

Qualifications and Credentials: *Screening Check Guide for Parishes*

FAQs

The [Screening Check Guide](#) outlines qualification and credentials requirements for common parish roles. The Guide was emailed to parishes in the General Manager's monthly memo on 31 January 2019.

The following are FAQs in relation to the Guide.

Q1: When do the Guide screening requirements commence?

A: The Guide requirements commenced on 31 January 2019. Parishes should take steps to ensure that they meet the requirements for positions in the Guide.

Note that the requirements for Clergy and Lay Ministers set out in the *Qualifications and Credentials Policy – Background Check Matrix: Clergy and Lay Ministers* (also included in the General Manager's memo) have not yet commenced. Parishes will be notified when these requirements do commence.

Q2: When do the checks need to be completed by?

A: Checks in the Guide for existing workers are to be completed by Friday 29 March 2019.

If a person's position does not require a Blue Card, that person may commence duties in a position immediately upon being elected or appointed, even if the required checks have not yet been completed. Wherever possible, required checks are to be completed within 21 days of the person commencing. If circumstances arise that result in checks not being completed within the 21 days, the Rector/Priest-in-Charge may, on reasonable grounds, allow the person more time to provide their check requirements.

Reasonable grounds for an extension of time include a check taking longer to process than expected (e.g. national police check) or illness causing delay. Any extension of time granted by the Rector/Priest-in-Charge should not be longer than an additional 21 days. If checks have not been completed within the extended period (within 6 weeks of the person commencing), advice should be sought from the Office of Professional Standards.

Q3: What are the timing requirements for Blue Cards?

A: Any person currently holding a position in a parish who does not hold a Blue Card as required, is to stand aside from their position until a Blue Card is received. Extensions of time cannot be granted as it is a legal requirement to hold a Blue Card for the positions specified in the Guide. In the event that the person is unable to obtain a Blue Card or receives a negative notice, please notify and seek advice from the Director of Professional Standards, but in the meantime the person should stand down.

Q4: Do Wardens include both Parish Churchwardens and Centre Churchwardens?

A: Yes. For the purposes of the Guide, a Warden should be taken to refer to any Churchwarden.

Q5: Do all Blue Cards need to be linked to the parish?

A: Yes. Even if a person holds an existing Blue Card linked to another organisation or institution with which they are involved, the parish (with the assistance of the applicant) is required to submit 'An applicant/cardholder to this organisation' form ([link](#)). There is no cost associated with this form, unless the applicant is taking on a paid position in the parish and only has a volunteer Blue Card (V Card).

Q6: Are there consolidated versions of the Safe Ministry Check available, incorporating all forms to be completed by relevant applicants?

A: Yes. All consolidated and relevant forms are available online at ([link](#)).

Q7: Who pays for National Police Checks, and what is the expected cost?

A: National Police Checks must be applied for by the person being checked. It is recommended that parishes offer to reimburse the person. Checks can be obtained online for around \$50 for paid workers, and \$30 for volunteers.

The following site is an option:

https://www.nationalcrimecheck.com.au/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI1efM-aeF3wIVS4mPCh0xwAjGEAAYASAAEgLR4PD_BwE

Q8: If a person has a Blue Card, why do they need to also complete a National Police Check?

A: Information considered for Blue Card applicants is more limited in nature than National Police Check information. For example, dishonesty offences may be discovered through a National Police Check. Such offences may not stop a person obtaining a Blue Card.

Q9: How does the Parish obtain an Anglican National Register Check for a person?

A: Parishes can initiate an Anglican National Register check for an individual by emailing the following address: nationalregistercheck@anglicanchurchsq.org.au. The full name and date of birth of the person being checked needs to be included. The email is to have the signature block of the sender. If any concerning information arises, the Rector/Priest-in-Charge only will be contacted. If there is no concerning information, an email stating this will be sent in response.

Q10: How often should National Police Checks be renewed?

A: Any National Police Check should be renewed on a continual five yearly basis.

Q11: Are reference checks required for all persons working with children?

A: Yes. All persons working directly with children or supervising persons who work with children are required to provide two referees when completing their Safe Ministry Checks/Questionnaires.

The referees will be asked (by the person doing the recruitment) to indicate the suitability of the person to work with children in the parish and to meet the position requirements (as per the Safe Ministry Check Resource templates ([link](#))).

Q12: Does the Office of Professional Standards need to be advised of completed checks?

A: No. Parishes are not required to advise the Office Professional Standards of the screening check results required by the Guide (subject to Q14 below).

Q13: Do copies of all completed checks need to be maintained?

A: Yes. The parish should retain copies of all relevant checks completed by parish workers. These records should be stored in a manner that ensures the confidentiality of the relevant information, but at the same time a parish worker is entitled to request to be provided access to their own records (because of privacy legislation).

Q14: Who decides whether a person is suitable for a position?

A: If any adverse information arises during the screening of a person (other than through the Safe Ministry Check - see below), the Rector/Priest-in-Charge should notify the General Manager. The General Manager will consider if the person is suitable for a particular position, and in consultation with the Rector/Priest-in-Charge and the Regional Bishop, will determine what appropriate action to take.

If a Safe Ministry Check raises information of concern (i.e. a 'Yes' answer is given to any question in the check), seek advice from the Director of Professional Standards.