



Volunteer procedure

Parent policy

Volunteer policy

Scope

This procedure applies to all UCA sites, services and programs in Victoria and Tasmania.

Procedures

1. Application

This policy applies to all UCA sites, services and programs in Victoria and Tasmania. The Synod People & Culture team will provide support upon request, in the implementation of National Criminal History Checks (NCHC) for Volunteers under this policy.

All who work or volunteer here are required to;

- Undertake to observe our Keeping Children Safe Policy
- Undertake to cooperate with strategies to actively ensure the safety, protection, and wellbeing of children who come into contact with us.

In accepting the service of Program Volunteers congregations must ensure that volunteer leaders and regular Volunteers:

- a) work within the Ethos and Values of the UCA and the policies of the Congregation;
- b) are provided with a written description of the duties to which they are assigned;
- c) are provided with resources appropriate to required tasks;
- d) have the attributes, qualifications and capacity to undertake any tasks which are assigned to them;
- e) receive a formal induction before commencing work on any congregational site, service or program;
- f) provide evidence of a recent National Criminal History Check, or agree to a National Criminal History Check being conducted, prior to commencing volunteer activities which relate to aged care;
- g) provide evidence of a recent (12 months) National Criminal History Check (VIC) or Criminal History National Police Records Check (TAS), or agree to a National Criminal History Check (VIC) or Criminal History National Police Records Check (TAS) being conducted, prior to commencing activities which are related to Vulnerable People, and;
- h) provide evidence of a Working With Children Check (VIC) or present Working with Vulnerable People Registration Card (Working with Children Registration Card) (TAS) at any UCA site, service or program which involves working with children and/or child related activities.
- i) The protection of children is the paramount consideration of the congregation and its volunteers when applying the working with children Act. Each congregation must nominate a person to keep a register of the Working With Children Checks and supply this information to the Synod. All suspicious behaviour, concerns or WWCC negative outcomes are to be recorded and sent to the Synod People & Culture.

2. Adverse criminal history information

In the event that adverse Criminal History Information (CHI) is received, the Volunteer Leader (or Employee responsible for ensuring a satisfactory check) will:

- a) Discuss the adverse result with the applicant

- b) Confer with the Responsible Person who will make a determination of the volunteer's suitability for the role based on relevance and proportionality of the conviction.

In assessing such suitability, the Responsible Person will consider:

- a) the significance of the conviction in relation to the duties of the position;
- b) whether excluding a person from the volunteer role is an outcome which is proportional to the type of conviction;
- c) how long since the conviction occurred;
- d) whether a person has been satisfactorily employed or performed in a voluntary capacity since the conviction;
- e) assessments, reports or findings in relation to treatment of a person since a conviction;
- f) whether the conviction represents an isolated incident or a pattern of criminality;
- g) the likelihood of an incident recurring if a person is employed for particular duties;
- h) the impact of a prospective incident if a person is employed for particular duties;
- i) strategies and /or procedures that could be put in place to reduce the likelihood of an incident occurring.

3. Adverse criminal history information appeal

If the Criminal History Check has been completed using the Synod Criminal History Check service, applicants may dispute adverse CHI by completing a National Police Checking Service (NCPs) dispute form. The dispute process and form is available upon request from the Synod People and Culture Unit or from the UCA website.

4. Criminal history check renewals

It is a requirement for Criminal History Checks to be renewed every three years.

5. Adverse Working with Children Check

Please refer to the Working with Children Check Policy

Definitions

Appointed leader: Appointed leader includes anyone who has 'general authority over the operations of a congregation.' Appointed leaders are people who are in a position of trust, influence, or authority because of their leadership role within the church.

Congregations: Means those people (members and adherents) who worship, witness and serve as a fellowship of the Spirit of Christ, meeting regularly to hear God's Word, to celebrate the sacraments, to build one another up in love, to share the wider responsibilities of the Church, and to serve the world, and who are recognized as a Congregation by the Presbytery.

Congregational volunteer: A person who willingly and without pay, performs a service for the benefit of a church or congregation. Any contact with children is occasional and incidental in nature. National Criminal History Check.

National Criminal History Check: involves identifying and releasing any relevant Criminal History Information (CHI) subject to relevant spent convictions/non-disclosure legislation and/or information release policies.

Program volunteer: A person who willingly and without pay, performs a service for the benefit of the wider community.

Responsible person: A Responsible Person is the appointed leader of the work unit. This may include but is not limited to a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chair of Church Council or General Secretary.

Synod: The Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

Vulnerable people: People in need of special care, support or protection, because of disadvantage due to, for example, disability, age, health issues, risk of abuse and/or neglect.

Working with Children Check (WWCC): In Victoria under the Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act) if you are doing child-related work and not exempt, you must have a WWC Check even if you have also had a National Criminal History Check completed. You may not continue working or volunteering if your WWC Act has expired. <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/applications>

Working with Vulnerable People Registration Card: In Tasmania, under the *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011* a registration card is required in order to engage in a regulated activity with children. http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/working_with_children

Related policies and procedures

Volunteer policy

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policy

Recruitment and Selection policy

Recruitment and Selection procedure

Working with Children Check/ Registration policy

National Criminal History Check (VIC) or Criminal History National Police Records Check (TAS)

Workplace Ethos and Values

Working with Vulnerable People Registration Card

Keeping Children Safe Policy

Related documents

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013

Working with Children Act 2015 (amended 26 October 2014)

VERSION: APPROVAL	POLICY MANAGER	REVIEW DATE
1: Standing Committee (SC 15.14.16)	Director People & Culture	17 April 2015
2: Senior Leadership Team	Director People & Culture	26 October 2019

Further assistance

Contact People & Culture for interpretation and assistance with this procedure.