



Summary of Checks and Screening

Clearance processes

Clearance processes apply to all licensed clergy and all lay church workers, whether paid or voluntary, elected or appointed. The requirements vary between the different roles but might include:

- Completion of a Safe Ministry Questionnaire (SMQ)
- Review by the Director of Professional Standards (DPS)
- National Register check (NR)
- Police Check (PC)
- Working with Children Check (WWCC)
- Attendance at an approved safe church training program (SCAW)
- Other certification specific to the role as may be determined

Safe ministry questionnaire

A standardised form developed by the Anglican Church of Australia. This forms part of the clearance processes for church workers and includes a declaration of an individual's history relevant to involvement in a Church role.

DPS review / National Register check

All clergy and some other roles are reviewed by the Director of Professional Standards, which might include a check against the Anglican Church's National Register.

The National Register is an essential part of the Church's response to the prevention of child abuse and adult sexual misconduct. The Canon provides for a national, transparent and accountable process to ensure appropriate checks are made before all ordinations, licences or appointments are made.

The National Register contains only information primarily pertaining to complaints or findings of child abuse and adult sexual misconduct as well as adverse findings against or adverse admissions made by clergy or lay people within the Church. Details about the operation of the National Register may be found in Canon 15, National Register Canon 2007.

Source: Anglican Church of Australia website - <https://www.anglican.org.au/national-register>

Police check

National Police Record Checks search for criminal history within Australia for an individual. Following a Police Check a National Police Check Certificate is issued that lists any criminal history a person may have. The certificate details any court outcomes that can be disclosed, from any state or territory in Australia, along with pending charges. The certificate won't include any restricted court outcomes.

A Police Check might be required for employment, voluntary work and occupation-related licensing or registration purposes. In the Diocese of Wangaratta Police Checks are required for all members of clergy and for some lay ministry roles.

Police Checks can be applied for online through the police service in the State in which a person normally resides or through national services such as Australia Post and specialist security services such as CV Check.

Prices for a Police Check might vary depending on which organisation a person applies through.

The Diocese of Wangaratta recognises Police Checks up to three months from the date of issue. If a Police Check is required and the existing certificate was issued more than three months prior, a new Police Check must be provided.

In the Diocese of Wangaratta a Police Check, if required, must be provided prior to commencement in the specified role. Where a Police Check is required, provision of a Licence, commencement of full duties, or commencement in an elected role cannot occur until the Police Check is received. Once in a role, a new Police Check must be provided every three years.

If an additional or new Church role is commenced within three months from the date of issue of the Police Check, no additional check is required. However, if an additional or new Church role is started more than three months from the date of issue a new Police Check is required.

The responsible organisation (parish or diocese) is encouraged to pay for or subsidise Police Checks for voluntary positions. Where a position is remunerated, the individual employee could reasonably be expected to cover the cost of the Police Check, however, this is something that should be clarified in each ministry unit.

Police Check certificates will be noted as received, however, certificates are not to be stored in hard copy or electronic form. A certificate must be returned to the individual who has provided it, or destroyed/deleted, within two business days of the document being processed by the diocese/parish.

Where a Police Check contains an adverse report the matter will be referred to the Diocesan Director of Professional Standards who will evaluate if the offence history is relevant to the role being undertaken and recommend a response.

For holders of a Victorian Institute Teachers Card, the card is accepted in the Diocese as equivalent to a police check.

For those applying for a Police Check in Victoria the Diocese has arrangements in place for reduced application fees for those doing voluntary work. To be eligible for the Community Volunteer Fee (CVF) you must enter the Diocese's address (PO Box 457 Wangaratta 3676) and the organisation code (02-96) when applying through Victoria Police. For more information regarding the Diocese's discount or the police check process contact the Registrar. Parish Priests can endorse the police check application on behalf of the Diocese.

Working with children check

Each state in Australia has a Working with Children Check (or equivalent) program and related legislation. They aim to enable organisations to protect children (or in some states, other vulnerable people) through screening of employees and volunteers. The Checks are mandatory for people engaged in organisations or roles that provide services to children or where children are likely to be involved. They look at relevant information from national criminal records over a person's lifetime as well as reports from courts or other relevant agencies and departments.

The checks are issued free for volunteers and a small fee applies where the person is employed or self-employed in a relevant role. A Working with Children Check is valid for five years but might be revoked if something occurs to invalidate the Check.

The government requirement for who must have a Working with Children Check is a minimum. Individual organisations can set additional requirements as part of their child safe and risk management policies and systems.

For more information of Working with Children Checks relevant to the Diocese of Wangaratta go to:

- For those engaged in work or relevant roles in Victoria - <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>
- For those engaged in work or relevant roles in NSW - <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/apply>

In the Diocese of Wangaratta a Working with Children Check, if required, must be provided prior to commencement in the specified role. Where a WWCC is required, provision of a Licence, commencement of full duties, or commencement in an elected role cannot occur until the WWCC is received.

If a current WWCC is part way through the period of issue when starting in a new or additional role, the validity of the current WWCC must be verified. This can be done online by an authorised representative of the diocese and/or parish (as applicable). An authorised representative might be the parish priest, Parish Safe Church Officer or program coordinator, the Director of Professional Standards, Diocesan Registrar or Diocesan Safe Church Officer (as applicable). The authorised representative will ensure the updated status of the Check is documented. Please refer to the Fact Sheet on Verifying WWCC for more information.

If an individual has an existing WWCC originally issued for the purposes of undertaking a role with a different organisation, as well as checking to ensure it is still valid, the WWCC official record must be updated to reflect the new employing or responsible organisation (i.e. the parish and the diocese).

When applying for a WWCC for the purposes of working, or engaging in a formal role, in a parish of the Diocese of Wangaratta, when identifying the relevant organisation/s in the application both the parish and diocese should be listed.

If an individual is deemed to be unsuitable to be issued with a WWCC, or if the WWCC becomes invalid during the period of issue, the Director of Professional Standards should be consulted to determine the most appropriate course of action.

For holders of a Victorian Institute Teachers Card, the Diocese is unable to accept this as equivalent to a WWCC because the VIT process does not notify the Diocese in the case of a breach or notification.

Safe church training / Safe church awareness workshop

The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia has developed minimum standards for safe church training, with all dioceses expected to have a suitable training program in place. The Diocese of Wangaratta is a signatory to the Safe Church Training Agreement which provides a multi-denominational national training program including Safe Church Awareness Workshops and Safe Church Refresher Workshops. Training is provided across the Diocese several times a year and SCTA training provided in other areas and by other denominations is open to anyone wishing to register.

Safe Church Awareness Workshops are designed for all congregational members, all ministry leaders, and children, youth and family leaders. Completion of the endorsed Safe Church training is a requirement for all licensed clergy and most lay ministry roles.

The responsible organisation (parish or diocese) is encouraged to pay for or subsidise safe church training, particularly for voluntary positions. However, this is something that should be clarified in each ministry unit.

This training is valid for 3 years and requires a refresher course when that period has expired.

Other role-specific certification

Some roles might require certification or completion of training relevant to that particular role, such as safe food handling, privacy, governance, risk management or ministry-specific training.

A note on certified documents

In the event that you need to provide certified copies of clearance documentation, be aware that any member of clergy who is an authorised marriage celebrant can legally certify your documentation. Alternatively, you can have documents signed by a Justice of the Peace or other authorised person. Click on the following link for more people who are [authorised to certify](#) documentation.