



Fact sheet

National Reference System

Each state and territory in Australia has their own Working with Children Check (WWCC) system.

The blue card system can access a national reference system (NRS) that records any adverse WWCC decision made by another participating Australian state or territory about people who have applied to work with children. The adverse decisions recorded on the NRS include negative notices, suspended or cancelled WWCC clearances and interim bars.

How does the NRS impact applicants?

When a person applies for a or renews their blue or exemption card, We completes a national criminal history check.

All applicants are first checked through the NRS to determine if they have an adverse interstate WWCC decision (including current and expired adverse decisions). If this check comes back clear, we continue with existing checks to assess the application.

What happens if you have a current adverse WWCC in another state or territory?

If the NRS check confirms that you have a current adverse interstate WWCC decision, your application will be withdrawn, and you will be prohibited from working with children in Queensland.

Before making another application in Queensland, you must contact the interstate WWCC agency that issued the adverse decision to review or appeal their decision.

If they remove the adverse decision, you can then apply for a blue card in Queensland.



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Compliance obligations

People who have a current adverse interstate WWCC decision are a restricted person.

Restricted persons who start or continue in regulated employment or business with children are committing an offence with aggravating circumstances.

This means that a higher maximum penalty can apply.

Organisations that knowingly employ a restricted person in regulated employment are also committing an offence with aggravating circumstances.

Significant penalties, including fines and imprisonment, can apply for failing to comply with blue card obligations.

How long do applications take?

Most blue card applications with no NRS matches, criminal history or other concerning information are processed within 28 business days.

Applications submitted online are usually processed more quickly than paper applications.

Need help?

Phone us on 1800 113 611 or 07 3211 6999. Or visit our website at www.qld.gov.au/bluecard. If you need an interpreter, contact Language Loop on 1800 512 451.



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