



commission for
children and young people
and child guardian

Blue cards for home stay providers

The Commission is an independent statutory authority which promotes and protects the rights, interests and wellbeing of children and young people in Queensland, particularly those most vulnerable.

The Commission's work is regulated by the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*. This Act requires people working with children under 18 in certain businesses, paid or voluntary employment, to undergo employment screening – the Working with Children Check.

What is the Working with Children Check?

A detailed national check of a person's criminal history, including any charges or convictions.

The Commissioner also considers disciplinary information held by certain professional organisations for:

- teachers
- child care service providers
- foster carers, and
- nurses, midwives, and certain health practitioners.

In addition, information from police investigations into allegations of serious child-related sexual offences will be taken into account, even if no charges were laid because the child was unwilling or unable to proceed.

A person whose application is approved is issued with a positive notice (in the form of a letter) and a blue card.

If a person's application is refused, they are issued with a negative notice. This prohibits them from working in the categories of employment or carrying on a business in the areas listed under the Act.

If people do not comply with their obligations under the Act, penalties apply, including fines and imprisonment.

Do home stay providers need a blue card?

Yes. If a person intends to provide a child accommodation service (including home stays) arranged by a state school, non-state school or private agency, they need a blue card if they provide the service for 10 days or more a year, or more than twice a year.

Short term arrangements (less than 10 days and on no more than two occasions in a year).

If a person accommodates a child for less than 10 days, and no more than twice a year, they do **not** need a blue card.

Long term arrangements (10 days or more, or on more than two occasions in a year).

If a person accommodates a child for 10 days or more, or more than twice in a year, they **do** need a blue card.

To apply, the home stay provider must complete the relevant blue card application form and send it to the Commission.

NB: different home stay arrangements require different application forms.

How do home stay providers for state schools apply for a blue card?

To apply, the home stay provider must lodge a 'Business (**B**) application form', which can be found on the Commission's website at www.bluecard.qld.gov.au. Parts A, C, D and E must be completed.

In **Part A** (Business Details), the home stay provider should write their **own** name and contact details (**not** the school's contact details).

If the person is not paid (ie. they are a volunteer) they do **not** need to complete **Part B** (Payment Options). However, they must complete the Statutory Declaration so the Commission can waive the prescribed application fee.

The person must have two forms of original identification verified by a prescribed person (as identified on the form).

The prescribed person must complete **Parts D and E**.

Once complete, send the form to the Commission with the statutory declaration (if applicable).

How do home stay providers for non-state schools or independent agencies apply?

If the home stay provider is a volunteer at a non-state school or independent agency, they should lodge a 'Volunteer (**V**) application form', which can be found on the Commission's website at www.bluecard.qld.gov.au

In **Part A**, the school or independent agency's details must be provided.

The home stay provider's identification must be verified by an authorised representative of the school or agency.

If the home stay provider is self-employed, they must lodge a 'Business (**B**) application form'. In this case, the home stay provider should write their **own name** and contact details in Part A (Business Details), **not** the school's or the agency's contact details.

The home stay provider must have two forms of original identification documents verified by a prescribed person (as identified on the form).

If the home stay provider receives reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses but no payment, they do **not** need to complete **Part B** (Payment Options). However, they must complete the Home stay Statutory Declaration so the Commission can waive the prescribed application fee.

To work out whether to complete a **V** or **B** form, consult the organisation coordinating the home stay service.

Do adults (other than the home stay provider) living in a home where a child accommodation service is provided need a blue card?

Yes. An adult who is a permanent Australian resident needs a blue card if they live in a home where child accommodation services are provided for 10 days or more, or more than twice in a year.

They are included under the “child accommodation service including home stays” category of employment under the Commission’s Act and should lodge a ‘Volunteer (**V**) application form’.

What form should an adult resident of a home use where a child accommodation service is provided through a state school?

Adult residents are treated as volunteers, and may apply for a blue card by lodging a ‘Volunteer (**V**) application form’. They must complete all parts of the form.

In **Part A** (Organisation’s Details), the adult resident should provide the **details of the home stay provider** carrying on the regulated business (ie. the person conducting the home stay).

In **Part B** (Volunteer’s Details) the adult resident should provide their **own details**, taking care to answer all questions, write clearly and sign the declaration inside the box in section 21 to avoid delays in processing.

In **Part C**, the adult resident must have the home stay provider sight two forms of original documentation to verify their identity. The home stay provider carrying on the business must complete Parts C and D of the form.

What form should an adult resident of a home use where child accommodation is provided through a non-state school?

The adult is considered a volunteer under the Commission’s Act and may apply for a blue card by lodging a ‘Volunteer (**V**) application form’.

All parts of the form must be completed.

If the home stay provider is a volunteer at a non-state school or agency, the adults living in the home are also considered volunteers of the school or agency.

In **Part A** (Organisation’s Details) the adult resident of the home should provide the details of the school or agency the home stay is being conducted through.

In **Part B** (Volunteer’s Details) the adult resident should provide their **own details**, taking care to answer all questions, write clearly and sign the declaration inside the box in section 21 to avoid delays in processing.

In **Part C**, the adult resident must have two forms of original documentation verified by an authorised representative from the school or agency.

Accessing and lodging application forms

Application forms can be found on the Commission’s website at www.bluecard.qld.gov.au

The Home stay Statutory Declaration can be found at www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/employment/bluecard/declarations.html

Please ensure all sections of the forms are completed in full to avoid delays in processing.

Once complete, forms should be sent to the Commission with a statutory declaration (if required).

Risk management for child protection

While the Working with Children Check carried out by the Commission is a significant step in protecting children and young people, it is important to understand it is only one element in a suite of strategies supported by the government to promote safe environments for children.

Employers of people in regulated employment and those carrying on a regulated business are required to implement a risk management strategy for child protection.

It must outline the practices and procedures they have in place to promote the safety and wellbeing of children in their particular service environment.

The Commission offers free workshops to help organisations develop appropriate risk management strategies to foster safe service environments.

For more information on risk management, go to the Commission’s website at www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/about/risk_management.html

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