

# UNDERSTANDING POLICE AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

Some positions with volunteer organisations will require background checks to screen prospective volunteers for suitability. Police checks and Working With Children Checks are particularly important if the volunteer role will involve vulnerable client groups such as children, the elderly, or people with disabilities. They are also important if the role requires the volunteer to be involved in financial duties, or to access certain documents.

The responsibility to provide these checks may be taken on by the organisation, but in some cases the individual may need to provide these checks themselves. This will vary but will be made clear to the volunteer within the role description or during the application process. Having a criminal record does not mean that you cannot volunteer. Please speak with the organisation where you want to volunteer.

There are costs associated with police checks, which an organisation may or may not cover for you. You will need different kinds of Working With Children Checks if you are a volunteer or an employee.

## Police Check

Visit:  
<https://www.police.vic.gov.au/national-police-records-checks>

Or email  
[policecheckvic@police.vic.gov.au](mailto:policecheckvic@police.vic.gov.au)

## Working With Children

Visit:  
[www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/)

Or contact the  
WWC Check Information Line on  
1300 652 879



## Police Check

- Police checks are sometimes referred to as Criminal Record Checks or National Police Certificates. Once a police check has been requested, your name will be checked against all criminal records in Australia.
- There is a cost associated with Police Checks which is usually paid for by the volunteer organisation, but this can vary and should be discussed before the commencement of any position which requires a check to be undertaken. Volunteers under 16 years of age will require a parent/guardian to witness the application form.
- Police check certificates are only current up to the date of issue and it is up to an organisation to decide how often they require the check to be renewed. Allow at least 10 working days for an application to be processed by Victoria Police.
- The Victoria Police website contains information about Police Checks as well as how to apply for a National Police Certificate; including current fees and an online application form. National Police Certificate application forms can also be obtained from your local police station.



## Working With Children Check

- The Working With Children Act requires that people who are going to work and/or volunteer with children under 18 years of age apply for and pass, a Working with Children Check (WWC Check).
- The WWC Check screens your criminal record for any specific criminal offences indicating unsuitability for work with children.
- There is no application fee for volunteers, but this means that the volunteer WWC only applies to volunteering roles.
- The Working with Children check is valid for five years and is transferable between organisations. If you are under 18 you will not have to apply for a WWC Check. It may take up to four weeks to process your application before you receive your Working With Children Card.
- You commence your application online and will need to finalise your application in person at a participating Australia Post outlet
- Get your application started by visiting <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>