



Catholic Archdiocese of
Adelaide

Integrity and Safeguarding
Department

(incorporating the Screening and
Verification Authority (SAVA)¹)

Archdiocesan

Working with Children Check Guidelines

¹ As of 01/07/2024, the Screening and Verification Authority (SAVA) was incorporated into the newly established Integrity and Safeguarding Department of the Archdiocese. All screening services and functions of the previous SAVA have been maintained and remain the same. These services are now provided by the Safeguarding Operations Team of the new department.

Table of Contents

Overview.....	3
1. Screening in Religious Organisations – SA Legal Requirements	4
2. Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide Requirements	4
3. General Details.....	5
4. Acceptable Checks or Clearances	7
5. Exemptions	8
6. Third-Party Service Providers	8
7. Checks for 14yrs and over (Work Experience/Vet Courses/Other).....	8
7.1 If service is to be provided to a Catholic location	8
7.2 If service is to be provided to a NON-CATHOLIC location ..	9
8. When is a check not required?	9
9. Responsible Authority & Nominated Authorising Persons..	9
9.1 Responsible Authority (RA)	10
9.2 Nominated Authorising Person (NAP)	10
10. The Screening Process.....	11
11. Location Registers	12
12. Contact Details – Safeguarding Operations	13

Overview

In line with the *Integrity in Our Common Mission* (2023) principles, the Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide takes seriously its duty of care for those who entrust themselves to it and to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all participants in programs and activities across the Archdiocese. The Archdiocese recognises and encourages the significant role that the Church community plays in the provision of an environment that nurtures the wellbeing of children, young people and those who are vulnerable.

It is important to be aware that we are required to fulfill all legal requirements set out under the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*, together with the requirements outlined in the *Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide Screening Policy – Working with Children Checks*.

There are many settings across the Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide where the nature of services provided are unique in the degree to which they encourage participation by parents, caregivers and community representatives. For the purpose of this document and to be inclusive they are referred to as care settings. Positive partnerships are very significant in the overall effectiveness of the education and the care process.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide has been screening its employees and volunteers since June 2007. Since that time many legislative and other changes have occurred and in May 2016 the Archdiocese moved its model of screening to *Working with Children* screening as its standard for all locations across the Dioceses of Adelaide and Port Pirie. This document incorporates the very latest updates to our model of screening required as a result of the recent legislative changes commenced from July 2019 and further reiterates the checking requirements for all Clergy and Religious, Employees, Volunteers, and Contractors who provide service to locations across the Diocese of Adelaide and Port Pirie.

These locations include Catholic Schools & Catholic Education Offices, Adelaide Archdiocese Parishes and Diocesan Offices or Agencies, and Centacare Adelaide. The Archdiocese also provides ongoing service to the Diocese of Port Pirie, Parishes and Diocesan Offices, as well as some other smaller affiliated Catholic organisations.

This document should be read in conjunction with the *Screening Policy – Working with Children Checks*.

The following information has been developed to clarify the checking requirements for groups in all care settings across the Archdiocese.

1. Screening in Religious Organisations – SA Legal Requirements

The Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide is required to ensure that Working with Children Checks are obtained prior to the appointment of Clergy and Religious Persons, new employees, volunteers or contractors as outlined in the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*, together with the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Regulations 2019*.

The primary object of the new Act is to minimise the risk to children posed by people who work with them and to further prohibit those who are assessed as posing an unacceptable risk to children from working with them. The Act provides a system of accountability for people working or volunteering with children as well as added accountability placed upon organisations in relation to who they may or may not appoint to roles. The Act also provides for a central assessment unit to undertake the screening of persons to ensure consistency of screening and ongoing monitoring of checks across South Australia.

Organisations must ensure a child check is conducted at least every five years, and they must also ensure that the correct type of check is undertaken for respective roles (e.g. employee v volunteer). In addition, organisations have ongoing obligations to the Department of Human Services to continuously register and de-register interest in individuals as they move through their organisation and have increased reporting obligations around any new assessable information that is known relating to the organisation's individuals.

The Act and its associated regulations affirm that all services and activities provided by religious organisations, as well as other targeted sectors including education, are deemed to be 'child related work', and the work includes all services and activities (spiritual, pastoral, education) provided by persons on behalf of religious organisations, or educational sectors where contact is made or would reasonably be made with a child.

Under the Regulations, contact is determined to mean, if the person has:

- Physical contact with the child, or:
- Is in close physical proximity to the child, or:
- Communicates with the child (whether orally, or by written, electronic, or other means).

2. Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide Requirements

The Catholic Archdiocese provides a range of services to families and children, as well as a range of support services to those within the community who are at risk. (Includes the elderly, people with disabilities and those who are disadvantaged or experiencing crisis).

The Archdiocese has a duty of care toward all these individuals, to ensure that they receive the proper care and support from those who are employed or contracted by the Archdiocese and those who provide volunteer services on behalf of the Archdiocese.

In addition, members of governing bodies are required to undergo checks to protect against people in such positions adversely influencing the protective climate of an education or care environment through the decisions of committees or boards.

Groups identified below require a Working with Children Check facilitated by the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Operations¹ Team, unless they have a current acceptable check from the Department of Human Services or are exempted from checks in accordance with the *Screening Policy – Working with Children Checks*.

- All clergy, religious, and paid employees in an Education or other care program, a Parish or Diocesan Office or Agency, a Centacare Agency.
- All regular volunteers holding recognised roles in an Education or other care program, a Parish or Diocesan Office, a Centacare Agency.
- Some occasional volunteers holding recognised roles in an Education or other care setting, a Parish or Diocesan Office, a Centacare Agency.
- Members accepting a governance position on parish councils, boards, or committees.
- Some contractors, subcontractors, and agents who provide services to children, families, and at-risk persons on behalf of the Archdiocese.

In order to continue to meet community expectations, best practice and legislative compliance, the Archdiocese facilitates its checks through the Department of Human Services (DHS).

3. General Details

- All new appointments which attract remuneration, will require a current not prohibited 'Employee' Working with Children Check prior to undertaking a position with the Archdiocese and or working with children or young people.

*(In the event that a person has a current Working with Children Check for volunteering and commences paid work, **that check will need to be upgraded**. This upgrade must be applied for within 28 days of starting the paid work and only in the event that the paid work is for more than seven days in a calendar year.)*

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- All Clergy & Religious Persons will require a current not prohibited Working with Children Check prior to undertaking ministry and or any religious or spiritual activities within the Archdiocese.
- All new volunteer appointments (*where service provision exceeds seven times in a calendar year*) for which no remuneration is received will require a current not prohibited 'Volunteer' Working with Children Check prior to working with children or young people.
- All rostered volunteers, Safeguarding Contact Persons, and Extra Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (regardless of frequency of service provision) will require a current not prohibited 'Volunteer' Working with Children Check prior to working with children or young people.
- All persons (new and existing) will be precluded from ministry, employment, contracting, or volunteer roles within the Church if they are not willing to obtain the relevant Working with Children Check prior to working with children or young people.
- All persons providing service in either a paid or voluntary capacity will be required to renew their Working with Children Check on a five-yearly cycle unless exempted as per legislation.
- All checks will be undertaken with the informed consent of the individual concerned.
- Identity must be verified as part of the screening process.
- All information and documentation relating to the checks will be managed in a sensitive, private, and confidential manner.
- Ongoing suitability of persons will be continuously monitored for the full term of engagement in the Archdiocese.
- All current Working with Children Checks presented at any location (including self-governed Catholic schools located within the Archdiocese) will be verified and registered directly onto the Department of Human Services portal by Safeguarding Operations¹ (directly registered organisation with DHS), who monitors all cross-service activity relative to Working with Children Checks in and across the Archdiocese.
- All assessable information (Section 19) will be reported to the Department of Human Services through the Integrity and Safeguarding Department within the required timeframe.
- The Integrity and Safeguarding Department will liaise with and make requests for further information from locations (including self-governed Catholic schools located within the Archdiocese) where it applies to requests for further

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information via all Section 37 and 42F requests made by the Department of Human Services.

- All information requested via the Section 37 and 42F requests will be collated, redacted accordingly, and provided direct to the Department of Human Services within the required timeframe by the Integrity and Safeguarding Department.
- Once an individual is cleared for service at the location or site, they are not required to obtain another Working with Children Check at any other Catholic site unless their current Working with Children Check has expired. Individual screening clearance letters/cards allow for ease of movement across all locations of the Archdiocese.
- Visiting Clergy & Religious Persons (from interstate or overseas) should be directed to the CAA website, to ensure all Archdiocesan requirements are met prior to any service provision at any location. Clergy and Visitations website information can be found here:

Clergy Religious Visitations and Appointments

- All Clergy who become permanently incapacitated through illness or injury and are no longer able to provide ministry or conduct public religious or spiritual activities, are required to provide a medical certificate from a medical practitioner that will be stored on file in lieu of a renewed check.
- All Religious Persons who become permanently incapacitated through illness or injury and are no longer able to provide ministry or conduct public religious or spiritual activities, are required to present a letter of advice from their Order. This will be stored accordingly on file in lieu of a renewed check.

