

4.6 Safety screening for funded organisations

Department of Health and Human Services

Who does this policy apply to?

The sections immediately below (unless stated otherwise) are for organisations which receive funding from the former Department of Human Services and Department of Health which has now merged into the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Note: Further updates may be required for this document. Always refer to this document online to ensure you have the most current version.

Policy purpose

Safety screening incorporates referee checks and the police record check. It may also include a Working with Children Check (if relevant to the role), a check against the Disability Worker Exclusion List (DWEL), a Disqualified Carer Check, Employment History Check (including disciplinary action disclosure and checks of qualification and training).

Safety screening plays an important role in providing a safer service delivery for people who receive support from community services organisations funded or registered by various departments within Victoria. The overarching imperative of the policy is to strengthen the protections and safeguards for people through a rigorous approach to managing employment safety screening.

Legislation and /or regulation

Relevant legislation is flagged in the pertinent sections of the policy.

Overview of safety screening

Safety screening is not a means of precluding people with an adverse history from employment within funded or registered organisations. The relevance of any adverse history is assessed strictly in relation to the work environment and job role. All of these checks are undertaken in strict compliance with the privacy and confidentiality principles as required by relevant legislation.

Safety screening does not completely eliminate the risk of employing unsuitable staff, however, it is designed to minimise that risk on the basis of available, relevant information. Employment safety screening will not detect 'unsuitable' employees unless the employee has a police record or if referees know of their background.

Note: Future risks are not mitigated by one-off safety screening at recruitment and it is prudent for funded or registered organisations and authorised agencies (see [Disability Worker Exclusion Scheme](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/disability-worker-exclusion-scheme) < <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/disability-worker-exclusion-scheme>> (external link, opens in a new window) for an explanation of authorised agencies) to incorporate a statement in their employment agreements confirming that all staff are obligated to:

advise their manager if they are charged with a criminal offence which is punishable by imprisonment or, if found guilty, could reasonably affect their ability to meet the inherent requirements of their job; and

disclose any formal disciplinary action taken against them by any current or former employer (many staff have multiple employers). This includes any finding of improper or unprofessional conduct by any Court or Tribunal of any kind and any investigations that the staff member has been subject of by an employer, law enforcement agency or any integrity body or similar in Australia or in another country.

It is also prudent for funded or registered organisations and authorised agencies to ask prospective workers to sign a statutory declaration with the content below stating that they have fully disclosed to their prospective employer, all relevant information regarding their criminal record and employment history. See [Appendix 1a Safety screening statutory declaration](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0003/908139/4.6-safety-screening-App-1a-safety-screening-stat-dec-07092015.doc) <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0003/908139/4.6-safety-screening-App-1a-safety-screening-stat-dec-07092015.doc> (Word 72 KB, opens in new window).

By way of this statutory declaration, they are declaring that they have fully disclosed in writing to the organisation, all details of:

- any charges laid against them by police concerning any offence committed in Australia or in another country in the past
- any offence of which they have been found guilty, committed in Australia or in another country in the past
- any formal disciplinary action taken against them by any current or former employer
- any finding of improper or unprofessional conduct by them by any Court or Tribunal of any kind
- any investigations they have been the subject of by an employer, law enforcement agency or any integrity body or similar in Australia or in another country.

They should also ensure that a copy of their responses to the above issues (which they provided to the organisation as part of the recruitment process to a position within the organisation) is attached.

Alternatively a statement to this effect could be included in the contract of employment paperwork.

When to apply this policy

DHHS in its role as employer, regulator and funder is committed to providing quality services to vulnerable clients in a safe environment. The department requires that funded organisations include safety screening pre-employment/pre-placement police record checks in their recruitment processes to minimise the risk of employing unsuitable people. Safety screening may also include conducting checks against the DWEL or a Working with Children Check, where relevant, please refer to the relevant section within this policy.

Below is a list of circumstances or persons where a police record check is required. The circumstances include either actual unsupervised contact with the specified client and patient categories listed previously, or the potential for such unsupervised contact.

Note: An offer of employment or placement in direct care/patient areas cannot occur until the completed police record check and any referee checks have been assessed by the funded organisation.

