



WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK POLICY

Application forms available from Australia Post Offices

In accordance with Victorian Legislation Skate Victoria and Inline Hockey Victoria will require members who are directly involved in aspects of our sport as defined in this policy, and who are involved with children under the age of 18 years to undergo a Working With Children Check.(WWC)

The Working with Children Check (WWC) is a checking system introduced in 2006, which helps to ensure that no person convicted of a serious offence will be involved in working with Children under the age of 18 years. This check is aimed at minimizing the risk to children of sexual and or physical harm.

Unlike the traditional Police checks which indicate a person's criminal status at the time of application the unique feature of the working with Children Check is that it is an ongoing monitoring system. Therefore it will be brought to the attention of the Department of Justice (the administrators of the WWC) if a person offends or has a finding against them by a relevant professional body during the period for which a WWC card is valid .Action can then be taken to revoke a card thereby further protecting children.

This requirement is mandatory for those falling within the required categories. Penalties may apply to those who fail to apply for a WWC Card and who are mandated to do so.

The requirement relates to people who work within the sport on either a paid or voluntary basis.

Work

For the purpose of the Act

Work is defined as regular and direct activities which are performed in conjunction with children under the age of 18 either for payment, reimbursement of expenses or on a voluntary basis that is not directly supervised.. The check has an application in the following areas of skating

- Coaches (paid or voluntary)
- Members of Club Committees
- Officials
- Team Managers
- Assistant Team Managers

Regular means activities that occur on a planned and on going basis.

Therefore the person who holds an ongoing position as an official is performing regular work while someone who is asked to help out on a once off basis as a regular official is unavailable does not fall within the requirements of the WWC legislation

Direct Contact

Is any contact with a child that involves:

- Physical contact (touching) eg Coach demonstrating a body stance by physically moving a person's head or arms into the required position.
- Talking face to face. Eg Referee addressing skaters prior to an event
- Being within eyeshot. ie Able to physically see the child. Eg Timekeeper, calculator or judge.

Direct Supervision

- Direct supervision would require someone to be designated to supervise a person in the performance of their role. While the role may not require constant physical presence it does require that there is another person who assumes responsibility for the actions of that person and will provide direct supervision for the majority of the activity.
(for the purpose of Skate Victoria / IHV the presence of the parent/ guardian of the child will not be deemed to be direct supervision.

Exemptions

The WWC Check exemptions relevant to Skate Vic / IHV

- People under the age of 18 years who are involved in the sport in an official capacity.
- Parent volunteers whose child ordinarily participates in that activity.

This exemption only applies to volunteer parents who participate in their children's activities.

For example: Brett is a volunteer team manager for a skating team on which his son Joshua ordinarily plays. Brett does not have to apply for and pass the WWC Check even if Joshua does not attend some of the practice sessions or games.

However if Brett coaches another team in which his son is not a member he will be required to have a WWC if the competitors on that team are under the age of 18 years.

- **sworn police officers (who are not suspended from duty)**

Sworn police officers are exempt from needing a WWC Check for any 'child-related work' as they are already checked by a similar scheme.

- **Teachers who have current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching**

Teachers with current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching are exempt from needing a WWC Check for any 'child-related work' as they are already checked by a similar scheme.

Time frames

The legislation is to be phased in over a several years.

The areas which are relevant to Skate Vic/ IHV membership are:

- While the Child related Occupations highlight 'overnight camps' it will be a requirement of all relevant Skate Vic / IHV personnel who are acting in an official capacity taking children under the age of 18 years away with them on a sporting activity to hold a WWC card. This would include such activities as acting as an official team manager for a group of skaters going to National or an International competitions or in the conduct of a development camp where children are staying away without their parents.

Any person undertaking this form of activity as of January 2009 MUST apply for a WWC card prior to taking on the responsibility.

NOTE

This does not involve a **private arrangement** between parents to accept responsibility for another child. E.g. Mary's parents agree to take Elizabeth with them to Nationals as Elizabeth's parents are unable to get time off work.

From time to time a coach makes a private arrangement to accept responsibility for a skater who is participating in an event away from home for more than a day. Skate Victoria's / HIV's policy is that to ensure the protection of its under age members that the coach should hold a WWC card. This requirement is specifically relevant if the reason for the child staying with the coach is related to a sporting activity. However while friendships can develop where contact between a coach and skater extends beyond the sporting activity it is in the best interests of the coach to ensure they have a current WWC.

A decision has been made by Skate Victoria that ALL accredited coaches over the age of 18 years must apply for a working with children check from June 2009 onwards.

Clubs/ Associations

Unless otherwise exempt persons with an official capacity holding roles within Clubs and associations will be required to have a WW C card **from June 2009**

In relation to Skate Vic/ IHV this is deemed to include the following

Within Clubs... Members of the Committee.

Members of formal subcommittees (e.g. Fundraising)

Managers of Teams

Within Skate Vic/ IHV. Those in charge of running or directing competitions

Accredited officials

Marshalls

Officials in training

Requirements

It is Skate Victoria's responsibility to:

- ensure that all employees or volunteers who are required to apply for a Working with Children (WWC) Check do so by the required deadline
- ensure that SV/ILHV do not engage a person in 'child-related work' if they are required to apply for a WWC Check and have not done so by the due date
- where volunteers are not required to apply for a WWC Check because their contact with children is directly supervised, ensure that the supervisor has applied for and passed the WWC Check unless an exemption applies (for example, the supervisor will not be required to apply for a WWC Check if he or she is a teacher with current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching)
- ensure that volunteers who are given a Negative Notice do not undertake 'child-related work', even if directly supervised

- ensure that its employees are not undertaking ‘child-related work’ with a ‘volunteer’ Assessment Notice and WWC Check Card; employees must apply for an ‘employee’ Assessment Notice and WWC Check Card
- ensure it complies with obligations to keep employees’ and volunteers’ information confidential as required under the *Working with Children Act 2005* and by any other relevant laws.
- Records employees’ and volunteers’ unique Application Receipt Number (received when they lodge their application)
- confirm that volunteers have passed the WWC Check
- sight volunteers’ WWC Check card as evidence that they have passed the WWC Check
- record employees’ and volunteers’ WWC Check Number, which is different from their Application Receipt Number

Those applying for a working with Children Card should sight Skate Victoria as the organization in which they are involved. **The address of Skate Victoria 69 Korumburra Rd Warragul 3820 is to be sighted as the address. Do not list your club.** Club committees change regularly and often do not have an appropriate location for the safekeeping of personal/ confidential documents. Such documents are best held by Skate Victoria.

This also enables Skate Victoria to ensure it meets its duty of care by being able to ‘track’ that all those requiring WWC have applied.

Those who are exempt because of their profession should notify Skate Victoria of their relevant status . eg supply Skate Victoria with their teacher registration number.

Skate Victoria

Ratified 2008