
WORKING WITH CHILDREN POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania (the Synod) is committed to ensuring that children who participate in Uniting Church activities are safe and supervised by adults who have

- If in Victoria, obtained a positive Working with Children (WWC) Check as required by the Victorian Department of Justice
- If in Tasmania, obtained a satisfactory Police Records Check

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to **all adults** participating in child related programs and activities of the Synod.

3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Adult	Person 18 years of age or more
Child	Person under 18 years of age
Child related programs and activities	Any program or activity that has been arranged by the Synod where the parents/care giver has handed over the responsibility for the child into the care of a Child Worker. This includes but not limited to KUCA programs, crèche, after school programs, children's holiday programs, children's camps/overnight sleep over's, youth activities and camps, separate children/youth programs at family camps.
Child related worker	Person over 18 who usually or is likely to have regular and direct contact with children including paid employees, volunteers and ministers
Child Worker	Any person who participates in a Synod child related program or activity as a supervisor, team member or support person for the program or activity.
Direct contact	Contact between adult and child which is <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical contact; OR• Face to face oral communication; OR• Physically within eyeshot
Direct Supervision	An adult who does not have a WWC Check who participates in a child-related program must be directly supervised by another adult who does have a positive WWC Check which includes the immediate and personal supervision of the visitor.
Synod	The Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, including Synod offices, presbyteries and congregations
Visitor	Any person who participates in a Synod child related program or activity as a visitor must be under direct supervision.
WWC Check Card	Working With Children Check plastic identification card (similar to a driver's licence)

4. ELIGIBILITY TO WORK WITH CHILDREN

Tasmania

All adults who participate in child related activities or programs of the Synod must have a satisfactory Police Records Check which is not more than 3 years old.

Victoria

All adults who participate in child related activities or programs of the Synod as a Child Worker are required by legislation to apply for and receive a positive Working with Children (WWC) Check. This includes all ministers or persons performing duties of a religious nature, as well as employees, consultants, contractors and volunteers.

Where a person receives a WWC Check which has been classified as negative then that person is not permitted to participate in child related programs or activities of the Synod under any circumstances or in any capacity.

It is an offence under the *Working with Children Act 2005* to participate in or to allow participation in child related programs or activities

- a) if a negative notice has been obtained;
- b) if an adult does not have a WWC Check.

Penalties for breaching this requirement are up to two years imprisonment and/or a fine.

5. WWC APPLICATION PROCESS

5.1 Obtain a Working with Children Check Application Guide and Form from

- a) an Australia Post Outlet; or
- b) Victorian Department of Justice (WWC Check Information Line 1300 652 873)

5.2 Read the guide then complete the application form as required noting that the code numbers to be listed on the application form are as follows:

- a) for those who supervise or attend a children's overnight camp - 10
- b) all those who work with children on behalf of or in association with a religious organisation – 64

5.3 Under *Name of the Organisation* include the following details:

- a) Name of Primary Organisation: Your congregation or place of work
- b) Postal Address: 130 Little Collins Street, Victoria, Melbourne 3000
- c) Employer/Volunteer organisation HR Director – Phone 9251 5202

5.4 Make photocopies of required proof of identity then submit in person at an Australia Post outlet (ensure that all documentation is completed, you have original proof of identity documents and photocopies with you and a passport photo).

5.5 Costs are currently \$76.10 for paid employees (including ministers), but there is no cost for volunteers.

5.6 Your Application Receipt

The back page of the WWC Check Application Form is titled *Your Application Receipt*.. Please photocopy the completed application receipt and forward to

- a) your congregation contact; and
- b) Human Resource Services, 130 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000

5.7 Approval

If your WWC Check is positive then you will receive a plastic identification card (similar to a driver's licence)

5.8 WWC Check Card

Photocopy your WWC Check Card and forward to both

- a) your congregation contact;
- b) Human Resource Services, 130 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000

5.9 Records

HRS will maintain Synod wide records in a secure and confidential manner. All Congregational WWC contacts will also keep local records in a secure and confidential manner.

6. MONITORING AND IMPROVEMENT

The Synod will review this policy as required but at least every two years.

7. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Equal Opportunity Policy

Conducting a Police Records Check Procedure

8. REFERENCES

Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act, 1986 (Cth)

Privacy Amendment (Private Sector (Act 2000))

Working With Children Act 2005

Working with Children Regulations 2006

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