Organisations should adopt this listing and include the owner/s and/or proprietor/s, their representatives, board members and any other staff who, because of their role, would have unsupervised access, or the potential for access, to the specified staff, client or patient categories:

- a) a prospective manager within the organisation, directly managing services to the specified client or patient categories;
- b) a prospective direct contact employee, caregiver, volunteer or student to be placed within the organisation to provide services to the specified client and patient categories;
- c) labour hires to be placed within the organisation to provide services to the specified client and patient categories;
- d) existing organisation employees not already working in direct care areas prior to their promotion or transfer into jobs in client or patient contact areas;
- e) any casual or relieving staff where there is contact with the specified client and patient categories;
- f) primary caregiver - those who are in a position of trust and responsibility with clients or patients from the specified categories. Caregivers include but are not limited to: foster parents, private

board providers, home board providers, Interchange families, Adolescent Community Placement caregivers, Cottage Parent spouses/partners, co-habitors in foster care, private board, Adolescent Community placements, Family Options caregivers, lead tenants, all adult cohabiters in home based and residential care (including spouses/partners and children aged 18 and over), and other providers of home based care funded through Protective Services and/or SAAP;

- g) volunteers, including those volunteers used during strike action; and
- h) any labour hire who is contracted to provide services in the organisation's facilities where there is contact with the specified client and patient categories, such as security staff and cleaners (see Use of Labour Hire Staff).

Other employees not involved in direct or patient contact may be required to undergo a police record check where the manager certifies that the job requires consideration of any police record check before approving employment.

Specified client categories for DHHS

All funded organisations and all authorised agencies that provide services to specified client categories for DHHS (as listed below) are required to comply with this policy (see Use of Labour Hire Staff for additional related information):

- a) any person under the age of 21 years who is subject to an order of the court of Victoria which relates to their care or protection;
- b) any person under the age of 18 years who is subject to a protective intervention report, investigation or involvement by Child Protection, DHHS;
- c) any person who is subject to an order of the Children's Court or subject to guardianship, following a protection application;
- d) any person under 18 years to be placed for adoption by DHHS;
- e) any person under 18 years who receives a residential or home based care or other service funded through Child Protection and/or Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program (SAAP), DHHS;
- f) any person who has a disability as defined by the **Disability Act 2006**;
- g) any person who receives accommodation support services provided to groups in community based settings and residential institutions;
- h) any person who receives public rental housing services under the **Housing Act 1983**;
- i) any other such client or patient of DHHS or an organisation funded by DHHS who receives direct care services;
- j) any person who receives care or treatment for a mental illness through a public mental health service or psychiatric disability and rehabilitation support service funded through the State government;
- k) any person who receives services through Specialist Children's Services in the Child and Family Health Program;
- l) any person who receives services under the Home and Community Care (HACC) program;
- m) any person who receives treatment through the Dental Health Program and the Tuberculosis (TB) Program;
- n) any person defined as a patient under the **Alcohol and Drug Dependent Persons Act (Section 28 Sentencing Act)**;
- o) any aged or infirm person who receives in-home services.

Pre-employment safety screening checks

Pre-employment safety screening checks involves the following tasks:

- Disability Worker Exclusion List check (applicable to disability residential care) (if required)

- Disqualified Carer check (also known as Carers' Register – applicable to out-of-home-care of children) (if required)
- Employment history including disciplinary action disclosure
- Police record check (including Proof of identity check)
- Qualification check (if relevant)
- Confirmation of a Working With Children Check (WWCC) card or WWCC receipt (if necessary)
- Referee Checks

See below for specific information relating to the above tasks. The information required for pre-employment safety screening is collected with an applicant's informed consent.

A pre-employment safety screening checklist is provided at Appendix 2 [Pre-employment safety screening checklist](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0008/908144/4.6-Safety-screening-App-2-Pre-employment-safety-screening-checklist-01092015.doc) <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0008/908144/4.6-Safety-screening-App-2-Pre-employment-safety-screening-checklist-01092015.doc> (Word 100 KB, opens in new window).

Employment History (including disciplinary action disclosure)

It is prudent to require prospective employees to disclose any formal disciplinary action taken against them by any current or former employer (many workers have multiple employers). This includes any finding of improper or unprofessional conduct by any Court or Tribunal of any kind and any investigations that the prospective employee has been subject of by an employer, law enforcement agency or any integrity body or similar in Australia or in another country.

