

# Selecting Volunteers and Employees

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## Process

### Purpose

This document explains the process to be followed when selecting volunteers, or applying to work with children in congregations. Before any person can work with children, an appropriate screening process must be undertaken. We actively seek to exclude people who may harm or abuse children. Our screening process includes the requirement that applicants hold a current blue card, complete a written application and declaration, participate in an interview/conversation about their application, and provide the names of two people who can confirm their suitability to safely work with children.

Volunteers must NOT commence working with children until the church leadership receives the letter of positive notice from Blue Card Services (unless legitimate exemptions apply). Paid employees are permitted to commence after the lodgement of their application form with Blue Card Services, providing all other aspects of screening are satisfactory. All successful applicants are required to complete appropriate training before they commence and to uphold church values, policies and processes during their term of commitment.

### Protecting privacy

It is expected that the application process will be completed in an open and honest manner. It is therefore essential that confidentiality and privacy be observed by all who have a part to play in completing the process. This includes the applicant, referees, and members of the church leadership and their delegates. Confidentiality is observed when statements (written and oral) are made on the clear understanding that they will be shared only with those who have a legitimate reason to hold that knowledge in order to progress the application; or where there is a legal obligation to share the information.

## Steps for the applicant

1. Complete application form.
2. Attach all of the required documents.
3. Submit the completed application to the church Elders or delegated representative.

## Steps for the Elders or delegated representative

1. Receive the application, consider if other information may be required from the applicant to clarify information provided on the application, interview the applicant and the referees.
2. Check the validity of existing blue cards or exemption cards by entering details on [www.bluecard.qld.gov.au](http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au)
3. Determine if the applicant is suitable to work with children, able to complete the tasks required.
4. Confirm and discuss your determination with the church Elders. If an applicant is deemed unsuitable for the role, this should be communicated in a sensitive way, with pastoral follow-up, and other more suitable roles suggested.
5. Advise the applicant of the decision, and ask them to complete the appropriate blue card application form and lodge it with Blue Card Services, listing the Chair of Elders as the organisational contact person, to ensure the appointment is registered with Blue Card Services. Ensure that the details of the blue card or exemption card are listed in the register of workers as required by law.  
Note: existing blue card and exemption card holders must complete the Authorisation to confirm a valid card/application form, and non-blue card holders must complete the blue card application form. For more information refer to [www.bluecard.qld.gov.au](http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au).

6. Arrange for the applicant to receive the Safe Church Awareness Workshop training, or equivalent.
7. Give the original application and attachments to the church Elders marked 'CONFIDENTIAL' for document storage.

## Explanatory notes for applicants – about the application form

### 1. Applicant details

For your application to be considered we must know that you are who you claim to be (by checking photo identification), and have your contact details.

### 2. Personal abilities and qualifications

Your gifts, strengths and abilities will be prayerfully considered in the application process. Your qualifications and previous experience may equip you for particular roles and we ask that you attach certified copies of documents which bear witness to your suitability for specific roles, and provide details of your previous work with children and young people.

We ask also that you tell us about your reasons for wanting to work with children and young people so that we can prayerfully consider your motivation and calling. Relevant information about any medical condition or limitation will assist us to understand your support needs and ability to fully participate as a volunteer.

### 3. Blue card/exemption card details

The requirement for a blue card is one aspect of the church's screening. Until such time as the screening process is completed and the appointment is approved by the church Elders, no person (regardless of exemption) is to commence working with children. To comply with the requirements of the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* we require that you:

- provide the details of your existing blue card or exemption card for online validation (for pre-screening)
- upon approval of your appointment, complete the Authorisation to confirm a valid card/application form and lodge it with Blue Card Services, listing the Chair of Elders as the organisational contact person, to ensure the appointment is registered with Blue Card Services; or
- if you do not hold an existing blue card or exemption card, upon approval of your appointment, complete the blue card application form and lodge it with Blue Card Services, listing the Chair of Elders as the organisational contact person, to ensure the appointment is registered with Blue Card Services.

