

## BLUE CARD PROCEDURE

### 1 Scope:

This procedure applies to Rockhampton Regional Council employees and consultants who are required to hold and maintain a blue card or exemption card.

### 2 Purpose:

To outline the process for managing blue cards or exemption cards for child related activities or services conducted by Council.

### 3 Related Documents:

#### Primary

Blue Card Policy

#### Secondary

*Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*

Applicant/Cardholder No Longer with Organisation Form

Blue Card Application Form

Blue Card Register

Change in Police Information Notification Form

Code of Conduct

Confirmation of Identity Form

Disciplinary Procedure

Eligibility Declaration Application Form

Exemption Card Application Form

Link an Applicant/Cardholder to this Organisation

Pre-Employment Screening Policy

Pre-Employment Screening Procedure

Volunteer to Paid Employment Transfer Form

### 4 Definitions:

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

Blue Card	A card issued by the Blue Card Services to people performing child related duties regulated by the <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</i> .
Blue Card Register	A register that record details of blue cards and exemption cards held by employees (excludes external consultants).
Change in Police Information	A person's police information changes if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An applicant is charged or convicted with an offence, whether or not a conviction is recorded;</li> <li>▪ An applicant becomes a respondent to, or subject to, an application for a child protection prohibition order or disqualification order; or</li> <li>▪ An applicant becomes subject to reporting obligations under</li> </ul>

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	the <i>Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004</i> or the <i>Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003</i> .
Consultant	A person who is engaged externally by council whose expertise is provided on a temporary basis, usually for a fee.
Contact Person	The appointed administration officer within the Community Services Directorate Office who manages the blue card and exemption card process within Council
Council	Rockhampton Regional Council
Disqualified Person	As defined by section 169(1) of the <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</i> : A person is a disqualified person if the person – (a) Has been or is convicted of a disqualifying offence; or (b) Is subject to – (i) An offender reporting obligations; or (ii) An offender prohibition order; or (iii) A disqualification order; or (iv) A sexual offender order.
ECM	Enterprise Content Management. Councils corporate recordkeeping system.
Employee	<i>Local government employee</i> : (a) The chief executive officer; or (b) A person holding an appointment under section 196 of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
Exemption Card	A card issued to registered teachers and police officers who provide services that fall outside of their professional duties.
W&S	Workforce and Strategy

## 5 Procedure:

Employees and consultants performing regulated work defined under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* must hold a blue card or exemption card.

### 5.1 Commencement of Child Related Work

#### 5.1.1 Employees

Requirements to hold and maintain a blue card will be stated in the appointment letter and position description.

Employees may commence employment after an application form has been submitted to Blue Card Services.

#### 5.1.2 Consultants

It is the responsibility of the consultant to maintain their blue card or exemption card.

Consultants will not commence child related activities until the relevant supervisor has confirmed online validation via the Blue Card Services website, and has been provided with a photo copy of the blue card or exemption card.

If the blue card or exemption card fails the online check the consultant will not commence child related activities.

### 5.2 Appointment

The following forms should be completed to ensure Council is registered as the current employer. This will enable Council to receive notification of any 'change to status information' or 'change in police information' for blue card holders:

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- Blue Card Application Form - for a new blue card;
- Exemption Card Application Form – for a new exemption card;
- Link an Applicant/Cardholder to this Organisation – to transfer or add Council to an existing blue card; or
- Volunteer to Paid Employment Transfer Form – to transfer an existing blue card from volunteer to paid employment.

### 5.2.1 Employees

W&S will provide the employee with the appropriate forms as per section 5.2.

For employees with no current blue card or exemption card, W&S will ensure required identification (original copies) is sighted, photo copied and the relevant section completed on the Blue Card Application Form.

For employees with an existing blue card or exemption card, W&S will sight the original, take a photocopy of the card and complete the online validation via the Blue Card Services website.

Where a document is in a former name, an original official document (eg. marriage certificate or change of name certificate) showing the change of name must be sighted.

If identification is unable to be sighted if the applicants usual residence is more than 50km from Council's address, a Confirmation of Identity Form will also be completed.

W&S will forward the online validation check outcome and documents to the contact person for processing in accordance with section 5.4.

### 5.2.2 Consultants

It is the consultant's responsibility to maintain their blue card or exemption card.

## 5.3 Renewal

### 5.3.1 Employees

A renewal notice will be issued by the Blue Card Services directly to the employee 10 weeks prior to the expiration date.

The contact person will provide supervisors with a reminder of cards due for renewal within the section.

The employee will complete the Blue Card Application Form and submit to their supervisor within 30 days of the date of issue.

The supervisor will ensure required identification (original copies) is sighted, photo copied and the relevant section completed on the Blue Card Application Form.

Where a document is in a former name, an original official document (eg. marriage certificate or change of name certificate) showing the change of name must be sighted.

If identification is unable to be sighted if the applicants usual residence is more than 50km from Council's address, a Confirmation of Identity Form will also be completed.

The supervisor will forward all documents to the contact person for processing in accordance with section 5.4.

