



People

Procedure for Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Volunteers

Who the procedure applies to:

- Staff (All paid positions in the Church other than those listed below as exceptions).
- Volunteers in contact with Children. These ministries include, but are not limited to, Kids and Youth Ministry, Prayer team, Welcomers, Homegroup Leaders, Pastoral Care team, and other Ministry teams where Children may serve (e.g., IT, worship).
- Junior Volunteers in contact with Children with parental consent.

Exceptions:

- QB Pastoral Leaders.
- Church Governance Group (Volunteers on the Church Council, Elders or Deacons).
- Volunteers not directly ministering to or not in contact with Children.

For all roles that are exempted from this procedure, other procedures and guidelines should be developed to govern their recruitment and selection, which include relevant Safe Spaces considerations and other legal requirements

Recruitment

Volunteers should attend the Church for six months before being accepted to help in a ministry role. This allows time for both the Volunteers to gain a greater understanding of the culture of the Church and its ministries, and for the Ministry Leaders to get to know the Volunteers better. There may be some instances where Volunteers have a pre-existing connection with the Church and extensive experience in a particular ministry where this is waived. The Safe Spaces Team should assess and document their reasons for exempting any Volunteer from this six-month wait period.

When recruiting Staff and Volunteers for roles involving contact or working with Children, the Church should adopt strategies that clearly demonstrate its commitment to child safety, wellbeing, cultural safety, and equity.

Throughout the recruitment process, the applicant should receive clear communication regarding the Church's safeguarding practices and expectations.

The screening and selection process

Please note that a recruitment process can take **up to three months**, depending on Blue Card processes and replies from referee checks, etc. Ministry Leaders should account for this when recruiting for their ministries.

Steps to be taken

Regardless of the recruitment strategy, the following steps **must** occur:

Step 1 - Application

Potential applicants must be given the following as part of the initial application process:

- A **position description** about the role.
- A **volunteer contact and consent form**.
- The **Code of Conduct** for Working with Children.
- A link to access a **Blue Card application form** (online).

After consideration of the requirements of the role, a person who still feels called should complete and return all forms to the relevant Ministry Leader.

Step 2 - Interview

The relevant Ministry Leader and a member of the Safe Spaces Team should review the contents of the application form and interview the applicant to check the person's suitability for the position and provide an opportunity for them to ask questions and clarify the role.

Step 3 – Screening

Should the interview go well, the following mandatory screening requirements will be completed:

- Two referee checks must be received, reviewed and approved.
- Previous Church reference checks should be received, reviewed and approved. (If the applicant has been at your Church less than 5 years).
 - A current Blue Card (or Exemption Card) must be sighted. Specifically: all Staff must hold a valid paid Blue Card
 - volunteers must hold a valid card, or Exemption Card
 - the card holder's identity must be confirmed (sighting a Blue Card/Exemption Card, alongside additional proof of identification e.g., Drivers Licence)
 - a copy of a valid card must be recorded and linked to the Church's Blue Card Portal. The church will abide by the 'no card, no link, no start' Blue Card laws.
 - exemptions for Restricted Employment, according to the Blue Card system are considered (e.g., a Volunteer under the age of 18). See Restrictions and Further Considerations below.
 - all Staff and Volunteers must be recorded on the Church's Blue Card Register (in addition to the Blue Card Portal). This includes valid card holders and those with Restricted Employment. Blue Card status must be continuously monitored through the Church's Blue Card Portal, and any changes in status must be acted on immediately.
- A signed Code of Conduct received.

All application and screening records must be filed and stored securely according to the Church's Procedure for Record Keeping.

Step 4 – Safeguarding training

Once the application is approved and mandatory screening requirements completed, QB Safe Spaces approved safeguarding training must be undertaken as per the Procedure for Training Staff and Volunteers.

Any additional training or information required to ensure all Staff and Volunteers can perform their role adequately and safely should also be provided at this time.

Figure 1 – Summary of recruitment strategies for different church roles.

Role	Interview completed by	Job Description provided by	Application completed & approved	Safe Spaces Code of Conduct signed every year	Current Blue Card required
Pastoral Leaders	Church Governance Group	Refer Church Constitution	Yes	Yes	Yes (Paid)
Staff	Pastor or other Appointed Leader	Church Governance Group or other Leadership Group	Yes	Yes	Yes (Paid)
Governance Group Member	Church Governance Group	Refer Church Constitution	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ministry Leaders	Governance Group or Selection Committee or Pastor	Church Governance Group	Yes	Yes	Yes
Team Members (in contact with Children)	By Ministry Leader and a member of the Safe Spaces Team	Ministry Leader	Yes	Yes	Yes
Junior Volunteers (under 18yrs of age) With parental permission	By Ministry Leader and a member of the Safe Spaces Team	Ministry Leader	Yes	Yes	No
Volunteers (not in contact with Children)	By Ministry Leader	Role Dependant	No	No	Optional

Probationary Period

Staff **must** have a probationary period written into their employment contracts.

