

# Working with Children Check: Frequently asked questions for NSW public libraries



Information about the Working With Children Check (WWCC) including who it is for and processes involved is available at <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/check>.

For more information or clarification about the WWCC email [check@kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au](mailto:check@kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au) or call (02) 9286 7219.

## 1. What does the Working With Children Check involve?

A Working With Children Check involves a national police check and a review of findings of misconduct.

Child related employees and volunteers are required to apply for the Check for themselves as they must give consent. Application is made online through OCG's website. The result is either a clearance to work with children for five years or a bar against working with children. Barred applicants cannot work or volunteer with children.

There is no paper, cleared applicants receive a unique number, like a personal Tax file number, and must give this number to their employer. Employers must register on OCG's website and verify that the number given them is valid; a fine can apply for employers not verifying. The Check is portable and can be used for any child-related work in NSW.

## 2. Who needs a Working With Children Check?

Only people in child-related work need a Working With Children Check. This includes paid staff and volunteers. The definition of child-related work is outlined in the *Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012* and in the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013*. Some work is exempted or excluded by law from having a WWCC, see Fact sheet 4 Exemptions [http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/191/FS4\\_Exemptions\\_July2014.pdf.aspx](http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/191/FS4_Exemptions_July2014.pdf.aspx)

More information is available at <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/employer/who-needs-a-working-with-children-check>

## 3. Will staff working in public libraries in NSW need to have a Working With Children Check?

Library staff who regularly work face-to-face with children will need a Check, but staff who only have incidental contact with children will not.

To prepare for the Check, employers should decide which roles are child-related and will need a Check, and which are not. General interaction with children through working at library desks can be classed as incidental contact. If a staff member runs children's programs on a regular basis, even if not weekly, they will require the Check.

#### **4. I need a Working With Children Check. When should I apply?**

Apply for a Working With Children Check before you start working with children.

<https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check>

New staff employed in child related roles are required to supply their Working with Children Check to their employer prior to commencing in the role.

#### **5. Could a children's librarian be defined as child-related work?**

Yes. A staff member whose primary role is working with children will need to apply for a Working With Children Check.

#### **6. Will library staff need to pay for a Working With Children Check?**

If they are in paid child-related work, they will pay an \$80 application fee for a five-year clearance. This equates to \$16 per year, the lowest in Australia. The Working With Children Check remains free for volunteers.

#### **7. Do public library volunteers need a Working With Children Check?**

Volunteers who work with children are required to apply for a Working With Children Check. Volunteers and students on professional placement do not pay for the Working With Children Check.

#### **8. Is there a standard statement that public libraries could use when advertising for paid and volunteer public library positions?**

No, however a Working With Children Check is a prerequisite for child-related work in NSW.

Information for employers is at

<https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/employer>

#### **9. What are the requirements for contractors coming in to public libraries?**

Contractors who are doing child related work have the same obligations as paid staff and volunteers. If a contractor is hired for child-related work, he or she must have a valid Working With Children Check and it verified online.

#### **10. How do I apply for a Working With Children Check?**

**Step 1:** Fill in the online form. <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check> An application number will appear on screen and will start with APP.

**Step 2:** Take your application number and proof of identity to a Service NSW Centre. Paid workers will pay a fee of \$80. For volunteers, the Check is free.

- More information on proof of identity requirements  
<https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/applicant/proof-of-identity>
- Find your nearest Service NSW Centre <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/service-centre>

Once you have done this, give your application number to your employer. They can then verify your application online which lets OCG know that you are working for them.

**Step 3:** You will receive an email once the process has been completed. If you are granted clearance, you will receive a Working With Children Check clearance number starting with WWC. Give this number to your employer to verify in OCG's WWCC system.

### **11. How do I verify whether someone is cleared to work with children?**

If you are an employer, you must first register with the Working With Children Check system. Instructions on how to register as an employer are available at

<https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/employer>

Please refer to the *Resources* section on the website.

Once you have registered, you will be able to log on to the online system using the Username and Password you used to create the employer registration (keep the log on details in a secure place) and verify all workers (paid and unpaid) using the online system. You will be required to enter the worker's full name, date of birth and Working With Children Check number (an application number will also suffice). You will receive the outcome immediately on screen.

It is a legal requirement for an employer to keep records of their child-related workers and a fine can apply for not keeping the required records, see

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2012/51/part2/div2/sec9a>. These may be electronic or hard copy but must be made available for audit and monitoring purposes. For further information see *Record keeping documents* here

<https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/employer/resources>

**Remember:** The Working With Children Check is only one of the resources available to help keep children safe. Introducing child-safe policies and procedures is an essential part of creating a child-safe environment. Find out more about creating child safe organisations at

<https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/become-a-child-safe-organisation>

#### **ELEARNING PACKAGE**

The Office of the Children's Guardian has made available an e-Learning package about The Working with Children Check. The module contains short videos visually explaining the key processes in the WWCC system. <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/become-a-child-safe-organisation/child-safe-elearning>