

# Child Related Employment Screening

## What is it?

Child related employment screening is a comprehensive assessment of information obtained about an individual to determine whether they may pose a risk of harm to children in a workplace or volunteer environment.

A risk assessment provided by the DCSI Screening Unit is intended to assist an organisation make informed decisions about recruitment of its employees and volunteers.

## When is it required?

This type of screening is required for people who perform, or will be performing, prescribed functions in government or non-government organisations providing the following types of services wholly or partly for children:

- health and welfare
- education
- sport and recreation
- religious and spiritual
- child care
- residential
- overnight care

The need for child related employment screening must be considered in the context of the legislation, as exemptions may apply in some circumstances.

### Relevant legislation

The *Children's Protection Act 1993 (the Act)* and *Children's Protection Regulations 2010 (SA) (the Regulations)*.

Organisations are required by the Act to ensure that, before a person is appointed to or engaged to act in a 'prescribed position,' an assessment of their relevant history is undertaken.



A 'prescribed position' is defined as one that involves the performance of one or more of the following prescribed functions:

- regular contact with children or working in close proximity to children on a regular basis, unless the contact or work is directly supervised at all times; or
- supervision or management of persons in positions requiring or involving regular contact with children or working in close proximity to children on a regular basis; or
- access to records of a kind prescribed by regulation relating to children; or
- functions of a type prescribed by regulation (currently only the provision of overnight care is prescribed - see Regulation 10).

## What does it involve?

Child related employment screening by the DCSI Screening Unit involves the consideration of a person's expanded criminal history, which is extensive and cross-jurisdictional.

It is a comprehensive assessment that includes information relating to charges for offences alleged to have been committed, regardless of the outcome of those charges, such as acquittals, dismissed,

withdrawn and pending charges as well as convictions and spent convictions.

It also includes information from government databases, such as care concern investigations records and child protection information held by DCSI and the department for Education and Child Development (DECD).

Assessments are conducted in accordance with Standards issued pursuant to section 8A (j) of [the Children's Protection Act 1993](#).

Information may be shared with an employer.

Child related employment screening is considered as one part of the recruitment process. The final decision-making responsibility about engagement rests with the employing organisation.

As an alternative to obtaining a child related employment screening through the DCSI Screening Unit, the Regulations allow for the assessment to be conducted by the employer organisation itself.

If the organisation conducts its own assessment, it is required to obtain a criminal history report and assess that report in accordance with a set of standards issued by the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD), and any information provided by the applicant relevant to the assessment process.

## How long does it take?

If there is no criminal history and no match of the applicant's name against any government records searched, screening should be completed within **30 business days**.

Additional time may be required if the DCSI Screening Unit obtains information that requires further assessment. For example, information from courts, police agencies or other sources, or if the applicant's name registers as a match against any government records assessed by the DCSI Screening Unit.

In some cases an assessment may take more than **8 weeks** to finalise, depending on the relevance,

complexity, and amount of information to be taken into account.

If the DCSI Screening Unit assesses information about an applicant that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to the safety of children, the Screening Unit will contact the applicant to discuss the matter before finalising the assessment.

## Review process

Applicants will also have access to a review process in the event they do not agree with a screening outcome. Further information about the review process is available on the Screening Unit's website.

## What does it cost?

Refer to our website for the current screening fees.

## How often is it required?

DCSI child-related employment screening clearances are valid for three years. A clearance letter issued by the DCSI Screening Unit is portable between organisations within South Australia.

## How is it different to a National Police Certificate?

Child related employment screening by the DCSI Screening Unit involves a risk assessment specifically focused on an applicant's risk of harm to children in a workplace or volunteer environment.

There is no such risk assessment involved in the information provided in a National Police Certificate (NPC), which is simply a record of a person's disclosable criminal conviction history.

Also, the DCSI Screening Unit has access to additional sources of information, including child protection information, care concerns investigations, cross-jurisdictional expanded criminal history information and police reports. This information is not included on a NPC or available to an employer organisation conducting its own assessment of a NPC.

## Contacting the Screening Unit

Please email the Screening Unit. Your query will be directed to the appropriate area for a response.

**Email:** [DCSIScreeningUnit@sa.gov.au](mailto:DCSIScreeningUnit@sa.gov.au)

**Website:** [www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/screening](http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/screening)

**Postal address:**

Screening Unit  
Department for Communities and Social Inclusion  
GPO Box 292  
ADELAIDE SA 5001

## More information

For more information about Child Safe Environments, contact the Child Safe Environments team in Families SA by emailing [DECDCChildSafe@sa.gov.au](mailto:DECDCChildSafe@sa.gov.au).