

## Working with Children and Child Safeguarding in Football

### Questions & Answers

#### **WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS**

##### **Question**

*Where does the limit sit as a parent volunteer, eg. Just when involved with your child's team activities within the club. E.g. exec committee, canteen and working across multiple age groups not necessarily just your child's team. Are you saying it doesn't matter as long as it's the club your child is part of?*

##### **Answer**

The parent volunteer exemption applies differently depending on the category of child-related work that applies to the persons work. For example:

- Category 4: Coaching or private tuition service – Parents volunteering in the same activity as their child are exempt
- Category 12: a club association or movement – Parents volunteering at the same club or association where their child participates are exempt.

See [Factsheet CRW03: Exemptions, The parent volunteer exemption](#) for more information.

##### **Question**

*Just to confirm, committee must all have a WWCC if they are in close contact with kids?*

##### **Answer**

It will depend on whether the committee members are undertaking child-related work and if any exemption applies to them. See [Infographic CRW05: Who needs a Working with Children Check?](#) for more information.

Given the nature of football clubs where children and young people both attend as players and spectators, if committee members are actively engaged in the day to day operations of the club, such as being at the grounds on game day in their capacity as a committee member, then yes they must have provide a WWCC or confirm that they are eligible for an exemption. If there is a committee member who doesn't attend the club outside of committee meetings and doesn't engage with children and young people in another capacity, e.g. via social media, then they wouldn't be required to acquire a WWCC or declare exemption.

##### **Question**

*What about grandparents and stepparents? Do they require a WWCC or are they also exempt?*

## Answer

A parent is defined in the WWC legislation as a person who:

- is the mother, father, stepfather, stepmother of the child
- at law has responsibility for the long-term or day to day care, welfare and development of the child
- is in a de facto relationship with a person referred to in either of the above or
- is specified as the child's prospective adoptive parent under the *Adoption Act 1994*

If a grandparent or step parent is considered a parent under the WWC legislation, then the parent volunteer exemption will apply to them. If they are not considered a parent, then they will require a WWC Check to volunteer in child-related work. A WWC Check is not required if they are attending as a spectator.

## Question

*If you have grandparents volunteering on the BBQ or in the canteen and they don't have custody of their grandchildren, so technically they are a volunteer without a child playing at the club, are they required to have a check?*

## Answer

They would only require a WWC Check if they are undertaking child-related work. For example, if they are serving children at the BBQ they will need a WWC Check, but if they are working behind the scenes to cook the BBQ and not serving children, they will not require a WWC Check. See [Infographic CRW05: Who needs a Working with Children Check?](#) for more information

## Question

If you pay a canteen person, what is the dollar threshold?

## Answer

There is no dollar threshold that determines a volunteer from a paid employee.

Additional information can be found in the answer to the next question

## Question

*Is there a threshold for considering what constitutes payment for people under 18? Some under 18's will receive nominal payment when umpiring games via WA umpiring.*

## Answer

The WWC Screening Unit provides the following definitions to assist organisations in determining a paid employee from a volunteer receiving a nominal fee.

A volunteer is a person who engages in child-related work for an organisation for no financial reward or wage. A person who receives payments that just cover the costs of carrying out their child-related work is considered to receive no financial reward and is considered a volunteer by the WWC Screening Unit. More information on this can be found in [Factsheet ORG03: WWC Check, Sport and recreation sector](#).

The rate for an umpire umpiring a year 3 or 4 game is \$45. A game is one hour long with 20 mins of break time. In essence an umpire is paid a minimum of \$45 for 1 1/2 hours work. For comparison, the minimum wage for a 17 year old in casual employment in fast food is \$17.41 an hour. They would need to work 3 hours to make \$45.

**Question**

*How young can a person be to obtain a WWCC? We had a second year umpire who was 13 during the 2025 season.*

**Answer**

There are no age restrictions on who can apply for a WWC Check. As long as the person under 18 is undertaking paid child-related work, they can apply for a WWC Check. If they are volunteering, then the child volunteer exemption would apply and they will not require a WWC Check.

The WWC Screening Unit can access information about a person's juvenile charges and convictions, so it is possible for someone under the age of 18 to have relevant criminal history which may result in a Negative Notice.