Police record check (including Proof of Identity)

Police record checks (sometimes referred to as criminal record checks), identify and release relevant criminal history information, at a point in time, using information held by police in Victoria and other states and territories relating to convictions, findings of guilt or pending court proceedings.

Establishing the identity of an applicant is critical to ensuring any police history information identified through a police record check belongs to the correct person. Therefore, the applicant must complete a police check form giving their consent to have their police history checked. This form also contains the Proof of identity check.

It is prudent to establish proof of identity when the applicant presents for interview to streamline and expedite the process. Applicants should be advised that their documentation will be processed where they are deemed competitive but will be otherwise destroyed.

Police record checks are not required for persons aged sixteen years or younger; however referee checks should be conducted. Teachers, parents and others who personally know the individual should act as referees and the credentials of any referees should be verified.

Recurrent police checks

Police record checks must be conducted at least once every three years for foster carers, lead tenants and all adult members (aged 18 years or over) of their households and for direct care employees of funded organisations that provide out of home care. If a police check on an applicant for employment as a residential carer reveals a disclosable court outcome, the funded organisation is required to notify the relevant department of their intention to employ the carer. Refer to the section 'Results of the police record check - disclosable court outcome' below.

Student placements

For students aged 17 years or younger, police checks are not required, however referee checks with teachers, parents or other adults who personally know the students must be undertaken. A referee's credentials can be verified by sighting official letterhead stationery or an email containing an official signature block or sent from an organisation's server.

A police check is required for students aged 18 years and older. These checks are administered by the relevant course coordinator in the educational institute or the student can obtain a police check through the Victoria Police website. Police record checks should be undertaken prior to the confirmation of the first placement and in each subsequent year of study. The student has the responsibility to notify the educational institution and the organisation of any change to the student's police record check status during the course year.

The educational institution's course coordinator must ensure that students are notified of DHHS' information collection requirements. The course coordinator must also explain the implications of consenting to a police record check and that refusal to undergo a police record check will mean that a placement cannot proceed.

For international students or students who have resided in an overseas country for 12 months or more in the last ten years, as they are only here for a short period, the usual requirement for obtaining an international police check is waived. However, they must complete a Statutory Declaration (see [Appendix 1b Safety screening statutory declaration student placements](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0007/922237/4.6-Safety-screening-App-1b-stat-dec-student-placement-07092015.doc) <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0007/922237/4.6-Safety-screening-App-1b-stat-dec-student-placement-07092015.doc> (opens in new window, Word 71 KB). By way of this statutory declaration, they are declaring that they do not have:

any charges laid against them by police concerning any offence committed in Australia or in another country in the past

any offence of which they have been found guilty, committed in Australia or in another country in the past.

International police checks

Applicants must be informed at the beginning of the recruitment processes that if they have resided continuously in an overseas country for 12 months or more in the last ten years, they should contact the relevant overseas police force to obtain a criminal or police record check. This is not applicable if they were travelling through, for example, backpacking and only staying in some countries for very short periods. Victoria Police and CrimTrac do not conduct international police checks, although some CrimTrac accredited broker agencies may do so. If they were a minor when they were overseas, they do not require an international police check.

Some countries will not release information regarding an individual for personal or third party purposes. In these extenuating cases, where an international police records check cannot be obtained, a statutory declaration and character reference checks must be conducted with at least two individuals who personally knew the individual while they were residing in the other country. This should be undertaken as a very last resort if the international police check is actually unavailable and cannot be obtained.

The applicant must be informed that referees will be asked whether they have knowledge or information concerning the applicant, which would adversely affect the applicant from performing the job, including any relevant criminal offences. The credentials of persons acting as referees must be verified and can include previous employers, government officials and family members.

Overseas applicants should not commence employment until this process is satisfactorily completed and this decision should be signed off by the relevant funded organisation manager.

In the case of asylum seekers and refugees who may be unable to provide character references to accompany a statutory declaration, the statutory declaration will suffice with proof of status. However, eligibility to work should be confirmed as part of the recruitment process by the funded organisation using the [Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Visa Entitlement Verification Online \(VEVO\) checking system](http://www.border.gov.au/Busi/Visa) <<http://www.border.gov.au/Busi/Visa>> (external link, opens in a new window) or their faxback service.

