

Interested in becoming a foster and kinship carer?

Who needs a blue card?



Foster and kinship carers and their adult household members (over 18 years) must hold a valid blue card. The decision about whether or not someone is a household member will be made by the child safety service centre Manager. They will take into account the nature and context of this person's contact with the child placed into your care.

Regular visitors to the home of an approved carer may also require a blue card. This will depend on the type of contact the visitor has with children and the frequency of the visits. Approved carers should talk to their Child Safety Officer (CSO) about any regular visitors to their home to determine if they require a blue card.

How do I apply for a blue card?



There are certain people who cannot apply for a blue card, such as people who already have a negative notice or who have been convicted of a disqualifying offence. There is more information about disqualified persons on page four.

Foster and kinship carers must be linked to the [Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs](#) (Child Safety) to comply with blue card system requirements and to get their blue card for free – this includes adult household members.

Before applying for a blue card, you should contact your Foster and Kinship Care Service or Child Safety directly on **1300 729 309**.

Existing household members who are turning 18 years of age can apply for a blue card when they are 17 years and 9 months old. If a young person submits their application for a blue card before they turn 18 years old, they can continue living in the home where approved care is provided whilst their application is being assessed.

The are three steps to apply for a blue card as a foster and kinship carer:

STEP 1

You must register for an online account. This is where we verify your identity with the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR).

STEP 2

Once you have registered for your online account, call Child Safety or the Licensed Care Service Provider (Foster and Kinship Care Service) and give them your online account number.

STEP 3

Once Child Safety have linked you to their organisation, you will receive a message from Blue Card Services to let you know you can continue with your blue card application. You can then use the online applicant portal to finalise your application. If you need help, give the Blue Card Mob a call and they can help you.

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What is the blue card check?

To determine if a person can be issued with a blue card, Blue Card Services conduct a working with children (blue card) check.

The blue card check includes any charges or convictions (even if no conviction was recorded and regardless of when or where in Australia the offence occurred); as well as any disciplinary information held by certain professional organisations; police investigative information into allegations of serious child-related sexual offences; domestic and family violence information.

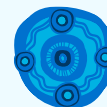
As part of the blue card application, Blue Card Services can also take other relevant information into account and may ask you to authorise access to information from other sources like doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists, or government departments.

The blue card check is confidential which means we don't tell anyone about the details of your check. While the Foster and Kinship Care Service or Child Safety aren't told about what is returned in the check, we must tell Child Safety about the outcome of your application. For example, if a blue card or negative notice is issued, or if the application is withdrawn.

Learn how to apply for a blue card by visiting www.qld.gov.au/applybluecard



If you are asked to provide a submission



If information is received back from the blue card check raising concerns about whether a person should be issued with a blue card, Blue Card Services will invite the person to make a submission. A submission is where the person can respond to the information received and tell their side of the story.

If you are invited to tell your story, you'll receive a letter that has all the information Blue Card Services has received as part of the blue card check. You can respond in your own words and explain why you believe you should be issued a blue card.

You can tell your story over the phone, in writing or face-to-face when we visit community. Your story can include:

- whether you agree with the police information and other relevant information
- what led to the events
- what was happening in your life at that time
- what has changed in your life since the offences took place
- what your life is like now
- any courses or programs you have completed
- any experience you've had caring for kids
- anything you want us to know about you and why you should get a blue card.

You can also provide other information to support your application, for example references or certificates of courses you have completed.

Further information in relation to providing a submission can be found in the ['How to make a submission' fact sheet](#).

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How long does the submission process take?



Each submission process is unique to the information received and therefore there is no set timeframe. There are things you can do to make the process quicker.

If you know police have information, you can consider the things you may want to include in your submission so you are ready should Blue Card Services contact you.

How can I get help?

Sometimes people may want additional support throughout the process. If you need help, you can complete the [Consent to discuss form](#) which allows another person to talk with Blue Card Services about your application.

You have control over what information we discuss with another party – for example, you could authorise a friend, family member, support person or representative from Child Services or the foster and kinship care service to talk to us about what you need to do as part of your application and to make follow-up enquiries, and not to discuss any information about a criminal history.

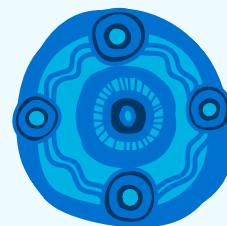


What happens if I have a change in my police information?

All card holders are monitored daily by the Queensland Police Service. This means Blue Card Services are notified if there is a change in a card holder's police information. For example, if a card holder were charged with an assault, we would receive notification of this.

If you are a blue card applicant or card holder and there is a change in your police information, you must notify us of the change and confirm where you are working or volunteering with children, including if you are a foster or kinship carer, adult household member or frequent visitor.

If we receive notification of a change in your police or other relevant information, we may ask you to tell us your story and your blue card status may be reassessed.



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Where can I get help?



Blue Card Services

You can contact us at any point throughout the application process to discuss your application, ask questions and seek assistance in understanding the submission process (your story).

The Blue Card Mob attend remote First Nations Communities throughout Queensland and provide a safe place to yarn with applicants and help with your submission.

Personal or professional supports

You can ask someone you trust to help with your submission, including your foster and kinship service provider. They can talk to us on your behalf and get more information about your case. To allow us to speak to them about your application, you must complete a [Consent to discuss information form](#) and send it to Blue Card Services via email, post or fax.

Community legal centres

While it is not necessary to have legal support for a blue card application, in some cases you may feel more comfortable doing so. There are community legal centres that can help by providing free information, legal assistance, representation, and casework.

Community Legal Centres Queensland (communitylegalqld.org.au) provide a list of not-for-profit community legal centres in different locations across Queensland.

Who is a disqualified person?

Regardless of the penalty and regardless of when or where it occurred, a person is a disqualified person if they have been:

- Convicted of a disqualifying offence, which includes;
 - having sex with a child (regardless of the type of relationship, e.g., teenage boyfriend/girlfriend, unlawful carnal knowledge)
 - other child-related sexual or child sexual abuse material offences
 - murder and other serious sexual or violent offences against an adult or child
 - choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting.
- A reportable offender under the *Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004*.
- The subject of an offender prohibition order under the *Child Protection (Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2008*.
- Prohibited by a court from applying for or holding a blue card.
- The subject of a sexual offender order under the *Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003*.



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What are serious offences?



Serious offences include drug trafficking, robbery and grievous bodily harm with intent.

Your application will be withdrawn if you are charged with a serious offence. You cannot apply again until the charge has been finalised in court.

If you already have a blue card and are charged with a serious offence, we will immediately suspend your card and you cannot continue to work or volunteer with children.

While your card is suspended you are considered a **restricted person**.

Need more information?

You can call Blue Card Services on **1800 113 611** or **07 3211 6999** Monday to Friday between 8:30am and 4:30pm. If you are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, press option 2 and your call will be prioritised.

We have more information on our website www.qld.gov.au/bluecard

You can also email the Blue Card Mob at yarn@bluecard.qld.gov.au

If you need an interpreter, contact Language Loop on **1800 512 451**.

If you or someone you know is feeling worried or down, there are people ready to listen and help. There is a safe place to talk and yarn – no shame or judgement.

13YARN (13 92 76) is the first national crisis support line for mob who are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping. They offer a confidential one-on-one yarning opportunity with a Lifeline-trained Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Crisis Supporter who can provide crisis support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

