



## Working with Children Check - Blue Cards

### Version Number

3.0

### Implementation Date

1/04/2016

### Scope

All state schools

### Purpose

The Working With Children Check – Blue Cards procedure sets out the way in which the department will comply with its responsibilities under the *Working with Children (Risk Management & Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)* in relation to employment and volunteer arrangements.

This procedure sets-out:

- the types of work that require a person to hold a Blue Card;
- the way in which the department manages Blue Cards; and
- the responsibilities of Blue Card holders and other persons.

### Overview

The department applies the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) employment screening process to ensure that it complies with its responsibilities under the *Working with Children (Risk Management & Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)* in relation to employment and volunteer arrangements in the department.

Specific information on Blue Card requirements can be found at: <http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/index.html>.

Unless otherwise exempt under a statute or order (as outlined below), all paid employees, who present for work to undertake child-related employment or activities, require a Blue Card if their duties include, or are likely to include, providing services directed mainly towards a child or children, or conducting activities that involve contact with children for at least:

- Eight consecutive days, or
- Once a week, each week, for over four weeks, or
- Once a fortnight, each fortnight, over eight weeks, or
- Once a month, each month, over six months.

Volunteers require a Blue Card prior to commencing child-related work or activities irrespective of the frequent of the work.

The *Working with Children (Risk Management & Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)* provides an exemption from the Blue Card requirements for any person who is a Registered Teacher or Police Officer or Health Practitioner (who is registered a Registered Health Practitioner in accordance with the

[Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009](#)) and, who works with children as part of their professional duties.

However, in certain circumstances Registered Teachers, Police Officers or Registered Health Practitioners may need to apply to Blue Card Services for an Exemption Card (refer to definitions) if they provide child-related services, either in a volunteer, paid or self-employed capacity, that are not part of their normal employment. Examples of such work may include coaching at a local sporting club or tutoring services.

Instrumental Music Teachers/Instructors are not exempt from the Blue Card Requirements of this procedure.

A fact sheet providing helpful information in relation to Blue Card Requirements for specific employee groups working in child-related employment or activities is provided at: [Who Needs a Blue Card?](#)

Additional information can also be found on the Blue Card Services website at: <http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/info-sheets.html>

## Responsibilities

### Departmental Employees

All departmental employees must not contravene the *Working with Children (Risk Management & Screening) Act 2000* (Qld)

Employees must self-fund their initial Blue Card application. Subsequent Blue Card renewal applications will be funded by the department. The 'Government paid employee Blue Card application' form can be found

at: <https://oneportal.deta.qld.gov.au/Services/HumanResources/Forms/Documents/govt-paid-employee-blue-card-app-form.pdf> (DET employees only).

Paid employees who commence child related work with the department and who already have a blue card must complete an [Authorisation to confirm a valid card/application form](#).

Paid employees not holding a Blue Card may commence work in *child-related employment* (refer to definitions) on lodgement of their Blue Card application. The Blue Card application must be lodged as soon as the employee commences work.

Employees must ensure that their Blue Card does not expire at any time, including during periods of absence from duty.

Employees must immediately notify Blue Card Services and their Principal/HOD/BSM or Manager as soon as they become aware that their Police Information (see: definitions) has changed (e.g. if they have been charged or convicted of a criminal offence).

<http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/contact.html>

If a Blue Card is suspended or cancelled or, if the employee is issued with a negative notice, the employee is unable to either, commence or to continue work in child related employment or services.

If the employees' Blue Card expires, the employee CAN NOT continue to work in child-related work or services until a renewal application has been lodged with Blue Card services.

Employees must, within 14 days, notify Blue Card Services and their Principal/HOD/BSM or Manager:

- when their Blue Card and/or positive notice has been lost or stolen;
- when they change their name or contact details; and

- if their employment ends on a date earlier than that which was stated on their Government paid employee Blue Card application form.

