

Working with Children Check



Quick guide

- Adults who work or volunteer in child-related work need to hold a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) in most cases.
- Child-related work may include working in hospital wards and medical practices where children are treated, and providing child health and mental health services.
- Check requirements with your employer as rules vary from state to state.

What is a Working with Children Check?

Working With Children Checks (WWCCs) are designed to ensure public environments in Australia are safe for children. Organisations that work directly with children must make sure workers and volunteers have the necessary screening checks, including WWCCs where required.

Generally WWCC are required for adults who work in either paid or volunteer roles and who have more than incidental contact with children as part of their role. Checks may also be required for anyone who has access to sensitive personal information about children, including health records.

Individuals need to apply for and maintain their own WWCC, which may be valid for a period of 2-5 years.

A WWCC involves a National Police Check (criminal history record check) and a review of reportable workplace misconduct to identify issues that may pose a risk to child safety. The outcome of a check is either a clearance to work with children, or a prohibition from working with children.

Most jurisdictions have ongoing monitoring provisions, so a WWCC can be altered or withdrawn if the holder commits misconduct or an offence that may affect their suitability to work with children.

Do I need a WWCC to practise?

If you provide health services directly to children, including counselling or mental health services, you are likely to require a WWCC. Most states and territories require valid WWCCs for staff working in paediatric wards, or children's health services, or providing healthcare in schools. You may also require a WWCC if you work in general hospital wards or medical practices where children are likely to be patients.

However, each state and territory defines child-related work differently, and has its own requirements and procedures for obtaining a WWCC. Doctors may not always need a WWCC if they occasionally treat children and those children are accompanied by a parent or guardian.

On the other hand, in some states, employers may require all employees to hold a WWCC, even those who fall within an exemption under the legislation. It is important to check with your employer or relevant body in your jurisdiction if you are unsure.

What is required in each jurisdiction?

Who needs a WWCC	Not needed	Length valid	State and territory WWCC homepages
<p>ACT</p> <p>Individuals who have more than incidental contact in 'regulated activities' provided to vulnerable people – including providing mental health services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If working with vulnerable people as a health practitioner 	5 years	Working with vulnerable people (WWVP) registration (act.gov.au)
<p>NSW</p> <p>Adults working/volunteering in 'child-related work', which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing health care in wards of hospitals where children are treated Providing other children's health services Providing counselling services for children Working with or supporting children with disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health practitioners in private practice who treat children with another adult present Students on clinical placement in hospital/health service Interstate workers who work with children for fewer than 30 days 	5 years	Working with Children Check Office of the Children's Guardian (nsw.gov.au)
<p>NT</p> <p>Anyone over 14 working in child-related employment, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work that involves/may potentially involve contact with children in connection with wards of hospitals or any other facilities for health services in which children are ordinarily patients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interstate visitors volunteering with children for less than 14 days in a year in total 	2 years	Working with children clearance: apply and renew NT.GOV.AU
<p>QLD</p> <p>Workers in 'regulated employment', including providing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health services mainly/only to children Health services in a facility that provides services mainly/only to children Counselling services to children remotely or where no-one else is present Services as a health student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered health practitioners working in their professional capacity 	3 years	Blue cards for working with children Your rights, crime and the law Queensland Government (www.qld.gov.au)
<p>SA</p> <p>Anyone over 14 who works or volunteers in child-related work, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing health services or allied health services for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anyone working with children less than 7 days/year Interstate workers who hold an equivalent check from their home state or territory who do child-related work as part of an organised event and for no more than 10 consecutive days 	5 year	SA.GOV.AU - Working with Children Checks (www.sa.gov.au)
<p>TAS</p> <p>Anyone over 16 working or volunteering in a 'regulated activity', including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child health programs or services conducted specifically for, or provided only or mainly to, children Employers may require person to be registered, even if exempt under legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interstate visitors may be exempt if they hold a WWCC from another jurisdiction Anyone working with children for less than 7 days/calendar year 	5 years	Apply for registration to work with vulnerable people Service Tasmania
<p>VIC</p> <p>Adults working at a specified service, body or place where the work involves direct contact with a child, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paediatric wards of public/denominational/private hospitals <p>Workers who are individually exempt can still be required to obtain a WWCC if their organisation requires one</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students under 20 who volunteer in activities/placements organised by their educational institution Workers visiting from interstate who only do child-related work in Victoria for one period of up to 30 days in a calendar year Visiting workers who hold an equivalent interstate WWCC and do child-related work in Victoria for up to 30 days in the same calendar year (can be multiple events) 	5 years	Working with Children Check vic.gov.au (www.vic.gov.au)

