



QBLAI CHILD AND YOUTH RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS POLICY

Policy Statement

Queensland Blue Light Association Incorporated (QBLAI) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people, including those who participate in our activities and our programs. In order to support this commitment QBLAI expects our employees, volunteers, and contractors to hold relevant working with children checks in accordance with all relevant legislation.

Scope

This policy applies to all current and potential employees, volunteers, and contractors who are engaged by QBLAI.

Objectives

This policy has been developed to provide a framework to ensure all applicable individuals engaged by QBLAI hold the relevant Working with Children Checks in accordance with legislation.

Guiding Principles

- QBLAI will endeavour to ensure that all current employees, volunteers and contractors engaged by QBLAI that have any contact whatsoever with persons under 18 years of age within the scope of their role with QBLAI must hold a relevant Working with Children Check (Blue Card).
- QBLAI will endeavour to ensure that all potential employees/volunteers have applied for a Working with Children Check (Blue Card) prior to commencing employment.
- Where a potential employee/volunteer already holds a valid Working with Children Check, QBLAI will confirm ongoing eligibility through an *Authorisation to Confirm a Valid Blue Card*.
- QBLAI will endeavour to ensure that all volunteers and potential volunteers who will interact with young people and children must hold a relevant Working with Children Check (Blue Card) prior to commencing with QBLAI.
- QBLAI will endeavour to ensure that all QPS employees have their exemption card prior to commencing QBLAI activities.
- QBLAI will endeavour to ensure that where there is any change to an individual's personal circumstances (e.g. moving house) that they understand that they are responsible for notifying the relevant body of this change.
- QBLAI will endeavour to ensure that where there is a change to an individual's criminal history that they understand that they are obligated to inform QBLAI and the relevant body of this change.
- Where a negative notice is reported, QBLAI may not be able to continue to engage individuals in any capacity.
- QBLAI will endeavour to notify the relevant body if an individual stops working for QBLAI or if the contact person for QBLAI changes.
- QBLAI will endeavour to ensure that individuals understand that Blue Cards are current for three years unless cancelled or suspended.
- QBLAI will endeavour to maintain a Blue Card Register of all employees and volunteers engaged by the Association.



Roles and responsibilities

QBLAI State Coordinator

The State Coordinator is responsible for:

- Approving the policy and procedure for implementation by QBLAI that is consistent with relevant legislation.
- Implementing, monitoring and reviewing the Working With Children Checks Policy.
- Providing advice and support where interpretation of the legislation is required.
- Providing advice and support to branches in regards to the completion of Working with Children Check application forms.

Recruiting Managers are responsible for:

- Notifying all applicants that by signing the application form they are consenting to the screening process under the Act;
- Endeavouring to ensure that the 'contact person' has sighted documents to confirm;
- Ensuring that while paid employees can commence employment after an application form has been submitted, volunteers must not commence regulated employment until they hold a valid Blue Card and positive notice;
- Explicitly warning all potential staff (paid employees and volunteers) that it is an offence for a 'disqualified person' to sign a Blue Card application form or a renewal form. It is an offence for an employer not to provide this warning.
- A person is disqualified if they:
 - have been convicted of a 'disqualifying offence'
 - are a 'reportable offender' with current reporting obligations under the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004, or
 - are subject to an offender prohibition order under the Child Protection (Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2008, or
 - are subject to a sexual offender order under the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003, or
 - are subject to a disqualification order from a court prohibiting them from applying for, or holding a blue card (see Blue Card Services website for further details of all the above).
- Advising prospective employees who may be 'disqualified persons', that in certain circumstances, they may be able to apply for an 'Eligibility declaration' under the Act; and
- Send a completed 'Authorisation to confirm a valid Blue Card' to register your association as the applicant's current employer if a new employee has a current blue Card. This is compulsory and you may be subject to penalties for failing to submit an authorisation form for a new employee.

Employees are responsible for:

- Providing details of any current and valid Working with Children Checks to QBLAI, which includes providing a copy of Blue Card and verification letter.
- Advising the relevant State Agency of any change to personal details.
- Advising the relevant State Agency of any change to criminal history.
- Advising QBLAI that there has been a change to their criminal history.
- Advising the relevant State Agency when they leave QBLAI/regulated employment.



Expiry of Working with Children Checks

It is important to note that Blue Cards are current for three years unless cancelled or suspended. It is the responsibility of the employee to apply for a new card as and when needed.

Action to be taken in the event of negative notice or barred notification

If an employee has had a card cancelled, suspended or receives a negative notice after a change in police information, QBLAI must ensure the employee does not continue to undertake child related work within the organisation (work that is regulated by the Act). Appropriate action will be taken in line with QBLAI policies and procedures which may include termination of employment.

In all cases it is important to contact the State Coordinator to discuss further.

E: admin@bluelightqld.org

Related documents	QBLAI Child and Youth Risk Management Statement of Commitment; QBLAI Code of Conduct; QBLAI Recruitment Policy; QBLAI Handling Disclosures and Suspicions of Harm; QBLAI Procedure for Handling Breaches; QBLAI Child and Youth Protection Policy
Policy Owner	QBLAI State Coordinator
Approved by	<i>QBLAI State Board</i>
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