More information about an employee's responsibilities under the *Working with Children (Risk Management & Screening) Act 2000* (Qld) can be found on the [Blue Card Services](#) website.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers must not contravene the *Working with Children (Risk Management & Screening) Act 2000* (Qld)

Volunteers must have a Blue Card PRIOR to their commencing child related work or activities unless an exemption exists under the *Working with Children (Risk Management & Screening) Act 2000* (Qld).

For example, the following Volunteers may be exempt:

- a Parent of a child enrolled at the school; or
- a legal guardian of a child enrolled at the school

A volunteer requires a Blue Card irrespective of the frequency of the child related work.

Volunteers must ensure that their Blue Card does not expire at any time, including during periods of absence from duty.

If a Blue Card held by a volunteer expires, the volunteer CAN NOT continue to work in child related work until the volunteer has been issued with a new Blue Card by Blue Card Services.

## **Regional Human Resources (HR) Officers**

Regional HR Officers must not contravene the *Working with Children (Risk Management & Screening) Act 2000* (Qld)

Regional HR Officers must report monthly on the number of employees who require a Working With Children Check or renewal of Blue Cards that are recorded as having expired and, immediately notify the relevant Principal/HOD/BSM/Manager of that school or business unit (refer to definitions) to request that a Blue Card application/renewal is lodged immediately.

Regional HR Officers must take action to contact schools or business units directly to ensure that any paid employee who does not have a current Blue Card is removed from child-related employment (refer to definitions) until a Blue Card application/renewal has been lodged with Blue Card Services.

Regional HR Officers must report monthly on the number of employees who have a Blue Card due to expire within the next 60 calendar days and immediately notify the relevant Principal/HOD/BSM/Manager of that state school or business unit to request that a renewal application is lodged prior to the expiry date.

Regional Officers must ensure that the Blue Card information obtained during the monthly reporting processes is updated in the departmental TSS Human Resource Information System.

Regional HR Officers, if notified by Blue Card Services of a negative notice, must notify and seek advice from the Ethical Standards Unit.

Regional HR Officers must ensure that all job advertisements, job descriptions and letters of appointment for positions requiring a Blue Card state the following:

- "The *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (Qld) requires a person in this position to hold a Blue Card."

### **Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers**

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must not contravene the *Working with Children (Risk Management & Screening) Act 2000* (Qld).

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must ensure that all paid employees commencing employment undergo a working with children check by completing and submitting the proper form to Blue Card Services, being either:

- for employees without a blue card - a [Government paid employee blue card application form](#) (DET employees only) or
- for employees starting child-related employment who possess a current blue card (whether the employee was previously employed by another department or outside organisation; or has been transferred, promoted or seconded from another school or non-school business unit) - an [Authorisation to confirm a valid Blue Card/application form](#)

Principals/HODs/BSMs must maintain Blue Card information for all paid employees and volunteers in the OneSchool system.

For individuals/businesses or contractors that are unable to be recorded in the OneSchool database, the Principals/HODs/BSMs or Manager must maintain a register of Blue Card information for ALL other individuals/businesses/contractors that regularly provide services directed mainly towards a child/children, or regularly conduct activities that involve contact with a child/children.

Managers in work areas other than schools must maintain a register of all employees who **regularly undertake child-related employment or activities**. These employees can include Regional Office staff such as Regional Systems Technicians who regularly visit schools, Field Officers who regularly visit Early Childhood Education and Care centres or Training Officers who regularly visit schools or other facilities in relation to apprentices or trainees who are under the **age of 18 years**.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must ensure that all Volunteers and Trainees (including Volunteer Student Teachers and Practical Learning Teachers) have a valid Blue Card BEFORE they perform duties directed mainly towards a child/children, or conduct activities that involve contact with a child/children.