For Volunteers, a probationary period of three months (one school term) should be established to allow both the Volunteer and Ministry Leaders time to see if the position is a right fit. The Volunteer and Ministry Leader should meet after three months to discuss the continuance of the position.

The probationary period enables the Church to observe the suitability and reliability of Staff and Volunteers. It also provides an opportunity to identify and address any behaviours inconsistent with the Church’s commitment to child safety, wellbeing, cultural safety, and its zero-tolerance approach to abuse, racism or discrimination.

Restrictions and Further Considerations

A note on Restricted Persons and Restricted Employment (for Blue Card purposes).

1) Restricted and Disqualified Persons

To help keep Children in Queensland safe, some people are disqualified from holding a Blue Card under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*.

A disqualified person is not able to apply for a Blue Card. If a person who holds a Blue Card becomes a disqualified person, they will be issued with a negative notice and become a Restricted Person.

A **Restricted Person** is someone who:

- has been issued a negative notice, or
- has a suspended Blue Card, or
- is a disqualified person, or
- has been charged with a disqualifying offence which has not been finalised, or
- is the subject of an adverse investigation Working with Children Check decision that is in effect.

The Church cannot allow a Restricted Person to work in Restricted Employment. Penalties of fines and imprisonment apply to both the Church and the individual.

2) When a Volunteer does not need a Blue Card – Restricted Employment

Not all environments involving children mean a person needs to hold a Blue Card.

Under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*, there may be some exemptions for volunteers from needing to apply for a Blue Card in certain situations – this is referred to as Restricted Employment.

Restricted Employment – refers to particular exemptions which allow a person to work with children without a Blue Card, such as:

- a Volunteer under the age of 18 (*see more details below*)
- a Parent Volunteer (*see more details below*)
- An infrequent volunteer working with children for less than 7 days in a calendar year (*see more details below*)
- a person with a disability who is employed at a place where the person also receives disability services or NDIS supports or services
- a secondary school student on work experience who carries out disability related work under the direct supervision of a person who holds a blue or exemption card.

Accordingly, a **restricted person** cannot work with Children, **even if they are exempt** from Blue Card requirements under the **Restricted Employment provisions**.

Additional information regarding some of the **Restricted Employment exemptions** available under the Act:

Under 18 Volunteers

A Volunteer under the age of 18 will not need a Blue Card unless they are a trainee, employee or work experience student.

Important Note: If an under 18 Volunteer is a **restricted person**, they cannot work with Children, even if they are exempt under the **Restricted Employment provisions**.

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Example: - A 17-year-old Junior Volunteer informs you that something happened on the weekend with the police and he has been charged with a disqualifying offence and tells you that he still wants to lead Friday Youth nights, until it is sorted out.

Your Response: Because he is considered a Restricted Person, he is unable to continue to volunteer.

Parent volunteers

For the Parent Volunteer exemption, a Parent of a child is defined as:

- the biological mother or father
- someone exercising parental responsibility
- someone who is regarded as the parent of the child under Aboriginal tradition
- someone who is regarded as the parent of the child under Torres Strait Island custom.

Under the parent volunteer exemption, parents do not need a Blue Card to volunteer for activities/ministry areas their own child is participating in. However, a parent volunteer will need a Blue Card if:

- the activity/ministry is an overnight camp or excursion.
- the activity includes close personal contact with a child, such as bathing, toileting or dressing. This means parent volunteers will not be able to supervise toileting while serving in ministry (e.g., taking a group of kids from Kids Church to the toilet).
- their child isn't directly participating in the ministry they are serving in. For example, a parent volunteer will need a Blue Card if while serving, their child goes into a different ministry room or area of the church.

Other relatives (e.g., grandparents, uncles and aunts) are not considered parents and are not afforded the volunteer parent exemption.

Important Note: If a Parent Volunteer is a restricted person, they cannot work with Children, even if they are exempt under the Restricted Employment provisions.

Example 2 - You are short a few leaders for your Sunday morning kids' program. A parent says that they can stay and help. You ask for a Blue Card, and they tell you that they don't have one because it was suspended, but as they are only helping this once, they don't require one.

Your Response: This parent is a Restricted Person and unable to help, even if only for this one time.

QB recommends all Parent Volunteers hold a Blue Card.

Infrequent volunteers

If a volunteer serves in a Child related ministry or event(s) for less than 7 days in a calendar year, they will not need a Blue Card unless the Volunteer is:

- working or volunteering as part of an overnight camp.

A calendar year is from 1 January to 31 December, and a day is for any period of time in one day, regardless of whether it is a full day or a part day.

Important Note: The 7-day frequency exemption applies to volunteering for all regulated organisations not just your Church. **QB recommends** your Church not to use the frequency exemption.

For example: A Volunteer claims they do not need a Blue Card to serve in Sunday School, stating they have not participated in any Child-related ministry this year. However, further inquiry shows they have previously volunteered three days at a community play group and five days at a junior sport.

Your Response: Because they have exceeded their 7-day limit, your Church cannot rely on the frequency exemption.