed below. • Their work usually involves direct contact with children (under the Act direct contact means face-to-face contact, physical contact, and oral, written and electronic communication). • The contact with children is not occasional direct contact that is incidental to their work. • They are not exempt from having a WWC Check. <p>In addition to the child-related work requirements, all ministers of religion are required to obtain a WWC Check unless their contact with children is only occasional contact that is incidental to their work or their congregation does not contain any children.</p> <p>Further, all kinship carers are required to obtain a WWC Check.</p> <p>Under the <i>Child Employment Act 2003</i> (Vic.) supervisors of children in employment are required to hold a WWC Check even if they are under 18 years of age.</p>
Exemptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers whose child is participating or ordinarily participates in the same activity is exempt from the WWC as are people who are closely related to the child/ren they are working with. • Children are exempt unless they are supervising children in employment. • Adults under 20 years who are students are exempt from the WWC Check in respect of any child-related work engaged in as part of their studies. • Registered teachers, Victoria Police officers, Federal Police officers and visiting workers are also exempt.
What services or sectors need to register?	<p>Child-related work means work at or for the following services, bodies, and places:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child protection services • children's services • education and care services • educational institutions • out-of-home care services, remand centres, youth residential centres or youth justice centres • refuges or other residential facilities used by children • accommodation services specifically provided for students including accommodation in the person's home • paediatric wards • clubs, associations, or movements (including of a cultural, recreational or sporting nature) that provide services or conduct activities for, or directed at, children or whose membership mainly comprises children • religious organisations • babysitting or child-minding services arranged by a commercial agency • fostering children • providing, on a publicly funded or commercial basis, a transport service specifically for children • coaching or tuition services of any kind specifically for children • counselling or other support services for children • overnight camps for children • school crossing services • providing, on a commercial basis and not merely incidentally to or in support of other business activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - entertainment or party services specifically for children - gym or play facilities specifically for children - photography services specifically for children - talent or beauty competitions for children • providing, on a publicly funded or commercial basis, an in-home care service for children.



Victoria (cont.)

Information considered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a National Police Record Check – offences with most significance includes: serious sexual offences; serious violent offences; serious drug-related offences a review of relevant findings from prescribed professional disciplinary bodies obligations or orders under the <i>Sex Offenders Registration Act 2004</i> or the <i>Serious Offenders Act 2018</i> individuals subject to a supervision order, a detention order or an emergency detention order any formal findings of guilt in relation to an offence, convictions of an offence, accepted pleas of guilt, or acquittals of an offence because of mental impairment information about any spent convictions, juvenile convictions and findings of guilt, pending charges and the circumstances surrounding any charges or convictions (such as the ages of the applicant and victim, applicant's behaviour since the offence, likelihood of future threat to a child) exclusion from child-related work in the past exclusion from child-related work by another state or territory <p>From 10 December 2019, the Act limits the appeal rights of the adults charged with or found guilty of the most serious offences.</p>
Types of registration issued?	Volunteer or Employee Check
Worker and employer obligations	It is an offence under the Act for a person to engage another person in child-related work if that person does not have a valid WWC Clearance Check. It is also an offence for a holder of a WWC exclusion to apply for child-related work and to engage in child-related work without a WWC Check. Organisations should check the status of the employee or volunteer's application online and know when they are due to expire.
Who applies?	Individuals are responsible for their own application for certification.
Do I also need a Police Check?	A WWC Check includes a National Police Check so a person does not need to undertake their own police record check. Organisations wanting to screen for offences such as fraud will need to conduct a separate police record check.
Where to apply?	<p>Working with Children Check Victoria</p> <p>Working with Children Check Ph: 1300 652 879 Online enquiry form: Enquiries</p> <p>National Police Check</p> <p>Victoria Police Email: policecheckvic@police.vic.gov.au</p>

Western Australia

Legislation	<i>Working With Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004</i> (WA)
Screening check name	Working with Children Check
Valid for?	3 years
Who is required to obtain a check?	Individuals who engage in child-related work. Volunteers who are under 18 years of age do not require a WWC Check; however, employees under 18 years of age do require a WWC Check. Further information is available on the Department of Communities Who needs a WWC Check? web page.
What services or sectors need to register?	Employees and volunteers in the following settings: child care services; community kindergartens; educational institutions for children; coaching or private tuition services; arrangements for the accommodation or care of children, whether in a residential facility or private residence; placement arrangements made under the <i>Children and Community Services Act 2004</i> (WA); child protection services; detention centres; community child health services; counselling or other support services; religious organisations; a club, association or movement (including of a sporting nature and whether incorporated or not) with a significant membership or involvement of children; wards of public or private hospitals in which children are ordinarily patients; babysitting or child-minding services; overnight camps; transport services specifically for children; school crossing services; children's entertainment or party services.



Western Australia (cont.)

Information considered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relevant national criminal record to see if the applicant has charges or convictions that indicate that they may be of harm to a child (this includes: convictions for any offence whether committed as an adult or a juvenile; any spent convictions; any pending charge for a Class 1 or Class 2* offence; and any charge that has been finalised by a court for a Class 1 or Class 2 offence but which did not result in a conviction) <p>Information may also be obtained from authorised bodies in WA and similar authorities in other jurisdictions such as: the Police, the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Department of Corrective Services, the Department of the Attorney General and the Courts.</p> <p>*Class 1 and 2 offences include various sexual offences against a child as well as offences such as murder, manslaughter, grievous bodily harm, indecent assault, making/viewing child pornography and involvement in child prostitution and other offences.</p>
Worker and employer obligations	Organisations must ensure that employees, volunteers, students and self-employed people who engage in child-related work have a valid WWC Check or WWC Card and ensure they are renewed before expiry.
Who applies?	Individuals are responsible for their own application for certification.
Do I also need a Police Check?	Yes
Where to apply?	<p>Working with Children Check Working with Children Check Freecall: 1800 883 979 Ph: (08) 6217 8100 Email: checkquery@cpfs.wa.gov.au</p> <p>National Police Check Western Australia Police Force</p>

Conclusion

Screening helps to prevent people with a known history of violent and abusive behaviour from gaining access to children through organisations, employment or volunteering. However, screening alone is not sufficient (e.g. it is limited to identifying known perpetrators) and needs to be coupled with interviews, thorough reference checks, policy development for child-safe environments, and robust accountability frameworks for responding to allegations.

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Authors and acknowledgements

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