



# Catholic Diocese of Darwin

## WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS POLICY

### 1. Introduction and Purpose

It is the policy of the Catholic Diocese of Darwin to ensure that children are safe from sexual or physical harm. As an employer, the Catholic Diocese of Darwin has a responsibility to ensure that all persons employed or engaged to carry out work in child related employment are screened appropriately through a Work with Children Check (WWC).

Every day children are taught, coached, and cared for by workers and volunteers. From sports coaches, music teachers, childcare workers, teachers and church groups – everyone plays a part in helping educate, nurture and inspire children. The requirement for a WWC has been introduced under the *Northern Territory Care and Protection Act, 2015* as a method to prevent and deter people who pose a risk to the safety of children from working with them, in either a paid or volunteer capacity. Therefore the WWC is an important part of the recruitment process for potential new employees and volunteers.

### 2. Scope

The onus for complying with the Northern Territory Care and Protection Act, 2015 rests with both the individual and the person who engages the individual e.g. Parish Priest is the employer of all involved in parish activities.

### 3. Definitions

**Contact** is any contact with a child that involves any of the following:

- physical or the potential for physical contact with children;
- spoken or the potential for spoken communication with children;
- written communication or the potential for written communication with children.

**Working with Clearance** is a search of national police records for criminal history in relation to:

- sexual offences involving children;
- violent offences involving children;
- drug related offences involving children.

A **Clearance Notice** is provided to a person after successfully applying for a Working with Children Clearance. The applicant will also receive their Ochre Card.

### 4. Policy Details

#### 4.1 Who Requires a Working with Children Clearance?

Child related work is any work that involves or may potentially involve contact (see definitions) with children in connection with the following:

- Educational facilities
- Religious organisation (includes all diocesan/parish activities)
- Counselling or other support services for children
- Overnight camps for children

- Clubs, associations or movements (including those that are of a cultural, recreational or sporting nature with significant child membership or involvement)
- Other services such as gym or play facilities
- People involved in working with youth

Without limiting the above any of the following is a person engaged in child-related employment:

Anyone performing child related work

- I. a minister of religion or as part of a religious vocation; or
- II. as a student for the practical training of an education or vocational course
- III. as a voluntary worker

*(Part 3.1, section 185 Child Related Employment (N.T, Care and Protection of Children Act, 2015)*

#### **4.2 Parish Registers**

Parishes must keep a register of the following information:

- Names of workers, this includes parish volunteers and council members
- Working with Children card number and expiry dates

Registers maintained by parishes need to be made available for periodic audit.

#### **4.3 Retreats**

Where interstate retreats/youth camps are run in the Northern Territory an interstate working with children clearance would be accepted. The organising committee must see evidence and sign off prior to the event taking place.

Exemptions:

- A person who is 15 years of age or less is exempt from holding a Working with Children Clearance.
- A visitor to the NT who will be working as a volunteer for a total period of no more than 14 days per year.

#### **4.4 Costs**

The cost of a Working with Children Clearance for a worker in the Northern Territory is \$55.00 and for a volunteer \$5.00. It is expected that parishes will offer to pay for the cost of a volunteer WWC.

#### **4.5 Volunteers**

When applying for a WWC the volunteer must name the parish as their volunteer agency. If the person volunteering already has a working with children clearance with another organisation then they should advise the regulatory body at [www.workingwithchildren.nt.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.nt.gov.au) and register the parish as their volunteer organisation.

#### **4.6 What if a person declines to apply for a WWC?**

If a worker or volunteer declines to have a WWC, the person concerned is prohibited from child-related employment and will be deemed unsuitable for employment or appointment as a volunteer in any position within the Catholic Diocese of Darwin.

## 5. Related Policies

Northern Territory Care and Protection of Children Act, 2015

<http://www.workingwithchildren.nt.gov.au>

CDDNT 1 Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

SUBJECT	Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults
TITLE	Working with Children Checks Policy
APPROVED BY	Bishop Eugene Hurley
ISSUE DATE	February 2016