Obtaining a police check

DHHS does not organise police record checks for funded/registered organisations (except in emergency situations - see below).

Police record checks can be obtained directly from [Victoria Police](http://www.police.vic.gov.au) <<http://www.police.vic.gov.au>> (external link, opens in a new window) or through an authorised service or agency accredited by CrimTrac. CrimTrac is the national information sharing service for Australia's police, law enforcement and national security agencies. A list of agencies accredited by CrimTrac can be found at [CrimTrac](http://www.crimtrac.gov.au/national_police_checking_service/index.html) <http://www.crimtrac.gov.au/national_police_checking_service/index.html> (external link, opens in a new window).

Cost of police record checks

Current information on the cost of obtaining a police record check through [Victoria Police website](http://www.police.vic.gov.au) <<http://www.police.vic.gov.au>> (external link, opens in a new window). Applicants and organisations conducting police record checks may be able to access reduced fees for checks on volunteers and students on placement. Refer to the [Victoria Police website](http://www.police.vic.gov.au) <<http://www.police.vic.gov.au>> for more information.

Some authorised service providers, such as CrimTrac accredited agencies, may also offer reduced fees for volunteers. For more information refer to the [CrimTrac website](http://www.crimtrac.gov.au/national_police_checking_service/index.html) <http://www.crimtrac.gov.au/national_police_checking_service/index.html> (external link, opens in a new window).

Prior to lodging a police record check

Funded or registered organisations and authorised agencies (with client/patient categories identified as above) must inform applicants that a police record check will be conducted if the applicant is competitive.

Requests for police record checks can only be submitted if the individual's written consent has been obtained. Written consent is obtained when the individual completes the relevant consent form provided by Victoria Police or the CrimTrac accredited agency.

If the organisation is conducting police record checks through a CrimTrac accredited agency, the funded/registered organisation should ensure that they provide applicants with relevant information as outlined by the accredited agency.

Lodging a police check

Procedures for lodging a police record check can be obtained from [Victoria Police website](http://www.police.vic.gov.au) <<http://www.police.vic.gov.au>> (external link, opens in a new window) or the CrimTrac accredited agency providing the police record check service.

Emergency police record checks

DHHS will conduct police record checks for funded/registered organisations only in emergency situations.

Emergency situations include those where client or patient contact is an immediate urgent issue (such as short term, emergency placement of children with extended family members or friends or for assessing volunteers being used in strike situations). The emergency check process should only be used in genuine emergencies and not as a solution to the late submission of police record check requests as there are limits on the number of emergency checks that can be conducted.

The emergency checks are to be arranged through the relevant Department of Health and Human Services' Regional Employment Police Record Checks Coordinator. The department will invoice organisations for any emergency checks conducted on their behalf, except where the department would normally reimburse these costs.

Results of the police record check

Information released as part of a police record check is restricted according to the relevant legislation or release policies operating in the specific police jurisdiction. Refer to the Victoria Police website for more information go to the [Victoria Police website](http://www.police.vic.gov.au) <http://www.police.vic.gov.au> (external link, opens in a new window).

Results of the police record check - no disclosable court outcome

Where the police record check of the competitive applicant, volunteer or student reveals no disclosable court outcomes, outstanding charges or other matters the appointment may be confirmed (an offer of employment or placement can be made).

Results of the police record check - disclosable court outcome

An applicant should not automatically be precluded from a job or placement on the basis of having a police record.

However, in line with Victorian Department of Health and Human Services' Child Protection Manual, if a person's national police history includes a Category A offence, further steps need to be taken. The individual should not be engaged in any client contact role if their criminal history includes a Category A offence without the written approval of the Director of the Office of Professional Practice (located at the department's head office, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne) and the Divisional Deputy Secretary.

A person whose criminal history includes a Category A offence must not be permitted to enter or remain within the household while a child protection client is placed there unless written endorsement has been obtained from the Director of the Office of Professional Practice (located at the department's head office, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne).

In all other cases, the relevant manager in the funded/registered organisation will manage the assessment process in order to determine the applicant's suitability for employment or placement (see Appendix 5 [Safety screening assessment instructions and form](#))

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0003/908148/Appendix-5-Safety-Screening-Assessment-Instructions-and-Form-23042015.doc> (opens in a new window, Word 112 KB).

