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| Working with Children Checks for kinship carers |
| Information for people being assessed as kinship carers by the Victorian child protection program |

# Introduction

This information is for people who are being assessed by the Victorian child protection program to be a kinship carer for a specific child or children.

Kinship care includes care for a child or children provided by relatives or another significant person from the family or child’s social network.

All people who engage in child-related work in Victoria are required by law, to hold a Working with Children Check. You need to apply for a Working with Children Check within 21 days from the date the child is placed in your care, or if you already hold a Working with Children Check card, you need to update your details to include your status as a kinship carer within 21 days from the date the child is placed in your care.

If you do not apply for, or update, a Working with Children Check within the 21 day period, you will be in breach of the law and a child cannot remain in your care if you do not hold a Working with Children Check.

What is a Working with Children Check?

A Working with Children Check is an ongoing screening process that assists in protecting children from harm by monitoring a person’s suitability to work with, or care for children. It screens a person’s criminal record to ensure those charged with or convicted of certain serious crimes, are unable to work with children. The card must be renewed every five years.

What do I need to do?

If you need a new Working with Children Check, you need to:

* Fill in the online application form in the [Working with Children Check website](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/) (see below for how to apply)
* Print off the barcode that will be sent to your email address
* Take the barcode to Australia Post and have your photo taken.

What if I already have a Working with Children Check?

If you hold a Working with Children Check for your current employment or volunteer work, you are required to update your kinship care status via the Working with Children Check website. You do not need to apply for a new Check.

Please refer to the **‘Working with Children Check - Guide for Existing Cardholders’** for more information on how to update your details.

What if I do not have a computer?

Please talk to your case manager about how they can help you apply or contact the Working with Children

Check Unit on 1300 652 879 for assistance.

Is there a cost?

There is no cost to apply for a Working with Children Check in Victoria and you can have your photo taken for free at Australia Post.

If you live interstate there will be a cost to have a photo taken at Australia Post outside Victoria. This cost can be reimbursed by child protection upon presentation by the carer of a receipt from Australia Post.

What if I have a past criminal history?

The Department of Justice and Regulation assesses sexual, violent and drug offences and offences against children, that may represent an unjustifiable risk to the safety of children.

Who in my house needs to apply?

Only the people who are assessed by the Victorian child protection program to be a kinship carer for a specific child or children.

In your household one person or two people may be assessed as primary carer/s.

How do I apply for a new Working with Children Check?

Please go to the [Working with Children Check website](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/) <www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au> and click on ‘applications’.

Please refer to the Department of Justice and Regulation’s **‘Working with Children Check – Guide for New Applicants’** for information on how to apply. In summary:

Each carer is required to complete an application form

* It is essential that you use the full Department of Health and Human Services address and phone number below in the Organisational field:

Department of Health and Human Services

PCB- Safety Screening – Kinship Carer

GPO Box 4057

Melbourne 3000

Phone 0390965715

* It is essential you select ‘80 – Kinship carer – caring for a child placed by Child Protection under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005’ in the drop down box in the Occupation field
* You must select ‘Volunteer’ for occupation type.

What happens next?

After the online application is complete, each carer will be emailed a barcode. Each carer will need to take the

barcode to Australia Post and will need to provide proof of identity and have their photo taken. Australia Post will

have each carer a receipt. This completes the application process.

The Working with Children Check card will be sent to you in the mail in 4-8 weeks.

What if my Working with Children Check comes back negative?

If the Working with Children Check Unit in the Department of Justice and Regulation has concerns about your application they will contact you and tell you what those concerns are. They may issue a prohibition, suspension or interim negative notice while they assess any concerns.

If a decision is made that you are not eligible for a Check, the Working With Children Check Unit will send you a letter.

The Department of Health and Human Services will also be notified. The department will then work with you to determine a plan in relation to the child or the children in your care.

More information

For more information please talk to your child protection case manager

Or visit the [Working with Children Check website](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/) [www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au)

Or contact the customer support line on 1300 652 879 or email: workingwithchildren@justice.vic.gov.au

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