

WA FOOTBALL COMMISSION - CLUB CIRCULAR

Subject: Child Safeguarding

Department: Club Development and Volunteers

Subcategory Working with Children Requirements

Circular CD&V 25-02

Audience Perth Metro Junior Clubs, Perth Football League, Country Football WA and Affiliates

Date: 04/02/25

SUMMARY	CLUB ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In July 2023 significant changes to Working with Children legislation were introduced that clubs need to ensure they understand• Whilst volunteers who don't have a child at the club must still provide a valid Working with Children Card, parents and guardians must now also confirm that they are covered by the parent volunteer exemption• There are certain steps clubs can take to ensure they are compliant with Working with Children legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure relevant Club Committee members, Team Managers, Coaches and Game Day volunteers are aware of their Working with Children obligations• Ensure the Club is compliant with Working with Children legislative requirements

Working with Children Checks

Complying with Working with Children (WWC) requirements is compulsory for all organisations engaging people in child-related work in Western Australia under the Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (the Act).

Volunteer work undertaken at a football club falls under Category 12 of the Act – A club, association or movement.

Under the new legislation, parents and guardians who volunteer under category 12 are not required to obtain a WWC check as they are covered by the parent volunteer exemption. Any person who volunteers at a club working with children who does not have a child participating **MUST** obtain a WWC check, and this must be recorded by the club.

Any person with a current Interim Negative Notice or Negative Notice cannot engage in child related work and are not able to access a WWC check.

Note: If volunteers are taking children on an overnight camp, all volunteers must have a valid WWC Check as specified in Category 15 of the Act.

Parent Volunteer Exemption

In Western Australia, it is recognised that many parents contribute their time to support their children in sports and other activities. Rather than requiring parent volunteers to obtain a WWC check, to decrease volunteer burden and increase volunteer engagement, parents and guardians are covered under the parent volunteer exemption. This means that they are ineligible for a WWC check and clubs can no longer request that a parent volunteer obtain a WWC check.

Any parent with a current Interim Negative Notice or Negative Notice cannot engage in child related work and is not able to access a parent volunteer exemption.

There is no obligation for clubs to check if volunteers have an Interim Negative Notice or Negative Notice. The onus is on the individual involved.

Who Requires a WWC Check or Exemption

The Act determines that volunteer work is child-related if the usual duties of work involves or is likely to involve contact with a child in connection with at least one of the categories of child related work. For club football, this is category 12.

For football clubs, it is recommended that as a minimum, the following volunteers be required to provide a WWC or confirmation of exemption:

Junior Competition Football

- All club committee members
- All match day officials (if club provided)
- All team coaches and assistant coaches
- All team managers
- All team first aiders
- All team runners
- All parent umpires in a junior competition
- Any other person who comes in regular contact with children at the club e.g. life members who regularly hand out awards.

Senior Competition Football

Due to the nature of football clubs in that they attract players, volunteers and membership of people under the age of 18, it is determined that senior competition football clubs are also bound under category 12 and therefore it is recommended that as a minimum, the following volunteers be required to provide a WWC or confirmation of exemption:

- All club committee members
- All volunteer positions, as listed above for junior competition football
- For all paid positions (excluding honorariums) including parents of participants.

Canteen Volunteers

- Any volunteer serving children
- A volunteer working in the canteen preparing food only and not serving customers (e.g cooking on a bbq) does not require a WWC check or exemption, even if working with children under 18 years as they are governed by alternative legislation.

Umpires

- First year umpires under the age of 18 have a reduced earning capacity and upfront costs associated with umpiring so are deemed volunteers and therefore the Child Volunteer Exemption applies. They are not required to obtain a WWC check but are required to confirm that they are exempt in the same manner as a parent volunteer.
- All other umpires, including those in their first year over 18 years and those under 18 years who have completed one year of umpiring MUST have a WWC check. If an umpire is club appointed, it is the club's responsibility to record the umpires WWC check information. If an umpire is provided by an umpiring association/club, it is the umpiring association/club's responsibility to record the WWC information.

Recording WWC Checks and Exemptions

To be compliant with the WWC legislation it is recommended that clubs keep a register of WWC Checks and parent volunteers with confirmation that they are exempt.

The following information and steps should be checked, recorded and updated each year for non-parent volunteers. This includes any family members other than the child's mother, father or legal guardian, such as grandparents, siblings over 18, aunts, uncles, etc.

- Maintain a copy of their current Working with Children Check Card
- Undertake a WWC Card validity check - workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au/online-services
- Maintain a spreadsheet containing the following as a minimum:
 - Organisation name and year/season
 - Card holder's surname and given names, as listed on the WWC Check Card
 - Card holder's date of birth
 - Volunteer position
 - WWC card number
 - WWC card expiry date
 - Current WWC status
- Ensure you register WWC card holders to the WWC Screening unit. This will ensure the club will be notified if a volunteer becomes ineligible to work with children but the onus remains with the WWC holder to ensure their card remains current and for them to alert clubs to a change in circumstance.
 - workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au/registeremployees
 - The attached WWC Check Record Keeping Spreadsheet can be used to bulk upload information (columns A to G)

The following information should be recorded and updated each year for parent volunteers who are exempt from WWC check

- A spreadsheet containing the following as a minimum:
 - Organisation name and year/season
 - Parent volunteer's surname and given names
 - Volunteer position
 - Confirmation that the parent volunteer has confirmed they are eligible for an exemption
 - Confirmation that signature and date from parent volunteer has been provided

Attached is a WWC Check Recording Keeping Spreadsheet for clubs to use to record volunteer's WWC Check or exemption status, or adapt to their needs.

Collecting Parent Volunteer Information

Given the nature of volunteering within a football club, it is understood that it may be challenging to collect and record confirmation of exemption from all parent volunteers. Clubs should however make efforts to collect this information.

Some suggested strategies include:

- Have parents complete and return a Volunteer Declaration

- Clubs can use the template attached or design their own using the information required in the record keeping spreadsheet as a guide
- Create an online form and/or QR code for quick registration by volunteers
 - This can also be used for record keeping in place of a separate record keeping spreadsheet
- Add as a tick box question as part of the club's Parent Code of Conduct
- Add as a part of your club's Code of Conduct on Play HQ

To assist in collecting and monitoring WWC Checks and exemptions it is also suggested that clubs appoint a Safeguarding Officer. This role can not only oversee WWC requirements but promote safeguarding of children and safeguarding principles throughout the club and the wider community.

Resources

There are many resources available to clubs to assist in ensuring they meet their WWC requirements:

- WWC Check Record Keeping Spreadsheet – Attached
 - Ensure you read the Instructions tab prior to filling in the form
- Volunteer Declaration – Attached
- WWC Football Bulletin – Attached
- Working with Children Check - [Website](#)
- Working with Children Check Online Services - [Website](#)
- The Parent Volunteer Exemption – [Fact Sheet](#)
- Working with Children Check Sport and Recreation Sector – [Fact Sheet](#)
- Child Safeguarding Officer Position Description – [Fact Sheet](#)

Clubs can also contact the Working with Children Check Contact Centre on: 1800 883 979.

The Working with Children Check Unit also provide free online and in person education session - [Eventbrite](#)

The Club Development and Volunteer Team will shortly be hosting a webinar for clubs to provide further information on Working with Children requirements and safeguarding young people.

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