



2026 Working with Children Checks & Child Safeguarding Toolkit

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BACKGROUND

WA Football is committed to promoting and protecting the safety, health and well-being of all children and young people involved in Australian Rules Football in Western Australia. We aim to provide a setting where children and young people feel safe, supported and included.

The adoption of child safeguarding practices and Working with Children requirements plays an integral role in ensuring clubs foster safe, welcoming and inclusive environments.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

Complying with Working with Children (WWC) requirements is compulsory for all organisations and individuals engaging in child-related work in Western Australia under the Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (the Act).

– Volunteer work undertaken at a football club may fall under Category 12 of the Act where the usual duties involve, or are likely to involve, contact with children.

Parents and guardians who volunteer under Category 12 are not required to obtain a WWC check as they are covered by the parent volunteer exemption.

Any person who volunteers at a club working with children who does not have a child participating **MUST** obtain a WWC check, and this must be recorded by the club.

Any person with a current Interim Negative Notice or Negative Notice cannot engage in child related work and are not able to access a WWC check or exemption.

Note: If volunteers are taking children on an overnight camp, all volunteers must have a valid WWC Check as specified in [Category 15](#) of the Act.

PARENT VOLUNTEER EXEMPTION

In Western Australia, it is recognised that many parents contribute their time to support their children in sports and other activities. Rather than requiring parent volunteers to obtain a WWC check, to decrease volunteer burden and increase volunteer engagement, parents and guardians are covered under the **parent volunteer exemption**. This means they are ineligible for a WWC check and clubs can no longer request that a parent volunteer obtain a WWC check.

Individuals under the age of 18 are also exempt from obtaining a WWC check under the child volunteer exemption category.

Any parent or child with a current Interim Negative Notice or Negative Notice cannot engage in child related work and is not able to access a parent volunteer exemption.

There is no legislative requirement for clubs to proactively check whether a volunteer has a Negative Notice. The legal onus rests with the individual; however, clubs should take reasonable steps to ensure compliance where concerns arise.

WHO REQUIRES A WWC CHECK OR EXEMPTION?

The following reflects WA Football's minimum recommended standards to manage risk and safeguard children.

The Act determines that volunteer work is child-related if the usual duties of work involves or is likely to involve contact with a child in connection with at least one of the categories of child related work. For club football, this is category 12.

For football clubs, it is recommended that as a minimum, the following volunteers be required to provide a WWC or confirmation of exemption:

Junior Competition Football

- All club committee members
- All match day officials (if club provided)
- All team coaches and assistant coaches
- All team managers
- All team first aiders
- All team runners
- All parent umpires in a junior competition
- Any other person who comes in regular contact with children at the club e.g. life members who regularly hand out awards.

Senior Competition Football

Given that senior football clubs often involve players, volunteers and members under the age of 18, senior competitions are likely to fall under category 12 where contact with children occurs. Therefore it is recommended that as a minimum, the following volunteers be required to provide a WWC or confirmation of exemption:

- All club committee members
- All volunteer positions, as listed above for junior competition football
- All paid positions (excluding honorariums) including parents of participants.

Canteen Volunteers

- Any volunteer serving children
- A volunteer working in the canteen preparing food only and not serving customers (e.g cooking on a bbq) does not require a WWC check or exemption, even if working with children under 18 years as they are governed under the Fair Work Act 2009.

Umpires

- First year umpires under the age of 18 have a reduced earning capacity and upfront costs associated with umpiring so are deemed volunteers and therefore the Child Volunteer Exemption applies. They are not required to obtain a WWC check but are required to confirm that they are exempt in the same manner as a parent volunteer.
- All other umpires, including those in their first year over 18 years and those under 18 years who have completed one year of umpiring **MUST** have a WWC check. If an umpire is club appointed, it is the club's responsibility to record the umpires WWC check information. If an umpire is provided by an umpiring association/club, it is the umpiring association/club's responsibility to record the WWC information.

COLLECTING PARENT VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Given the nature of volunteering within a football club, it is understood that it may be challenging to collect and record confirmation of exemption from ALL parent volunteers. Clubs should, however, make efforts to collect this information.

Some suggested strategies include:

- Have parents complete and return a Volunteer Declaration
 - Clubs can use the template attached or design their own using the information required in the record keeping spreadsheet as a guide
- Create an online form and/or QR code for quick registration by volunteers
 - This can also be used for record keeping in place of a separate record keeping spreadsheet
- Add as a tick box question as part of the club's Parent Code of Conduct
- Add as a part of your club's Code of Conduct on Play HQ

To assist in collecting and monitoring WWC Checks and exemptions it is suggested that clubs appoint a Child Safeguarding Officer. This role can not only oversee WWC requirements but promote safeguarding of children and safeguarding principles throughout the club and the wider community.

RECORDING WWC CHECKS AND EXEMPTIONS

To be compliant with WWC legislation it is recommended that clubs keep a register of WWC Checks and parent volunteers with confirmation that they are exempt. Information should be stored securely, accessed only by authorised personnel and used solely for the purpose of meeting child safeguarding and Working with Children compliance requirements.