4. Acceptable Checks or Clearances

- Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide – Screening Clearance Letter/Card.
- Working with Children Check Notification from DHS – Email Notification.
- South Australia Police Officers – SAPOL Identification Badge.
- Australian Federal Police – AFP Identification Badge.

The Teachers Registration Board requires teachers to renew their teacher registration every three years. Teachers are now required to obtain a separate Working with Children Check to support their TRB registration process. This can be undertaken through the school, or alternatively these can be initiated direct from the DHS Screening webpage located here: [Department of Human Services Screening Webpage](#).

In the event that a registration lapses, the teacher is not permitted to teach in a Catholic school.

5. Exemptions

- While some exemptions are able to be applied, **the Archdiocese reserves the right to require a check for any role, at any time, at its absolute discretion.**
 - All children under the age of 14 years.
 - Some Occasional Volunteers: Exemption under this category only applies:
 - Where the service provided does not involve a home visit, an excursion or overnight stay, or working with a child with a disability.
 - When the provision of service is to a maximum of seven occasions in a calendar year, and the persons are supervised at all times by someone at the location who has a current valid check or clearance.
 - South Australian Police Officers.
 - Australian Federal Police Officers.
 - Some Contractor/Third-Party Service Providers (On-Site): Some occasional or one-off Contractor/Third-Party Providers may be exempt depending upon the nature and frequency of the visit, and level of supervision at the location.

6. Third-Party Service Providers

Given all organisations are required to adhere to current legislative requirements and Government directed policy around the ongoing protection of children, the Archdiocese no longer requires locations to ensure that specific individual Catholic Clearances are obtained for all individuals at these externally located sites (Off-site – e.g. Campsite, Aquatic Centre, etc.).

In lieu of the previous requirements, the location representative, at the point of engagement with the third-party service provider, is now required to receive a written assurance from the provider that all personnel located at these external sites have been screened in accordance with the requirements of the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016* and the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Regulations 2019* and all other Government directives and policy relating to child safe environments compliance. This must be obtained **prior** to the planned activity taking place.

7. Checks for 14yrs and over (Work Experience/Vet Courses/Other)

7.1 If service is to be provided to a Catholic location

If a child aged 14 years and over elects to provide service to a location in the Archdiocese, a Working with Children Check may be required if the service provision is greater than seven times in a calendar year. To start the application process, an *Initiation Check Request Form* for the child must be completed by the location NAP and

identification worth 100 points must be viewed. The *Initial Check Request Form* should then be forwarded to the Safeguarding Operations¹.

The process in the main is the same as for all other applications initiated by the location, however in this instance, as the child is under the age of 18 years, once the electronic application has been completed, it must be printed, and the parent or legal guardian must sign it. The document must then be forwarded to Safeguarding Operations for the documentation to be completed, **prior** to being forwarded to the Department of Human Services for processing.

7.2 If service is to be provided to a NON-CATHOLIC location

In the event that the child has decided to provide service to a non-Catholic location requiring a Working with Children Check, or will be undertaking a VET course, the applicant, assisted by their parents/guardian, should apply for a Working with Children Check directly with DHS: [DHS Screening Webpage](#)

Individuals and their parents will interact directly with the Department of Human Services for these, and not through Safeguarding Operations. Paper applications for self-initiated checks should be sent directly to the Department of Human Services.

8. When is a check not required?

Checks are not required for one-off guest presentations such as guest speakers, concert performers, or for attendance at one-off events such as sports days or sport clinics, one-off specialist art and craft or cooking workshops, working bees, and whole-of-location events.

9. Responsible Authority & Nominated Authorising Persons

Each location or site must have a Responsible Authority (RA) and at least one Nominated Authorising Person(s) (NAP).

- The RA is required to be the location authority or site leader.
- The NAP(s) are usually the office or administrative personnel working at the location or site.

All RAs and NAPs are required to attend initial and periodic training sessions as required when there is a change in process; these will be conducted by Safeguarding

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Operations¹. For personnel new to the location, regular training sessions are offered across each year. In the event that training has not been undertaken, contact Safeguarding Operations directly for further information.

9.1 Responsible Authority (RA)

Position Accountability:

- The RA is accountable to the Manager, Safeguarding Operations together with the Director of the Integrity and Safeguarding Department, *(as well as the Director of the RA's respective sector where that applies - CESA & Centacare)*. The RA is required to ensure that all individuals have obtained the necessary checks as required in accordance with Archdiocesan policy.

