



## **WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK (WWCC)**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **Why is keeping children safe so important?**

Lifesaving Victoria has a moral obligation to protect its young members (U18). It now also has a State legal requirement to ensure all young members are protected from physical and sexual harm. This legal requirement involves all members 18 years and older who undertake volunteer work that:

*usually involves, or is likely usually to involve, regular direct contact with a child in connection with a service, body, place or activity specified in sub-section (3) in circumstances where that contact is not directly supervised by another person.*  
*Source: Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)*

#### **What does a Working with Children Check (WWCC) include?**

The *Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)* includes a compulsory Working with Children Check for all employees and volunteers who work in connection with twenty (20) occupational areas and who have regular, direct and not directly (indirect) supervised contact with children. This check has implications for all areas of Life Saving Victoria as many of our activities involve young members (U18) including:

- patrols
- competition
- coaching
- instructing
- assessing
- day-to-day club activities and operations

A WWCC will consider offences of a sexual, violent and drug related nature. The check includes:

- national criminal record check for relevant convictions, findings of guilt and relevant pending charges
- a review of relevant findings from prescribed professional disciplinary bodies (currently only the Victorian Institute of Teaching).

There is no difference between a volunteer and employee check except the cost. A 'volunteer' WWCC is FREE however an 'employee' WWCC requires payment.

**Please note: A Volunteer WWCC CANNOT be used for employment purposes.**

## If my lifesaving activities involve my own child, why can't I be exempt?

The legislation does provide certain exemptions from obtaining the check. However given the broad nature of Life Saving Victoria's activities, it would be almost impossible to apply the exemptions.

Our clubs provided a broad range of activities from patrolling to competition. Many of these activities involve the same members who may be exempt from some activities but not others. For example a mother could be her child's Age Manager (an activity directly involving her as a parent) but also a patrol captain (an activity where her child is not involved).

Therefore to ensure our members are operating within the legal framework, **it is compulsory that all members 18 years and older complete a WWCC.**

Please see Policy: [AD6-05 Member Protection – Working with Children Checks](#)

## How do I obtain a WWCC card?

1. Obtain an application form from Australian Post, your club or by contacting Life Saving Victoria
2. Read and complete the required information using black pen (except the signature component) (Please use **code 70** in Section D)

In the 'Details of Organisations' (Section E), please enter both Life Saving Victoria and your club's details:

<b>Primary Organisation: Life Saving Victoria</b>	<b>Other Organisation: Your club</b>
Life Saving Victoria PO Box 353 SOUTH MELBOURNE VIC 3205 Phone: 9676 6930	Please contact your club to obtain the appropriate contact information.

3. Provide 100 points of identification (refer to application form)
4. Provide a passport size photo (must be regulated size and taken within the last 12 months)
5. Lodge at Australia Post and receive an 'Application Receipt' (back page of application form), as evidence of submitting your form. The application receipt number in the top right hand corner is your WWCC number

The application receipt acts as a temporary WWCC until your application is processed. Once you have lodged your application and obtained a receipt, you can partake in activities involving children. The verified receipt can be used until the application is decided, or for a maximum of sixty (60) days from the date of issue, whichever occurs sooner.

### **How can I check the progress of my application?**

You can use the Check Status Online Enquiry to check the progress of your application. You will need your Application Receipt number to do this.

Applicants and employers are encouraged to check the status of an application online at <https://online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwc/wwc-online-check>.

### **What happens if I don't receive my assessment notice within 60 days?**

If you do not receive your assessment notice within sixty (60) days you will be unable to continue your child related work. If an extension notice has been issued and your club has been notified you will be able to resume. This notice will specify how long the extension is valid.

### **What happens if my application is denied?**

The WWCC looks for criminal activity relevant to the physical and sexual safety of children under 18 years of age. If a member has their application denied, they are issued with a Negative Notice by the Victorian Department of Justice. The member (applicant) and Life Saving Victoria's CEO will be informed. It is important to understand that Life Saving Victoria maintains strict adherence to privacy legislation which regulates such personal information being broadcast to a wider audience. If a member does have their application denied, they cannot be a member of Life Saving Victoria.

### **What do I do once I receive the Card?**

When you receive your assessment notice and WWCC card please notify your club so they can record the appropriate details under Member Protection in SurfGuard. Although each club will receive a copy of your assessment notice some may request to photocopy your WWCC card.

### **What is the difference between an 'employee' WWCC and a 'volunteer' WWCC?**

Employees and volunteers have the same obligations in regard to the WWCC. In recognition of the fact that volunteers do not work for profit or gain, there is no fee for a 'volunteer' WWCC application or replacement card. If you move from a volunteer position to undertaking 'child-related work' for profit or gain, you will need to apply for an 'employee' WWCC in order to avoid penalties.

## **Moving from volunteer to paid work**

If you are a volunteer who holds a current assessment notice, you can only use your 'volunteer' WWCC card for volunteer work. If you intend to undertake 'child-related work' for profit or gain, you will need to re-apply for an 'employee' assessment notice and WWCC card. If you do not comply with the above obligations, you may be subject to criminal penalties.

## **How do I add an organisation to my existing WWCC?**

Download a 'Change of Personal Details form' from

<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/Working+with+Children/Find/Forms/>.

You must list ALL organisations with who you are currently undertaking child-related work. This will update your record and any previous organisations you have listed will be deleted.

## **Renewing your WWCC**

Each check is valid for five (5) years, unless a relevant change in circumstances results in a negative notice being issued before the expiry date. You may apply for a new assessment notice six (6) months before or up to three (3) months after the expiry date on your WWCC card. It is an offence to continue to undertake 'child-related work' if you do not hold a valid assessment notice.

## **How do I record WWCC details with Surfguard?**

Once the club has received your assessment notice they will record these details under Member Protection in Surfguard. The following fields must be completed:

- **Member Protection Form**  
This box may be ticked once the club has received the WWCC assessment notice or sighted an application receipt from Australia Post
- **Member Protection Date**  
This is the 'notice issue date' listed on the assessment notice
- **Member Protection Expiry Date**  
This date can be calculated by adding five (5) years to the 'notice issue date' (in Victoria a Working with Children Check is valid five (5) years)
- **Member Protection Registration No**  
This is the ten (10) digit number that is listed in bold on the assessment notice
- **Member Protection Registration Date**  
This is the date listed on the receipt from Australia Post. If you receive the assessment notice first then the 'notice issue date' listed on the assessment notice should be used

For all WWCC related queries please contact Lifesaving Operations on 03 9676 6930 or email [lifesavingoperations@lifesavingvictoria.com.au](mailto:lifesavingoperations@lifesavingvictoria.com.au).

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