The following information should be recorded and updated each year for parent and child volunteers who are exempt from WWC check:

- A spreadsheet containing the following as a minimum:
 - Organisation name and year/season
 - Parent/child volunteer's surname and given names
 - Volunteer position/s
 - Verification that the parent volunteer has confirmed they are eligible for an exemption

The following information and steps should be checked, recorded and updated each year for non-parent volunteers. This includes any family members other than the child's mother, father or legal guardian; such as grandparents, siblings over 18, aunts, uncles, etc.

- Obtain a copy of their current Working with Children Check Card
- Undertake a WWC Card validity check - workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au/online-services
- Maintain a spreadsheet containing the following as a minimum:
 - Organisation name and year/season
 - Card holder's surname and given names, as listed on the WWC Check Card
 - Card holder's date of birth
 - Volunteer position/s
 - WWC card number
 - WWC card expiry date
 - Current WWC status
- You can register WWC card holders to the WWC Screening unit. This will ensure the club will be notified if a volunteer becomes ineligible to work with children. The onus remains with the individual to ensure their card remains current and for them to alert clubs to a change in circumstance.
 - workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au/registeremployees

- The WWC Check Record Keeping Spreadsheet can be used to bulk upload information (columns A to G)

Attached is a WWC Check Recording Keeping Spreadsheet for clubs to use to record volunteer's WWC Check or exemption status and can be adapted as needed.

WWC CHECK RESOURCES

There are many resources available to clubs to assist in ensuring they meet their WWC requirements:

- WWC Check Record Keeping Spreadsheet – Attached
 - Ensure you read the Instructions tab prior to filling in the form
- WWC Volunteer Declaration Form – Attached
- Working with Children Check - Online Services - [Website](#)
- Working with Children Check – Resources Page - [Website](#)
- The Parent Volunteer Exemption – [Fact Sheet](#)
- Working with Children Check Sport and Recreation Sector – [Fact Sheet](#)

Clubs can also contact the Working with Children Check Contact Centre on: 1800 883 979.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Safeguarding children and young people in sport means creating an environment where they are protected from abuse, harm, and neglect, ensuring their wellbeing, and upholding their right to feel safe, respected, and included while participating in sports.

It is an expectation that football clubs have procedures in place to ensure that all children and young people who participate in football feel safe, supported and included. Whilst ensuring Working with Children legislative requirements are met is one step, there are many other steps that clubs can take to foster a culture where everyone feels safe and welcome.

SAFEGUARDING INITIATIVES

Although the subject of safeguarding can feel daunting, it is important that clubs have processes in place to mitigate harm to children, young people and the wider football

community. WA Football and the AFL are committed to supporting clubs to foster safe environments and have developed a range of initiatives and resources to do this.

Demonstrating that your club is proactive in the space of safeguarding children and young people is a proven deterrent to people intending to cause harm.

Some initiatives that clubs can undertake include:

- Appoint a Child Safeguarding Officer who will serve as the first point of contact for concerns about a child or young person at the club and to champion the safeguarding message within the club;
 - Child Safeguarding Officer Position Description – [Template](#)
- Complete the Club Safeguarding Checklist to ensure best practice;
 - Club Safeguarding Checklist - [Checklist](#)
- Develop and implement a Child Safety and Wellbeing policy;
 - Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy - [Template](#)
- Periodically complete the Child Safety Risk Assessment;
 - Child Safety Risk Assessment - [Template](#)
- Communicate processes for reporting child safety concerns;
- Ensure child safeguarding principles and practices are embedded in club codes of conduct;
- Share safeguarding resources with coaches, volunteers, players and adults;
- Display safeguarding posters, flyers and information around the club and on social media and;
- Participate in and offer education sessions on safeguarding children and young people

REPORTING AN INTEGRITY ISSUE

WA Football is committed to protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults participating in WA Football competitions, activities and programs. We expect that all people connected to the game will act with ethical behaviour and demonstrate respect for everyone involved to create a safe, fair and inclusive WA Football environment.

All game employees, volunteers, stakeholders and participants are encouraged to report any improper conduct or criminal behaviour they observe or encounter to the WA Football Integrity unit: wafootball.com.au/about-us/integrity

SAFEGUARDING RESOURCES

WA Football and the AFL have a suite of resources for clubs to use to implement and promote safeguarding of children and young people

WA Football resources include fact sheets, posters and checklists for clubs and can be found at: wafootball.com.au/about-us/integrity/#safeguard

The AFL provides resources targeted at coaches, coordinators and clubs, and parents and guardians. These include fact sheets, guides, templates, tools and videos and can be found at: play.afl/safeguarding

Please note that some resources provided through the AFL sight Victorian legislation which may not align with WA legislation and should be taken as a guide only. This is particularly pertinent in relation to Working with Children legislation.

CONTACT US

For further information or to discuss Working with Children requirements and safeguarding children and young people at your club email:

clubdevelopment@wafootball.com.au

To report an integrity issue, visit:

wafootball.com.au/about-us/integrity