

Victorian Working With Children Check Amendments

Amendments to the Working with Children Check (WWCC) come into effect on 1 August 2017. Individuals that previously did not require a WWCC may now need one to undertake their role. This has implications to standard four of the **Victorian Child Safe Standards**.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse made several recommendations aimed at strengthening the protection children receive through Working with Children Checks. The following amendments to the Act implement these recommendations:

- Expand the definition of '**direct contact**' in the Act. The definition of direct contact now includes oral, written or electronic communication as well as face-to-face and physical contact.
- Remove references to '**supervision**' from the Act. This means that even if a person's contact with children as part of their child-related work is supervised by another person, they will still need to apply for a Working with Children Check (Check).
- Create a new occupational category of 'child-related work', known as 'kinship care'. Family members or other persons of significance caring for a child placed by Child Protection under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* are required to obtain a Check.
- Ensure that non-conviction charges (charges that have been finally dealt with other than by a conviction or finding of guilt) for serious sexual, violent or drug offences are considered as part of Check assessments and re-assessments.
- Enable the Secretary to the Department of Justice and Regulation to compel the production of certain information for the purposes of compliance monitoring.

In addition, various other miscellaneous and technical amendments have been made to improve the Act's operation and administration.

Detailed information on the changes is provided [here](#).

What does this mean for sporting organisations?

Sporting organisations at all levels should be aware of the incoming amendments. Changes in relation to Direct Contact and Supervision may now require some volunteers and staff to gain a WWCC that previously did not need one.

Examples:

Item 1 – Direct Contact

Matt is the communications officer at a local junior football club. He maintains the Facebook pages of the club, which involves direct contact with juniors aged 8-18 via social media. Due to the change in definition of direct contact, Matt is now required to hold a Check.

Item 2 – Supervision

Sarah is a trainee coach and supervised in her role coaching a junior basketball team by the club's senior coach. Previously she did not require a WWCC. Because of the changes, even though she is directly supervised by the senior coach, Sarah is now required to hold a Check.

Information and enquiries specifically relating to the changes in WWCC legislation can be found by contacting the WWCC office via:

P: 1300 652 879

E: workingwithchildren@justice.vic.gov.au

W: www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au