

Skilling Queenslanders for Work

Clearance Checks

Why are clearance checks required under SQW?

Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) providers are responsible for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all SQW participants and minimising the risk of any harm occurring while training is being undertaken.

When are clearance checks required?

Specific clearance checks are required when staff and/or participants will be:

- working with young people under 18 years
- undertaking works at aged care or residential facilities.

These checks work to minimise the risk of harm to groups considered more vulnerable in the community, and to provide safe and supportive environments for participants.

Working with children (Blue Card system)

The Queensland Government requires organisations who work with children to have in place child and youth risk management strategies to minimise the risk of harm to children receiving services essential to their development and wellbeing, such as childcare, education, sport and cultural activities.

Since 2001, the blue card system has been a key prevention and monitoring system for people working with children. In August 2020, changes to the blue card system came into practice which include the No Card, No Start laws which state that paid employees, volunteers, students and people carrying on a business cannot start in regulated child-related work without a blue card.

It is important to note also, that if a person who currently holds a blue card, submits their renewal application prior to the expiry of their current card, they can continue to work while their renewal application is being processed.

While many people are familiar with the blue card itself, it is important to be aware that the initial blue card screening is only the first component of a three-part system which considers past, present, and future risks.

Who requires a Blue Card?

SQW providers have responsibility for determining who in their organisation requires a Working with Children Check (blue card check).

SQW providers that already have dealings with young people under 18 years will have a designated contact

person who works with Blue Card Services within the Queensland Government to ensure all their obligations are met with regard to working with children.

SQW providers will need to give special attention to their obligation under the Working with Children Check when delivering:

- a project that recruits participants aged 15 to 17 years. Supervisors, project coordinators and others who are required to come into contact with the young people as part of their job (not just incidental contact) will likely need a Blue Card
- a Work Skills Traineeship project which includes a work placement where children are present including schools and childcare centres. The Work Skills Trainee/s will likely need a Blue Card in this situation
- accredited training which includes placing a participant to an unpaid vocational placement in a workplace with children, including schools and childcare centres. The participant will likely need a Blue Card.

Blue Card Services

The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training cannot provide specific advice about an organisation's obligations. SQW providers who are uncertain about their obligations should contact Blue Card Services directly.

For more information on Blue Cards visit: www.qld.gov.au/bluecard

Who requires a police check?

All staff working in residential and aged care facilities, including home aged care, who have supervised or unsupervised access to care recipients must obtain a police check.

All volunteers that are likely to have unsupervised access to care recipients must also obtain a police check.

This includes SQW participants who will undertake works at residential and home aged care facilities.

More information

You can read more about Police Certificate Guidelines for Aged Care providers on the Department of Health website at:

www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/police-certificate-guidelines-for-aged-care-providers

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