The funded/registered organisation manager will ensure that:

- a) the applicant, student or volunteer confirms that the details of the disclosable record are correct (if there is a dispute, refer to the Victoria Police website and search for Criminal History Information Dispute process);
- b) assessment of the disclosable record of the applicant, volunteer or student is made in accordance with the assessment criteria detailed below. N.B. there should be no mention of the actual offence in the assessment form;
- c) before employment is formally offered, a discussion occurs with the relevant DHHS Area Director/regional senior program manager about the intention to employ an individual with such a record. The departmental representative cannot direct or make the decision to employ, but should provide their opinion regarding any decision the organisation makes (in line with principles outlined). A list of relevant DHHS Area Directors is available on the [Funded agency channel](#) <<https://fac.dhhs.vic.gov.au/useful-links>> (external link, opens in a new window).
- d) following the discussion, DHHS Area Director should send an email to the manager of the funded/registered organisation to confirm the outcome of the discussion, including the funded organisation manager's decision to either employ or not employ the individual (without reference to the details of the disclosable record); and
- e) any decision made for or against a person is able to be justified and is fully documented.

The funded/registered organisation manager should give consideration to the following assessment criteria:

- the relevance of the criminal offence, in relation to the job or placement
- the nature of the offence and the relationship of the offence to the particular job or placement for which the applicant is being considered
- the length of time since the offence took place
- whether the person was convicted or found guilty and placed on a bond

- whether there is evidence of an extended police record
- the number of offences committed which may establish a pattern of behaviour which renders the applicant unsuitable
- whether the offence was committed as an adult or a juvenile
- the severity of punishment imposed
- whether the offence is still a crime, that is, has the offence now been decriminalised
- whether there are other factors that may be relevant for consideration, and
- the person's general character since the offence was committed.

Where a funded/registered organisation's manager makes the decision not to take on an applicant, volunteer or student with a disclosable record, the funded/registered organisation manager must:

- inform the unsuccessful applicant of the decision and its rationale
- provide an opportunity for the unsuccessful applicant to discuss the results, and
- inform the unsuccessful applicant of the opportunity for the decision to be reviewed.

Where a check demonstrates that a person has a disclosable record, a funded/registered organisation may also have obligations to report that outcome to the Disability Worker Exclusion Scheme Unit. Refer to the **Disability Worker Exclusion Scheme Management Instruction (2014)** available on the [Disability Worker Exclusion Scheme](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/disability-worker-exclusion-scheme) < <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/disability-worker-exclusion-scheme> > (external link, opens in a new window) web page, for further information about this process.

Qualification check

If qualifications are a mandatory requirement of the role, original qualifications must be copied, certified as being a true copy of the original and dated by the relevant delegate then returned to the applicant.

If there are doubts about the qualification, the organisation or authorised agency should undertake an online check to verify that the qualification was awarded to the applicant. If an online check is not possible, the applicant should provide a letter from the registrar of the relevant institution confirming that the qualification was in fact awarded to the applicant. If there are any concerns about the authenticity of the qualification as presented, the issuing institution must be contacted directly to verify that the particular qualification was completed and issued to the relevant applicant on the date specified.

Working with Children Check

In 2006, the Victorian Government introduced a checking system which affects some people who work or volunteer with children. The Working with Children (WWC) Check helps to protect children from sexual or physical harm by checking a person's criminal history for serious sexual, violence or drug offences and findings from professional disciplinary bodies. The introduction of the WWC Check creates a mandatory minimum checking standard across Victoria. **Note:** Each state has their own process, they are not transferable interstate. In Victoria a Victorian WWC Check is required.

Employers, self-employed persons, employees and volunteers all have obligations and responsibilities under the **Working with Children Act 2005**. By fulfilling these obligations, Victoria's children will be made safer through the effective operation of the WWC Check.

Funded and registered organisations are responsible for ensuring that their organisations comply with this legislation and, in particular that:

- all employees, labour hires, volunteers or students 18 years or over who are required to obtain a WWC Check, do so
- employees or volunteers issued with a Negative Notice do not undertake child-related work as defined by the Working With Children Act 2005.

- periodically go to the Department of Justice WWC Check website and check the status of all employees and volunteers with WWC Check cards using Check Status function.