**Question**

*If we request an AFL star to attend training, will WA Football ensure WWCC?*

**Answer**

The onus is on the club to check WWCC for anyone coming into the club to undertake work with children and young people.

**Question**

*Can a club have a policy that certain volunteers such as coaches must get a WWCC?*

**Answer**

No, a club's policy cannot overrule the WWC legislation.

**Question**

*So to confirm, we cannot force people to get a WWCC if they meet exemption requirements however to close off the huge gap with that can we not require through*

*policy that a coach get a WWCC or other people we deem that work close with kids if that's what we see fit as a club to close off that risk?*

**Answer**

No, a club cannot force a person to apply for a WWC Check if they are ineligible to apply due to an exemption or not undertaking child-related work.

The WWC Check is one of many child safeguarding strategies that clubs should have in place to mitigate risk to keep children safe. Other strategies may include requiring a National Volunteer Police Certificate from all volunteers at your club, conducting thorough referee checks on staff and volunteers, having and enforcing a clear code of conduct that provides instruction on acceptable behaviour and maintaining appropriate boundaries.

**Question**

*So we can enforce a National Police Clearance, but not a WWCC?*

**Answer**

Yes, a club can require their employees and volunteers to provide a current National Police Clearance so the club can review the information and determine if the person has any convictions that may pose a risk to the organisation if they were to work or volunteer with them.

The WWC Check is only a requirement for people engaging in child-related work and who are not exempt from applying. It is much more invasive than a National Police Clearance, as it allows the WWC Screening Unit to access information on a person's convictions, non-convictions, spent convictions, juvenile charges and convictions and pending charges, conduct review findings and outcomes reported through the Reportable Conduct Scheme and any other relevant information. The WWC Screening Unit is responsible for assessing whether a person poses an unacceptable risk of harm to children at the time of their application and on an ongoing basis for the life of the WWC Card.

**Question**

*It mentioned a few slides ago that exemptions will be retracted if people are not cleared for WWC so how do we know if people are going to have that WWC revoked if they don't have to get one?*

**Answer**

People who currently hold a Negative Notice or an Interim Negative Notice cannot access the parent or child volunteer exemptions. See [Factsheet CRW04: Exemptions, Narrowing of access](#) for more information.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

### **Question**

*Are there best practice policy examples that you could share with us?*

### **Answer**

There are many resources available to assist clubs in promoting safeguarding and developing policy. Currently, available footy specific safeguarding policies are Victorian based and therefore don't align with WA legislation. WA Football will be developing a Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy template for clubs to use.

Some useful websites to find out more about safeguarding in sport include:

<https://wafotball.com.au/about-us/integrity/>

<https://play.afl/clubhelp/safety-inclusion>

<https://www.sportintegrity.gov.au/>

### **Question**

*What is the obligation / expectation on parents to support safe environment? I.e. The 'drop and leave' but expecting professional level care from sporting club appears to be a challenge. Can this be covered off in club documentation?*

### **Answer**

Yes this can be covered off in club codes of conduct and child safety policies. Clubs can clearly outline their expectations of parents, players, coaches and other volunteers in relation to supervising and caring for children and refer back to these policies when communicating expectations or if an issue occurs.

### **Question**

*Does the obligation on a club change with the incidence of mental health in children? I.e a child with anxiety may require additional support – where does the onus for this sit?*

### **Answer**

Football clubs provide a service to the community, being the opportunity for people to participate in Australian rules football. If a child requires additional support, parents should communicate these needs to the club and then the club can determine if they are able to provide the level of care or if another program which provides a higher level of support may be more appropriate for the player. The clubs position on additional support can be outlined in policy.

**Question**

*Does the Integrity Team notify the club that there has been a safeguarding report made and that an investigation will take place?*

**Answer**

This is all dependent on the severity and risk matrices surrounding the alleged safeguarding incident and whether handled by an internal or external stakeholder.

In most instances, a club will be made aware, being mindful of confidentiality, surrounding an investigation.

**Question**

*Is there a time limit on reporting an integrity issue?*

**Answer**

This would be all dependent on the relevant leagues by-laws or rules and regulations. All Incident Report Forms submitted through the relevant Integrity portals, will be assessed by the WA Football Integrity Unit.