



Blue Card Services

Working together to keep kids safe

Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy

Sole Operator Supplement



Queensland
Government

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Foreword

Safe service environments don't just happen: they require ongoing planning, commitment and maintenance. The blue card system aims to create safe and supportive service environments where children and young people can receive services and participate in activities essential to their development and wellbeing.

This document has been drafted to assist sole operators, who are regulated by the blue card system, in developing and implementing a child and youth risk management strategy, as outlined in the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2020*.

This document should be read in conjunction with the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#) which is available on the [Blue Card Services website](#).

Requirements for organisations

The *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (the Act) and the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2020* require regulated businesses to develop and implement a child and youth risk management strategy which demonstrates the business' aim and willingness to keep children and young people safe.

To comply with the legislative framework, a child and youth risk management strategy must include the **eight mandatory requirements**.

The eight mandatory requirements correspond with the 10 National Principals for Child Safe Organisations.

These requirements are categorised into components which:

- address an organisation's **commitment** to creating a safe and supportive service environment
- strengthen an organisation's **capability** to provide such an environment
- assist an organisation to manage any particular **concerns** with respect to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who are involved with the organisation, and
- promote the **consistency** of an organisation's approach to risk management, both within the organisation and with respect to compliance with the requirements under the Act.

The mandatory requirements are

Commitment

1. A statement of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm, and
2. A code of conduct for interacting with children.

Capability

3. Written procedures for recruiting, selecting, training and managing staff and volunteers.

Concerns

4. Policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines
5. A plan for managing breaches of your risk management strategy, and
6. Risk management plans for high risk activities and special events.

Consistency

7. Policies and procedures for managing compliance with the blue card system, and
8. Strategies for communication and support.

These requirements apply to all organisations, including **sole operators**.

Eight mandatory requirements

Statement of commitment

As a sole operator, your statement of commitment will be describing your individual commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm. Therefore, you should use “I” statements when drafting to personalise your statement.

Sample Statement starter

I am committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and will treat them with respect and understanding at all times. In order to provide a positive and supportive environment where learning and skill development is encouraged and facilitated, I will conduct my business activities in accordance with the following values...*(list the values)*.

For more ideas see our [references](#).

Code of conduct

A strong code of conduct will provide clear guidelines for everyone involved in your organisation about what is expected of them and the consequences if they fail to meet the expectations. As a sole operator you may not have employees to consider however, you should still ensure that you have a code of conduct which outlines standards of behaviour and applies to all people involved with your organisation, such as:

- yourself
- children and young people
- parents and carers
- consultants and contractors, and
- visitors.

Your code of conduct should address issues such as language, supervision of children, physical contact with children, behaviour management, transport etc.

Detailed information further outlining the issues which should be considered in your code of conduct can be found in the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#).

Recruitment, selection, training and management

A sole operator by their nature does not engage paid staff or volunteers, therefore policies and procedures for recruitment, selection and management may not be applicable. You are however responsible for your own ongoing training and professional development.

You should draft this requirement to reflect your individual training goals, objectives, plans and records. Your training plan should include an acknowledgment that you are aware of the obligations regarding handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines (see requirement 4 below) and provide details of specific strategies which you will utilise to ensure that you remain up-to-date with contemporary procedures and maintain current details of relevant contact people/organisations.

You can review tips on how to draft effective training policies and procedures in the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#).

You should also include an acknowledgment that in the event that you decide to engage paid staff or volunteers that you will review your child and youth risk management strategy as a whole and in particular draft specific policies and procedures for recruitment, selection and management.

Handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines

It is critical that you have clear policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines. You should be aware of how to manage and who may need to be advised of any disclosures or suspicions of harm.

You also have a mandatory obligation to report to police if you are aware or reasonably suspect that a child is the victim of sexual abuse by another adult.

Detailed information outlining how to draft these policies and procedures can be found in the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#).

Managing breaches of your risk management strategy

Your risk management strategy must include a plan for managing any action or inaction by any person involved with your organisation, including children and parents, that fails to comply with any of the policies and procedures which make up your risk management strategy.

Detailed information outlining how to draft a plan can be found in the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#).

Compliance with the requirements of the blue card system

As you are a sole operator, the focus of your policies and procedures for compliance with the blue card system should be your personal compliance requirements. This would include risk management requirements and your own obligations as a cardholder which include advising Blue Card Services if you have a change in police information and keeping your contact details up to date.

As you do not have any staff or volunteers you are not required to keep an '[employee register](#)' however you must keep a written record of your personal blue card details including card number, type of card, issue date and renewal date and your strategy to ensure your card remains current.

It is important to note that your child and youth risk management strategy must be reviewed at least on an annual basis and after any incidents to ensure that risks continue to be addressed and minimised throughout your organisation.

Risk management plans for high risk activities and special events

You are required to have risk management plans for high risk activities and special events.

It is possible that you may not engage in any high risk activities or special events due to the nature of your business. If this is the case you should note this under this requirement however, you must first review the detailed information outlined in the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#) to ensure that your activities definitively do not fall within the scope of what can be defined as a high risk activity or a special event.

As part of your annual review of your child and youth risk management strategy, you should consider whether there has been any changes to your organisation which are likely to impact on your approach to high risk activities or special events.

Communication and support

Your organisation must have strategies for communication of your risk management strategy and support to ensure relevant stakeholders are made aware of your policies and your commitment to child protection.

Your strategies for communication in relation to your risk management strategy should be targeted towards all people involved with your organisation, such as:

- children and young people
- parents and carers
- consultants and contractors, and
- visitors.

Your strategies for support should consider what support services which will be available to yourself as well as other people involved in your organisation such as parents and children and young people who may also require support to assist with managing concerns.

Detailed information outlining how to draft these strategies can be found in the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#).

Conclusion

To further assist you in developing and implementing effective child and youth risk management strategies, a series of videos, which are available on the [Blue Card Services YouTube channel](#), have been developed to supplement this toolkit.

Remember, safe service environments don't just happen, they require ongoing planning, commitment and maintenance.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about child and youth risk management strategies.

We hope you found this document useful and we encourage you to contact Blue Card Services if you require further assistance.

Thank you

Contact details

Phone us **1800 113 611 or 07 3211 6999**

Visit our website **www.qld.gov.au/bluecard**

Email us **info@bluecard.qld.gov.au**