If the employees and volunteers of funded/registered organisations require a WWC Check, they must:

- show their Application Receipt to their employer or volunteer organisation upon request as evidence that they have submitted an application
- present their WWC Check card to their employer or volunteer organisation on request or when applying for child-related work
- inform their employer or volunteer organisation within seven days if they have been issued with an Interim Negative Notice or Negative Notice, or if they have a relevant change in circumstances
- not engage in child-related work if they have been issued with a Negative Notice
- ensure the accuracy of their personal details and employer or volunteer organisation information through the use of the online MyCheck/Change of Details function on the Department of Justice WWC Check website.

For a full and complete list of all obligations or for further information refer to the [Working with Children website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren) <www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren> (external link, opens in a new window).

From 1 July 2006, organisations receiving funding from DHHS are responsible for ensuring that employees or volunteers undergo a Working with Children (WWC) Check if required. Section 9 of the Working with Children Act 2005 identifies which employees or volunteers require a WWC Check. The funded/registered organisation's contact details should be in the employer section in the WWC Check application form.

Referee checks

Referee checks are a mandatory component of recruitment as they provide the best opportunity to discover past behaviours and predict future behaviour in the workplace. They are an important part of the safety screening process. A minimum of two checks should be carried out to confirm the applicant's suitability, including contact with their most recent employer. Refer to the template example [Safety screening referee check template](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0003/871410/4.6-Safety-screening-referee-check-template-SA-info-kit-30052014.doc)

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0003/871410/4.6-Safety-screening-referee-check-template-SA-info-kit-30052014.doc> (Word 55 KB, opens in a new window).

Funded or registered organisations and authorised agencies may also have obligations to report the outcome of a referee check to the Disability Worker Exclusion Scheme Unit. Refer to the 'Disability Worker Exclusion Scheme Management Instruction (2014)' available on the [Disability Worker Exclusion Scheme webpage](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/disability-worker-exclusion-scheme) < <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/disability-worker-exclusion-scheme>> (opens in a new window) for further information about this process.

Note: An offer of employment or placement in direct care/patient areas cannot occur until the completed police record check and any referee checks have been assessed by the funded/registered organisation.

Storage of documentation and confidentiality

Information obtained as part of the safety screening process must be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and privacy in accordance with the relevant legislation and standards. Refer to [Appendix 6 Record Storage and Destruction](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0010/908146/4.6-Safety-screening-App-6-Record-storage-and-destruction-01092015.doc)

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0010/908146/4.6-Safety-screening-App-6-Record-storage-and-destruction-01092015.doc> (Word 85 KB, opens in new window) for details.

For further information

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Department of Education and Training

Overview of safety screening

Safety screening plays an important role in providing safer service delivery for children and families who receive services from organisations funded by the Department of Education and Training (DET).

Pre-employment safety screening checks

The pre-employment checks that a funded organisation must conduct on prospective employees will depend on the nature of the service provided by the organisation. The checks may include the following:

- proof of identity;
- employment history;
- qualification check;
- confirmation of a Working With Children Check (WWCC) or a current Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration;
- criminal history check; and
- referee checks.

All information required for pre-employment safety screening is collected with the applicant's informed consent.

A [pre-employment safety screening checklist](#)

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0008/908144/4.6-Safety-screening-App-2-Pre-employment-safety-screening-checklist-01092015.doc> (Word 100 KB, opens in a new window) is available from the Department of Health and Human Services' Service agreement information kit 's web page on Safety screening for funded organisations.

Proof of Identity

As part of the pre-employment check, a funded organisation should seek 100 points of identification, confirming the prospective employee's identity.

Working with Children Check

Any person doing 'child-related work', involving unsupervised direct contact with children, in Victoria, must hold a current Victorian WWCC. Funded organisations must ensure employees and volunteers hold a valid Victorian WWCC, where required.

All non-teaching school based employees in Victorian government schools are required by DET to have a WWCC even if their duties do not fit the definition of 'child-related work'.

More information on the WWCC can be found at the [Working with Children Check website](#) <<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>> (external link, opens in a new window).

Student placements

Children aged 18 years or under are not required to hold a WWCC. However, funded organisations wishing to provide a work experience placement for a student should conduct referee checks with teachers, parents or other adults who personally know the student.