Note: While Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers are not responsible for organising a Blue Card for a trainee/student teacher engaged through a Group Training Provider (GTP) or education provider, it is still their responsibility to ensure a valid Blue Card is held by the individual before they commence work.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must ensure that if a volunteer (who has a Volunteer Blue Card) is engaged in paid child related employment that they submit a [Volunteer to paid employment transfer form](#) to the Public Safety Business Agency.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must take timely action to ensure all Blue Card renewal applications are lodged with Blue Card Services PRIOR to the expiry date.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must ensure that, in the event that an employees' Blue Card expires, that a renewal application is lodged immediately with Blue Card Services. The employee must not be engaged in child related employment until such time as the Blue Card renewal application has been lodged.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must ensure that, in the event that a volunteer's Blue Card expires, that a renewal application is lodged immediately with Blue Card Services. The volunteer must not be engaged in child related employment until such time as the volunteer is issued with

a new Blue Card from Blue Card Services.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must take immediate and appropriate action, on a case-by-case basis when they are notified that an employee or volunteer has had their Blue Card suspended or cancelled, or has received a negative notice. (Please refer to the [Flowchart](#) and the [Risk Management Strategy](#))

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must immediately notify the department's Ethical Standards Unit as soon as they become aware that an employee or volunteer's Police Information (see: definitions) has changed (e.g. if they have been charged or convicted of a criminal offence) or, if the employee has been issued with a negative notice or had their Blue Card cancelled or suspended.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must ensure that any employee, volunteer or contractor/individual with a negative notice, suspended or cancelled Blue Card is not engaged in child-related employment.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must advise applicants that it is an offence for a disqualified person to sign a Blue Card application form in accordance with the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (Qld), Part 4, section 174.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must sign the declaration on the application form stating the applicant has been warned of offences, and verifies that the applicant has signed the declaration stating they are not a disqualified person, before the application is lodged.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must ensure the applicant's identifying documents are sighted.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must ensure Blue Card applications are managed in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) by ensuring that:

- the application forms have a covering sheet while being processed in the school/business unit;
- if an application is faxed to the Public Safety Business Agency, the original is posted immediately;
- the school/business unit records the application has been made, however, copies of the application are not to be retained.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must not sign a form to verify that they have sighted an Employee or Volunteer's Blue Card if they have not yet done so.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must manage Negative Notices, and Blue Card cancellations and suspensions in accordance with the [Blue Card Risk Management Strategy](#).

#### **Officers of the Workforce Relations and Review Unit**

Officers of the Workforce Relations and Review Unit must not contravene the *Working with Children (Risk Management & Screening) Act 2000* (Qld).

Officers of the Workforce Relations and Review Unit must review this procedure at least annually.

Officers of the Workforce Relations and Review Unit must take immediate and appropriate action in relation to a person's employment when notified by the Ethical Standards Unit of a change in Police information, a Negative Notice or, Blue Card cancellation or suspension.

#### **Officers of the Ethical Standards Unit**

Officers of the Ethical Standards Unit must not contravene the *Working with Children (Risk Management & Screening) Act 2000* (Qld).

Officers of the Ethical Standards Unit must take immediate action when notified by a Principal/HODs/BSM or Manager that an Employee or Volunteer's Police Information (see: definitions) has changed (e.g. if they have been charged or convicted of a criminal offence) or, that the employee has received a negative notice or, that their Blue Card has been suspended or cancelled.

## Process

To assist Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers to meet their obligations under the *Working with Children (Risk Management & Screening) Act 2000* (Qld) a [process flowchart](#) is provided as a guide for when individuals are engaged in their school or business unit in child-related employment or activities.

The flowchart steps out the Blue Card process requirements:

- for engaging new employees and volunteers in child-related employment or activities; and
- for managing existing employees and volunteers.

The Blue Card process requirements contained in the flowchart are detailed below.

### Appointing new Employees and Volunteers

When engaging a person as a paid employee or a volunteer in child related employment of activities:

Consider whether the person has either, a current Blue Card, a Blue Card application in progress or, an Exemption Card application in progress?

**If yes**, complete the Organisation/employer declaration section of Authorisation to Confirm a Valid Blue Card for government employees. This form is to be submitted by the employee and can be found

at: <https://oneportal.deta.qld.gov.au/Services/HumanResources/Forms/Documents/auth-confirm-valid-card-app-govt-employees.pdf>.

