

Working with Children at Landcare Events

how the new Working With Children Check affects Landcare

From time to time, many Landcare groups conduct activities involving children. Legally speaking, a 'child' refers to any person less than 18 years of age.

In 2014, the Working With Children Check was improved in QLD. It is more comprehensive than the previous Check and provides better protection for children. The new model is also consistent with other state and territory Checks.

WHO NEEDS A CHECK?

Under the QLD legislation, if you are involved in an organisation that provides services for children, including events such as tree planting, enviro-education, school visits and community working bees, where you come in **face-to-face contact** with children, you must undergo a Working With Children Check and hold a "blue card".

Importantly, the Check applies to all staff, both paid or voluntary.

WHAT DOES A CHECK INVOLVE?

A Working With Children Check involves a national police check and review of findings of misconduct involving children, and the result is either a clearance to work with children for three years, or a bar against working with children.

If the outcome is a clearance, your Check will be **valid for three years** for any child-related work in QLD. If it is a volunteer-class Check, it may only be used for unpaid work.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A CHECK

The QLD Family and Child Commission website provides an online application at www.bluecard.qld.gov.au. The Check also includes a Proof of Identity check, which can be completed at a QLD motor registry.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

For paid staff, the cost is \$81.40. The Check remains free for volunteers and students.

EXEMPTIONS

There are exemptions for registered teachers and police officers from the Working With Children Check, which can be found at: www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/pdf/flowcharts/Apply-for-an-exemption-card.pdf

In effect, at \$81.40 for 3 years, and is a relatively inexpensive risk management tool for Landcare Groups and Networks paid staff.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The QLD Family and Child Commission website provides information and factsheets involving working with children. Visit www.qfcc.qld.gov.au

