



**uniting  
church**  
in Australia,  
Synod of NSW & ACT

## Guideline - Working with Children Check in NSW

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This guideline applies to all Synod entities in NSW other than those which require a specific tailored policy. In particular, it is for Ministers, Ministry of Pastor, Lay Leaders, Employees, Volunteers and Members of Councils in a Congregation, Parish Mission or Presbytery of the Uniting Church, Synod of NSW and the ACT.

Title:	Guideline- Working with Children Check in NSW
Creation Date:	14 August 2020
Version:	1
Last Revised:	December 2020
Approved by:	Synod Standing Committee <b>150/20SC</b>
Approval date:	4 December 2020

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## Guideline - Working with Children Check in NSW

### Background

A Working with Children Check is mandatory for any individual in NSW involved in child-related work.

Child-related work is work in a child-related sector where the person has direct contact with a child or children, and that contact is a usual part of and more than incidental to the work.

Direct contact includes physical contact or face-to-face contact with children. Child-related work also includes child-related roles specified in the legislation.

All Uniting Church organisations fall within the scope of a child-related sector; however, some entities, or some workers may not engage in child related work. In some cases, therefore, a WWCC may not be required.

All holders of a WWCC (employed and volunteer) are also Mandatory Reporters so it is important that all holders of WWCC undergo training to meet the mandatory reporting requirements.

Please refer to the Mandatory Reporting Guidelines for NSW on the Synod Safe Church Website.

### WWCC Summary of Requirements

- individuals seeking to engage in child-related work must provide a WWCC number issued by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian to an entity before they can be permitted to engage in such work; and
- entities must register online and then verify every individual's clearance number online with the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian before they permit an individual to engage in child-related work. They must keep accurate records and recheck clearances when they are due.
- Any WWCC holder who cannot obtain a working with children clearance in the first instance; and/or their clearance subsequently revoked and/or a bar or limitation placed upon their capacity to work with children by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian, must notify the entity, and the entity must immediately report it to the Safe Church Unit at: [safechurch@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:safechurch@nswact.uca.org.au)

### Responsibilities for WWCC

Each Synod Body is responsible for the oversight and management of WWCC in their entity. Many Synod Bodies will manage WWCC under their own policies and procedures. This guideline applies wherever an entity does not have its own policy.

WWCC is to be managed as part of the recruitment and management of staff;

- When a role is created or advertised, the necessity for a WWCC is to be considered and included in the job description
- Before a person starts a child-related role whether paid or on a volunteer basis, they must provide the appropriate WWCC number and their date of birth (for verification purposes)
- A register should be kept showing the WWCC clearance number and expiry date
- All relevant employees (including volunteers) are responsible for keeping their WWCC current, and providing this information to the appropriate person
- All employees (including volunteers) who are required to hold a WWCC must immediately inform the appropriate person if their WWCC status changes.

## Who needs a Working with Children Check?

The Office of the Children's Guardian defines child-related work (including voluntary work) as:

- providing services for children under 18 and you are over the age of 18
- where the work normally involves being face to face with children
- where contact with children is more than incidental to the work.

A Working With Children Check is required by all ordained ministers or individuals engaged as religious leaders or spiritual officers who must undergo a Working with Children Check regardless of whether they engage in face-to-face contact with children.

Examples of those who need a valid WWCC in the Synod context:

- Ordained ministers
- SRE Teachers
- Ministry of Pastor roles
- Chaplains
- Child-care workers
- Teachers, Principals and various other school staff
- Lay church leaders (see definition in table below)
- Any employed person or volunteer who contributes to any program involving children.

Who Does NOT require a working with children's check?

- People under 18 years of age
- People whose work occasionally includes helping out with children as an incidental part of their role

See table below for further examples.

If you are unclear about whether a working with children check is required, refer to the [Office of the Children's Guardian](#) website.

Or contact the Synod Safe Church Unit – [safechurch@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:safechurch@nswact.uca.org.au)

## Summary of WWCC Process

1. Identify everyone within your entity who requires a WWCC.
2. Everyone who requires a WWCC must apply online at [ServiceNSW](#) and follow the instructions to have their identification documents verified in person at Service NSW.
3. Obtain WWCC numbers from each person who requires a WWCC and ensure they have clearance. No person is able to work with children until their WWCC is granted. If a WWCC is refused then they are unable to work with children and the Safe Church Unit must be notified immediately so appropriate actions can take place under the Persons of Concern Policy.
4. Verify each person online with [ServiceNSW](#) so they are linked to your organisation.
5. Maintain a WWCC register showing the details of each holder of a WWCC. A template is provided on the Safe Church Unit website
6. Ensure that all holders of WWCC renew before their WWCC expires (every 5 years).

## Further Information

Lay church leader	<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of church council</li> <li>• Elders recognised as having an active spiritual ministry within the congregation</li> <li>• People identified by the ministry agent as key leaders such as in the areas of worship, music and technology</li> <li>• Accredited lay preachers</li> </ul>
Other exemptions to the requirement for a WWCC	<p>Some other examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work is with children is very short term e.g. a visitor to a school as a guest speaker</li> <li>• a co-worker or supervisor of a worker who is under 18 (and you are not in child related employment)</li> <li>• visiting from interstate and working with children for fewer than 30 days</li> <li>• volunteering as a referee, umpire or lines person or other sporting official where the work does not involve contact with children for extended periods without other adults being present</li> <li>• work in an organisation that delivers services for children but do not have more than incidental contact with the children</li> <li>• informal domestic work at a home where there are children.</li> </ul>

## Guideline Review

This Guideline is to be reviewed annually by Synod Risk & Compliance and amendments approved by the Synod Governance Oversight Committee (SGOC).