Responsibilities/Duties:

- To identify and designate the location Nominated Authorised Person(s) (NAP).
- Receive Status notifications and monthly reports from Safeguarding Operations and pass to the NAPs for recording on Location Registers.
- Securely dispose of Notification Reports annually.
- Ensure Location Register is maintained and updated.
- Review suspicious applications to validated ID.
- Be the first point of contact for the Location NAP in case of concerns.
- Be the first point of contact for applicants in case of difficulties or concerns.
- Direct enquiries to Safeguarding Operations.
- Assist Safeguarding Operations with Location Health Checks.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Participate in training as required.

9.2 Nominated Authorising Person (NAP)

Position Accountability:

The NAP is accountable to the RA of the location at which they are appointed for the administrative duties associated with the 'authorisation' and check 'lodgement' process.

Responsibilities/Duties:

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- Ensure the Initiation Check Request Form is fully completed, and the writing is legible.
- Perform verification of original Identification Documents and record details as required on the back of the Initiation Check Request Form and forward to Safeguarding Operations¹.
- Provide applicants with the *Instructions To Applicants* form.
- Update and advise Safeguarding Operations of all associations/ disassociations for your location.
- Provide a point of enquiry and general information regarding the Check process.
- Maintain and monitor the Location Register.
- Provide documentation to Safeguarding Operations in accordance with requirements of the Location Health Check.
- Refer non-standard or complex issues to Manager, Safeguarding Operations.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Participate in training as required.

10. The Screening Process

- The RA or NAP must view original Identification Documents to the value of 100 points as per the identification section on the Initiation Check Request Form.

Please note: 100 points of identification is required. All acceptable forms of identification are listed on the form, along with the number of points assigned to each listed document type. Proof of Name Change is required if documents provided are in different names.

- The RA or NAP at the location is required to fully complete and sign off the Initiation Check Request Form and submit the finalised document for processing.

*In the event that processing is urgent, please ensure that **URGENT** is written on the front of the Initiation Check Request Form in the **top right-hand corner** and contact the office to clarify the urgency.*

- Safeguarding Operations will vet and process of all *Initiation Check Request Forms* and any correspondence in relation to checks.

In the event that forms are deemed incomplete, or identification provided does indicate that 100 points of identification have not been viewed, the forms may be required to be returned to the location to enable proper completion of the process.

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- Safeguarding Operations¹ is responsible for;
 - the ongoing monitoring of checks direct with the Department of Human Services, along with any notifications relating to checks and
 - the initiation of location billing for the employee, volunteer, or contractor checks undertaken.

Once the determination has been made, either an Archdiocesan Clearance Card or a Non-Clearance letter will be posted to the individual. As part of this process, individuals will also receive written correspondence direct from the Department of Human Services which they should keep for their own records.

It is important to **understand and allow up to 12 weeks processing** for all applications. In the event that a name is detected on either the National Names Index held by ACIC or one of the child related databases held by the Department Child Protection, the application may experience some delays as the Department Human Services works through their assessment processes. The Archdiocese has no control whatsoever over the time taken by the department to complete the check process and issue a result.

The location or site will be advised of the update to the applicant status via the routine monthly reports or correspondence from Safeguarding Operations and the RA should endeavour to pass on the information provided to the NAP at their site to enable appropriate updates of registers or databases.

The individual should show the original clearance letter/card to the location NAP or RA.

Locations are able to take a copy of the clearance letter/card, **but only with the consent of the applicant**. Any copies taken must be destroyed when the Applicant disassociates from the location.

11. Location Registers

It is an ongoing requirement of all locations across the Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide that details are kept relating to all personnel providing service at their location (**including occasional volunteers who may or may not need a check**).

The level of detail required includes:

- Applicant Surname and Given Name.
- Applicant Date of Birth.
- Applicant Role.

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- Applicant status – Employee/Volunteer/Contractor.
- Expiry Date of check, or alternatively a comment ‘Occasional Volunteer’.
- Disassociation Date (if applicable).

For all locations utilising the Preceda system, this record will meet the audit requirements provided employees, volunteers, and contractors are recorded. In the event that only employees are recorded on Preceda, a location register will also be required to be kept by the location to hold details pertaining to volunteers and contractors.

For locations not utilising the Preceda system, a location register will be required to be kept by the location to capture the required details.

This level of detail is auditable, and locations will be asked to provide this register when the location is visited for the periodic Location Health Check.

12. Contact Details – Safeguarding Operations

Post:

Safeguarding Operations,

Integrity and Safeguarding Department

Catholic Diocesan Centre

GPO Box 1364

ADELAIDE SA 5001

Enquiries should be directed to:

Phone: 8210 8150

Email: <mailto:receptionsava@adelaide.catholic.org.au>