

Blue Card System – Information Sheet

Obligations for regulated organisations

Child and youth risk management strategy

Organisations regulated by the blue card system are required to develop and implement a child and youth risk management strategy, which must be reviewed annually.

This strategy must meet eight mandatory requirements to ensure that organisations have appropriate policies and procedures in place to identify and minimise risks of harm to children.

Further information is available at:
<http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/risk-management.html>

Blue Card Services may request a copy of your strategy at any time and failure to comply with the requirement to have a child and youth risk management strategy is an offence.

Blue card requirements

The application process

Organisations are responsible for lodging blue card or exemption card applications.

More information regarding this process is outlined on the *Blue card process for new employees* flow chart available on the Blue Card Services website.

Engaging someone who does not have a blue card/exemption card

When a person joins your organisation and proposes to start in regulated activities and they do not have a blue/exemption card, you must lodge a *Blue card application* form (or *Exemption card application* form).

You must ensure that:

- All volunteers and students hold current blue cards before commencing regulated activities.
- All paid employees have applied for a blue card before commencing regulated activities.

Engaging someone who already has (or has applied for) a blue card/exemption card

When a blue/exemption card holder proposes to start in regulated child-related activities with your organisation, you must notify Blue Card Services by lodging a *Link an applicant/cardholder to this organisation* form.

You must ensure that:

- This form is lodged before they commence regulated employment.
- If you have engaged a volunteer blue card holder in paid employment, the payment is submitted with the *Link an applicant/cardholder to this organisation* form.

Submitting this form ensures that a blue/exemption card holder's record is linked to your organisation. This means you will receive important notifications about the card holder (e.g. the suspension or cancellation of a card).

Disqualified person warning

It is an offence not to provide every applicant with a warning that they must not sign an application form if they are a [disqualified person](#). Further information and relevant application forms are available on the Blue Card Services [website](#).

If an applicant is unsure whether they are a disqualified person, they should not complete an application form and you should direct them to contact Blue Card Services immediately for further information.

Tips for managing the application process

Please ensure you use the most current version of the application form and complete all sections. Common application issues for organisations include:

- not signing the employer's declaration section on the form or signing the declaration before the applicant
- not providing details of the relevant contact person for the organisation, and
- not sighting a signature identification document from the applicant.

Notifying Blue Card Services when a person leaves your organisation

When a volunteer or paid employee ceases working with your organisation, you should submit an *Applicant/cardholder no longer with organisation (for organisations)* form to Blue Card Services to notify of this change.

Managing changes in criminal history

You must advise Blue Card Services if your employee or volunteer advises you that they have had a change in their police information. You must not continue to employ the person in regulated child-related employment until you have submitted a *Change in police information notification* form to Blue Card Services.

Please note, your employees/volunteers are not required to disclose the specific nature of the change, only that a change has occurred. As a listed employer, Blue Card Services will notify you of any suspension or cancellation of the person's blue card or exemption card.

In some circumstances you may receive a notification from Blue Card Services that a person has had a change in their police information which is considered relevant to child-related employment. You must then take appropriate action to ensure that your risk management strategy considers and addresses any potential risks created by changes to the police information of blue card holders in your organisation.

Managing high risk cases

You have specific obligations if you become aware that an employee/volunteer:

- has been issued with a negative notice
- is a known disqualified person, or
- has had their blue card or exemption card cancelled or suspended

Your organisation must:

- Ensure the employee/volunteer does not continue to undertake regulated, child-related work within your organisation. This includes any position on a committee or advisory board where the person's decision making impacts on children within the organisation's service environment

- Ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place to manage any risks of harm to children and young people if you continue to employ the person to perform work that is not child-related. It is advisable to provide this information to Blue Card Services, and to discuss with us any possible implications, particularly in relation to whether the work they are undertaking is potentially regulated by the legislation.

Blue card renewals

It is important to note that:

- blue cards are current for three years unless cancelled or suspended
- paid employees can continue working as long as they lodge a renewal form before the expiry date of their blue card
- volunteers/trainee students must lodge a renewal form at least 30 days before their blue card is due to expire to continue working in child-related employment while their renewal application is processed
- exemption cards remain valid (unless suspended or cancelled earlier) while the card holder is a police officer or registered teacher and do not need to be renewed.

Blue card register

Organisations are required to maintain a blue card register which contains details of all paid employees and volunteers involved in providing child-related activities within the organisation.

The register must identify:

- whether or not the person requires a blue/exemption card (if not, why not e.g. an exemption applies under the legislation)
- the type of application/blue card (e.g. paid or volunteer) or exemption card
- when the person applied and/or the date of issue of the positive notice and blue/exemption card
- the blue/exemption card number and the expiry date of the blue card, and
- the renewal date

A template register can be downloaded free of charge at: <https://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/risk-management.html>