<p>WA</p> <p>Working (paid or unpaid) in 'child-related work', in listed categories including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community child health services or • A ward of a public or private hospital in which children are ordinarily patients (e.g. Perth Children's Hospital) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpaid students on placement (under 18) 	<p>3 years</p>	<p>Working with Children Check (www.wa.gov.au)</p>
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Is my WWCC valid if I am working interstate?

In most states, interstate workers will not need a local WWCC to work with children for short periods if they have an equivalent registration from their home state. Again, this varies so check with your employer or the local authority where you are working.

If you are moving interstate you may need to wait until you have moved, as in most cases you will need to apply from within the relevant state. This also varies so check with the authority in your new state.

Do I need a WWCC as a student on clinical placement?

Students may not need a WWCC for clinical placements. Again, requirements vary from state to state. In some states exemptions only apply to school students on work experience so check with your institution or placement organiser.

What sort of issues could affect my WWCC?

The relevant authorities check, and monitor, for offences or misconduct that may affect a WWCC holder's suitability to work with children. They may consider a range of issues including sexual offences, offences involving violence, apprehended violence orders, drug and alcohol offences. Lapsed or withdrawn charges may also be considered and authorities may seek access to interstate records as well as records from other countries where information sharing agreements apply.

Some jurisdictions also require employers and/or WWCC holders to notify the authority of offences that may affect suitability to hold a WWCC.

If a WWCC is declined or cancelled you will receive a notice detailing why the decision has been made, what it means and your rights.

There are procedures in place for appealing decisions to cancel a WWCC or decline an application. For further information please see the requirements in your state or territory.

Can I work without a WWCC?

New applications

You may be able to work while your application is being assessed as long as you have an application number from the relevant authority. This varies between jurisdictions. It may also depend on your employer's policies.

Cancellation

If your WWCC is cancelled, you will be prevented from working with children for a period, generally five years. You must immediately stop any paid or volunteer work which requires you to hold a WWCC. It is a criminal offence to continue to do so.

The relevant authorities are required by law to notify any employer who has verified your application, or person reasonably believed to be engaging you in child-related work that you have been refused a WWCC.

Lapsed

If you fail to renew your WWCC before it expires, in most cases you must also stop working with children. Each state has different requirements for renewal, so it is important to check the expiry date on your WWCC. Most states have a process to alert you when your WWCC is due to expire, so ensure you keep your contact details up to date.

References

Australian Capital Territory

[Working with vulnerable people \(WWVP\) registration \(act.gov.au\)](http://act.gov.au)

Northern Territory

[Working with children clearance: apply and renew | NT.GOV.AU](http://NT.GOV.AU)

NSW

[Working with Children Check | Office of the Children's Guardian \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://nsw.gov.au)

Queensland

[The blue card system explained | Your rights, crime and the law | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](http://www.qld.gov.au)

Tasmania

[Do I need to register to work with vulnerable people? \(cbos.tas.gov.au\)](http://cbos.tas.gov.au)

Victoria

[Home | Working with Children](#)

Western Australia

[Working with Children Check - Western Australia](#)

South Australia

[SA.GOV.AU - Working with Children Checks \(www.sa.gov.au\)](http://SA.GOV.AU)

For more information or immediate medico-legal advice, call us on **1800 128 268**, 24/7 in emergencies. avant.org.au/mlas



avant.org.au/avant-learning-centre

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