**Note:** Unless a particular exemption applies, you can NOT commence volunteering with children until such time as the church Elders receives the letter of positive notice from Blue Card Services. A paid employee may commence employment whilst waiting for their blue card or exemption card, providing they have lodged the correct form with Blue Card Services.

### 4. Referees

Before your application can be approved, we will contact your referees. Please provide the details of two people who have agreed to be your referees. These should be people in a supervisory position from the last place where you worked with children, not family members, and people who do not live with you.

### 5. Applicant's declaration

You are required to answer each question with one response. If you answer yes to any of the first four questions below, you will not necessarily be excluded from the selection process; however, further discussion may be required to understand your individual circumstances. The word 'charged' or 'charges' means any allegations made and known to you or any allegation made to a court, disciplinary body, employer, supervisory body or church in Australia or in any other country.

### 6. Attachments

The document certification process is as follows: photocopy the original document. Take the original and the photocopy to a person authorised to certify documents (e.g. solicitor, Justice of the Peace, Commissioner for Declarations, or Notary Public). The authorised person must make the following statement on every page of the documents to be certified: 'I have sighted the original document and certify this to be a true copy of the original'. The authorised person's name and contact details and their certification qualification including any registration number if applicable, should be clearly indicated. Scanned documents, photocopies and faxes of certified copies are not acceptable.

## Application form

### 1. Applicant details

Applicant's full name:

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Preferred name:

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Date of birth:

Gender:

Male

Female

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Phone number:

Email:

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Address:

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Preferred method of contact:

Mobile

Email

Text message

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Other (provide details):

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Previous names (e.g. maiden name or other 'known as' name):

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### 2. Personal abilities and qualifications

**Gifts and abilities:** please list your gifts and abilities which would be beneficial in your work with children.

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**Previous experience, qualifications and training:** please list the specific details of previous experience which equips you to work effectively with children (attach a certified copy of specific documents and qualifications relevant to this application).

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**Work history:** please provide details of the last place where you worked with children.

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**Motivation and calling:** please describe why you want to work with children.

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**Medical conditions:** please provide relevant information about any medical condition or limitation that may affect your ability to fully participate as a volunteer.

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## Blue Card / Exemption Card details

### Name as it appears on your blue card or exemption card:

Card number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date (DD/MM/YY): \_\_\_\_\_ Type: (V,P or E) \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Even if you hold a current and valid blue card, you may be required to complete an Authorisation to confirm a valid card/application form and lodge it with Blue Card Services. You will not be permitted to commence voluntary work with children until after your positive notice letter from Blue Card Services is received by the church Elders.

## Referees

**Name of referee 1:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone number:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Organisation:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Position held:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Relationship to you:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of referee 2:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone number:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Organisation:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Position held:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Relationship to you:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Applicant's declaration

Please answer every question. If you answer yes to questions 1-4, you will not necessarily be excluded from the selection process; however, further discussion will be required to understand individual circumstances.

Yes	No	Have you ever abused or neglected a child?
Yes	No	Have you ever been accused of abusing or neglecting a child?
Yes	No	Have you ever been disciplined for abusing or neglecting a child?
Yes	No	Are you aware of any issue or reason that may affect the decision by church Elders to allow you to work with children?
Yes	No	Have you ever had charges made against you for abusing or neglecting a child? (Charges: any allegations made and known to you or any allegation made to a court, disciplinary body, employer, supervisory body or church in Australia or in any other country)
Yes	No	Do you confirm that the information provided in this document is true and correct?
Yes	No	Do you consent to the referees listed above being contacted for the purposes stated in this application?
Yes	No	Do you consent to the church Elders using and disclosing your personal information in the manner described in the process above?
Yes	No	Do you understand that you can withdraw from this application process at any time without giving reason?

**Applicant's signature:**

**Name:**

**Date:**

**Parent's signature (if applicant is under 18):**

**Name:**

**Date:**

## OFFICE USE ONLY

Determination, recommendation, comments and conditions:

Signature of person conducting screening:

**Name:**

**Date:**