DET provides extensive resources on [Work Experience](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/work/pages/workexperience.aspx) <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/work/pages/workexperience.aspx> (external link, opens in a new window) placements on the DET website.

Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration

A person who is employed as an early childhood teacher in a Victorian education and care service, or children's service, must be registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT). VIT registration is renewed annually, and requires a current National Police History Check, which is valid for 5 years. A WWCC is not required where an employee is registered with VIT.

There are limited circumstances when VIT registration requirements may not apply. Contact the [Regulatory Authority](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/default.aspx)

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/default.aspx> (external link, opens in a new window) for further information.

More information regarding VIT registration is available on the [Victorian Institute of Teaching](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/) <http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/> (external link, opens in a new window) website.

Criminal History

In addition to the WWCC, some funded organisations are required by law to perform criminal history checks on prospective employees. DET has produced fact sheets detailing the criminal history check requirements for the following providers:

- Licensed children's services ([Criminal history check requirements for licensed children's services](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/regulation/pracnotescrimhistory.pdf)) <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/regulation/pracnotescrimhistory.pdf> (external link, opens in a new window)
- Centre-based services ([National Quality Framework Criminal history requirements: Centre-based services](#)) (external link, opens in a new window)
- Family day care services ([National Quality Framework Criminal history requirements: family day care](#)) (external link, opens in a new window)

Police record checks can be obtained directly from the [Victoria Police website](http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=2) <http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=2> (external link, opens in a new window) website or through an authorised service or agency accredited by CrimTrac. CrimTrac is the national information sharing service for Australia's police, law enforcement and national security agencies. A list of agencies accredited by CrimTrac can be found on the [CrimTrac](https://www.crimtrac.gov.au/) <https://www.crimtrac.gov.au/> (external link, opens in a new window) website.

Qualification check

If qualifications are a mandatory requirement of the role, original qualifications must be copied, certified as being a true copy of the original and dated by the relevant delegate then returned to the applicant.

If there are any concerns about the authenticity of the qualification as presented, the issuing institution must be contacted directly to verify that the authenticity of the qualification.

Referee checks

Referee checks are an important part of the safety screening process. A minimum of two checks should be carried out to confirm the applicant's suitability, including contact with their most recent employer. Refer to the template [Safety screening referee check template](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0003/871410/4.6-Safety-screening-referee-check-template-SA-info-kit-30052014.doc) <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0003/871410/4.6-Safety-screening-referee-check-template-SA-info-kit-30052014.doc> (Word 55 KB, opens in a new window).

Recording and Storage of Documentation

Information obtained as part of the safety screening process must be treated with the highest level of confidentiality in accordance with the relevant legislation and standards. Refer to the table [Record Storage and Destruction](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/___data/assets/word_doc/0010/908146/4.6-Safety-screening-App-6-Record-storage-and-destruction-01092015.doc) <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/___data/assets/word_doc/0010/908146/4.6-Safety-screening-App-6-Record-storage-and-destruction-01092015.doc> (Word 85 KB, opens in a new window) for details.

Particular record keeping requirements apply to certain services. For more information, refer to the fact sheets below.

- Licensed children's services ([Criminal history check requirements for licensed children's services](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/regulation/pracnotescrimhistory.pdf)) <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/regulation/pracnotescrimhistory.pdf> (external link, opens in a new window)
- Centre-based services ([National Quality Framework Criminal history requirements: Centre-based services](#)) (external link, opens in a new window)
- Family day care services ([National Quality Framework Criminal history requirements: family day care](#)) (external link, opens in a new window)

Statutory Declaration of Full Disclosure

Funded or registered organisations and authorised agencies should ask prospective employees to sign a statutory declaration, affirming that the prospective employee has fully disclosed any pending charges, convictions, disciplinary actions, findings of improper conduct, or any investigations to which they have been subject.

Alternatively a statement to this effect could be included in the contract of employment paperwork.

Ongoing disclosure

Future risks are not mitigated by one-off safety screening at recruitment. Funded organisations should incorporate a statement in their employment agreements requiring staff to inform their manager if the employee is:

- charged with a criminal offence that could reasonably affect their ability to meet the inherent requirements of their job; or
- subject to a formal disciplinary action by any current or former employer.

For further information

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