The paid employee can commence work once the confirmation form has been submitted to Blue card Services.

**If no**, complete the Organisation/employer declaration section of a Government paid employee blue card application. This form is to be submitted by the employee and can be found at: [Government paid employee blue card application](#) (please note, this form is found only on the department's OnePortal webpage and is not located on the Blue Card Services website)

A paid employee can commence work once the application form has been submitted to Blue Card Services.

A volunteer can not commence work until they have been issued with a Blue Card and this has been sighted by the Principal/HOD/BSM or Manager.

Principals/HODs or BSMs must ensure that the Blue Card information for all employees and volunteers is entered and maintained in the OneSchool database.

Managers in non-school locations who engage employees or volunteers in child-related employment or activities must ensure that a register of current Blue Card information is maintained.

### **Managing existing Employees and Volunteers**

An application to renew the Blue Card of an employee or volunteer must be submitted PRIOR to the Blue Card expiry date.

If a Blue Card for an employee or volunteer expires, the following action must occur:

- For paid employees, the employee is removed from child-related employment or activities until a renewal application is lodged with Blue Card Service.
- For volunteers, the volunteer is removed from child-related work or activities until a renewal application is lodged AND a new Blue Card has been issued and sighted by the Principal/HOD/BSM or Manager.

### **Transitioning from Volunteer to Employee status**

A person who was previously engaged by the department as a Volunteer must within 14 days of becoming a paid employee, submit a [Volunteer to paid employment transfer](#) form to the Public Safety Business Agency.

### **Verifying and Confirming Blue Cards**

Employees and Volunteers who hold a valid Blue Card must comply with a lawful and reasonable request by a Principal/HOD/BSM or Manager to produce their Blue Card for verification.

Employees and Volunteers who hold a Blue Card must comply with any request from their Principal/HOD/BSM or Manager to complete an [Authorisation to confirm a valid card/application for government employees form](#) when it is lawful and reasonable for the department to do so.

Principals/HODs/BSMs or Managers must use the [online Blue Card validation tool](#) available on the Blue Card Services website to check the validity of an Employee or Volunteer's Blue Card.

### **Performing duties without a Blue Card**

Paid employees may commence child-related employment or activities without a Blue Card if they have already lodged a [Government paid employee Blue Card application form](#) (DET employees only) and they have not had a Negative Notice issued upon them by Blue Card Services.

Volunteers may not undertake child-related work or activities without a Blue Card.

### **Suspended, Cancelled Blue Cards or Negative Notices**

If the Blue Card of an employee or volunteer is suspended, cancelled or, the person is issued with a negative notice, the Principal/HOD/BSM or Manager must immediately remove that person from performing child-related employment or activities and must immediately contact the Ethical Standards Unit.

### **Change in Police Information**

Any employee or volunteer who is engaged in child-related work or activities and who has a change in their police information must immediately complete the applicant/card holder sections of the Change in Police Information form (link provided below) and provide this form to their Principal/HOD/BSM or Manager.

On being notified of an employees' change in police information, the Principal/HOD/BSM or Manager must complete the Organisation sections of the Change in Police Information form



provided by the employee/volunteer and submit the form to Blue Card Services.

The Change in Police Information form can be found

at: <http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/pdf/forms/PSBA027MAY16-CH-Change-in-police-information-notification.pdf>.

The employee/volunteer can not be engaged in child-related employment or activities until the form has been lodged.

The Principal/HOD/BSM or Manager must immediately notify the Ethical Standards Unit of the change in police information.