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### 5.3.2 Consultants

It is the consultant's responsibility to maintain and renew their blue card or exemption card.

## 5.4 Processing Applications

The contact person will process all employee blue card and exemption card applications and renewals.

Upon receiving an application, the contact person will:

- Ensure all necessary supporting documentation has been received;
- Conduct an online validation check on the Blue Card Services website for renewal applications;
- Complete the relevant section on the form;
- Submit the form and supporting documentation, including payment, to Blue Card Services;
- File original documentation in a locked file; and
- Electronically forward documentation to W&S to be registered in the employee's personnel file in ECM.

### 5.4.1 Positive Notice

If the application is approved, the contact person will receive a positive notice from Blue Card Services. The contact person will notify the relevant supervisor and W&S (to register in the employee's personnel file in ECM).

The Blue Card Register will be updated with the applicant's details and expiry date.

### 5.4.2 Negative Notice

If the application is not approved, the contact person will receive a negative notice from Blue Card Services. The contact person will notify the relevant manager, supervisor and W&S and record information in the Blue Card Register.

The supervisor will notify the employee and liaise with the manager and W&S to ensure the employee does not continue to undertake child related work within Council. The employee will be immediately suspended and will be required to 'show cause' why their employment should not be terminated. The employee will remain on a suspension until the discipline process is finalised.

If Council continues to employ the person to perform work that is not child-related, Council will ensure that appropriate actions are taken to manage any risks of harm to children and young people that may arise as a result of the person's ongoing employment.

### 5.4.3 Consultants

As Council is not registered as a current employer for consultants, it is the responsibility of the consultant to notify the relevant supervisor if a negative notice is received.

The supervisor will terminate the contract with the consultant immediately if a negative notice is received.

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## 5.5 Disqualified Person

### 5.5.1 Verbal Warning

It is an offence for a disqualified person to apply for or renew a blue card/exemption card. Council must provide a verbal warning of this offence to an employee before completing an application.

Blue Card Services provides the following example of how a warning could be delivered:

*'When applying or validating an existing blue card, I am required by the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act to provide you with a warning that it is an offence for a disqualified person to sign a Blue Card Application Form. If you are unsure whether you are a disqualified person, you should contact Blue Card Services for more information before signing the application form.'*

### 5.5.2 Eligibility Declaration

A disqualified person may, in certain circumstances, be able to apply for an eligibility declaration under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* using the Eligibility Declaration Application Form.

Blue Card Services can only issue an eligibility declaration, if satisfied that the case is an exceptional one in which the best interests of children would not be harmed by allowing the person to apply for a blue card. A person who has been or is convicted of a disqualifying offence is not a disqualified person if issued an eligibility declaration which has not expired.

## 5.6 Change in Police Information

Blue Card Services will receive a daily update from the Queensland Police Service on blue card or exemption card holders, including those with an application in progress.

If an employee/consultant has a change in police information the following will be completed:

- The employee/consultant will immediately notify their supervisor of a change in police information (Note: employees are not required to disclose the specific nature of the change - only that a change has occurred);
- The employee/consultant will complete the Change in Police Information Notification Form and forward to the supervisor immediately (Note: failure to lodge this form is an offence and Council may be subject to a penalty); and
- The supervisor will notify the manager and W&S and forward the Change in Police Information Notification Form to the contact person to process in accordance with section 5.4.

Once lodged, Blue Card Services will reassess the eligibility for the employee to hold a blue card and advise the contact person of the outcome. The contact person will advise the manager, supervisor and W&S and will finalise the application depending on a positive or negative notice (refer to section 5.4).

### 5.6.1 Undertaking Child Related Work

Once an employee has advised of a change in police information, the supervisor will ensure the employee does not continue to undertake child related work within Council, until the Change in Police Information Notification Form has been lodged to Blue Card Services (Council may choose not to engage them for child related work until notification has been received from Blue Card Services);

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The employee may be suspended from the workplace and may be required to 'show cause' why their employment should not be terminated. The employee may remain on a suspension until the discipline process is finalised.

If Council continues to employ the person to perform work that is not child-related, ensure that appropriate actions are taken to manage any risks of harm to children and young people that may arise as a result of the person's ongoing employment within Council.

### **5.7 Cessation of Child Related Work for Council**

Council is required to notify Blue Card Services if an existing blue card holder employee ceases working in child related work.

The supervisor will ensure the employee completes the Applicant/Cardholder No Longer with Organisation Form and will submit to the contact person.

The contact person will process the form in accordance with section 5.4 within 14 days of the employee ceasing child related work for Council.

W&S will advise the contact person via email of 'cessation' or 'advice of staff movement' for employees for the Blue Card Register to be updated.

## **6 Review Timelines:**

This procedure will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

- 6.1** The related information is amended or replaced; or
- 6.2** Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the General Manager.

## **7 Responsibilities:**

Sponsor	Chief Executive Officer
Business Owner	General Manager Community Services
Procedure Owner	General Manager Community Services
Procedure Quality Control	Corporate Improvement and Strategy

**MICHAEL ROWE**  
**GENERAL MANAGER COMMUNITY SERVICES**

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