## Online Resources

### Forms

- [Government paid employee blue card application form](#) (DET employees only)
- [Blue card application \(BC\) form](#) – Volunteers, Trainee Students  
(Note: No payment is required for volunteer and trainee students)
- [Authorisation to confirm a valid card/application form](#) (DET employees only)
- [Volunteer to paid transfer form](#)
- [Change in Police Information form](#)

### Guidelines

- [About the Blue Card, Public Safety Business Agency](#)
- [Queensland College of Teachers](#)

### Other relevant information/documents

- [Blue Card Flowchart](#)
- [Blue Card Forms](#)
- [Blue Card Risk Management](#)
- [Who Needs a Blue Card?](#)
- [Payment of Blue Card Fees](#)

## Review Date

27/01/2017



## Definitions

### Blue Card

A Blue Card is a plasticised card, issued to a person who is the holder of a current positive notice by Blue Card Service in the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) and is valid for three years from the date of issue. A Blue Card displays the following information about the Blue Card holder:

- the name of the person;
- the registration number of the person;
- the expiry date of the person's positive notice; and
- the signature of the person.

### Business Unit

An example of a departmental Business Unit may be a Regional office work area that employs



staff such as Regional Systems Technicians who regularly visit schools, Field Officers who regularly visit Early Childhood Education and Care centres or, Training Officers who regularly visit schools or other facilities in relation to apprentices or trainees who are under the age of 18 years.

### **Child/Children**

A person under the age of 18 years.

### **Child-Related Work/Employment or Activities**

Employment or services conducted in the department are regarded as child-related if the usual functions of the employment or services include or are likely to include—

- (a) providing services that are directed mainly towards children; or
- (b) conducting activities that mainly involve children.

In DET, such work or activities predominantly occur in schools but may also occur in other locations, for example, in relation to Early Childhood Education and Care and, Training in relation to trainees and apprentices under the age of 18 years.

### **Employee**

A person employed by the Department of Education and Training.

### **Exemption Card**

An Exemption Card is a plasticised card, issued to a registered teacher, Police Officer or Registered Health Practitioner allowing them to undertake child-related services that are not part of their normal employment, such as private tutoring of a child, work in a child care centre, volunteering at a children's sporting club, participating in a homestay or reading program or supervising after hours school care.

### **Positive Notice**

A notice issued by Blue Card Services which permits a person to perform child-related employment or activities.

### **Negative Notice**

A notice issued by Blue Card Services which prevents a person from performing child-related employment or activities.

### **Police Information**

Any information issued by the Police Commissioner which may include an individual's criminal history and investigative information.

### **Parent**

A Parent is a child's mother, father or someone else, other than the chief executive (child safety), who has or exercises parental responsibility for the child however a person standing in the place of a Parent on a temporary basis is not a Parent for the child.

A Parent for an Aboriginal child includes a person who, under Aboriginal tradition, is regarded as a Parent of the child.

A Parent of a Torres Strait Islander child includes a person who, under Island custom, is regarded as a parent of the child.

### **Registered Health Practitioner**

Includes Medical Practitioners, Nurses and Midwives, Podiatrists, Psychologists, Optometrists, Osteopaths, Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists.

Note: Speech and Language Therapists are not Registered Health Practitioners and DO require a Blue Card.

### **Volunteer**

An unpaid worker performing child-related work or activities for the department.






## **Authority**

- [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000 \(Old\)](#) Chapter 8
- [Criminal Law \(Rehabilitation of Offenders\) Act 1986 \(Old\)](#) Parts 1-14
- [Information Privacy Act 2009 \(Old\)](#)
- [Public Service Act 2008 \(Old\)](#) Chapters 1-4

## **Related Policy Instruments**

- [Student Protection](#)
- [Allegations Against Employees in the Area of Student Protection](#)

## **Attachments**

-  [Blue Card - Risk Management](#)
-  [Blue Card Flowchart](#)
-  [Blue card application forms](#)
-  [Payment of blue card fees](#)
-  [Who needs a blue card?](#)

## **Contact**

For further information, please contact:

### **Workforce Relations and review**

Phone: (07) 3513 6518

Email: [workforce.review@dete.qld.gov.au](mailto:workforce.review@dete.qld.gov.au)

### **Ethical Standards Unit**

Phone: (07) 3055 2955

Email: [ethicalstandards@dete.qld.gov.au](mailto:ethicalstandards@dete.qld.gov.au)

or

**Public Safety Business Agency**

Phone: 1800 113 611

[Public Safety Business Agency website](#)

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