

Blue Card requirements for local councils

This fact sheet provides information for local councils to help determine who needs a blue card under the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (the Act).

Who decides if a job in the Council requires a blue card?

All children in Queensland have a right to be safe and protected from harm. The blue card system checks and monitors people who work in child-regulated industries and helps organisations to create safe environments for children. However, the blue card system does not apply to every environment where a child may be present and not every employee needs a blue card.

Under the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld) a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has the responsibility of ensuring which positions in Council require an employee to hold a blue card. Council should not have a policy that requires their employees to apply for or hold blue cards if the work the person is doing is not regulated by the Act.

When is a blue card required?

Under the Act there are 17 categories of regulated employment. If an employee's work falls within one of these categories, they must have a blue card unless an exemption applies. An employee cannot rely on an exemption under the Act if they are a restricted person.

In some cases, a job may come under more than one category of regulated employment. Whether an employee requires a blue card depends on several factors:

- the environment the work is carried out in,
- the type of work,
- the frequency of work, and
- whether an exemption applies.

Council employees require a blue card if they engage in employment regulated by the Act.

The Council Executive Management Committee

A CEO, Mayor and other elected members will require a blue card (as a business operator) by virtue of their decision-making capacity for any child-related services run by Council.

Who needs a blue card?

Common jobs requiring a blue card are:

- working at an education and care facility while children are present
- carrying out lifeguard duties at the community pool
- teaching cultural activities or art classes to children
- conducting children's groups in a library.

Common scenarios*

Position within Council	Do they require a blue card?	
A librarian employed to do children's story time, reading programs or deliver programs such as technology and arts and craft classes to children.	YES	
A swimming instructor at the community swimming pool providing paid or unpaid swimming lessons to children and young people.	YES	
A lifeguard or staff member responsible for first aid at a community pool or fitness centre with activities and services for children.	YES	
An employee (educator) at an education and care premises ie. Childcare Centre , Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) or Vacation Care Program .	YES	
A Park Ranger who regularly provides cultural activity programs, mainly involving children .	YES	However, if the job does <i>not</i> include cultural activities or programs mainly involving children, a blue card is <i>not</i> required.
Providing support and services to children living with disability .	YES	A Disability Worker Screening Card may also be required. For more information visit: www.workerscreening.dsdsatsip.qld.gov.au
Working at a Community Centre .	MAYBE	A blue card may be required for those providing certain services and activities to children.
Carrying out administration duties/work for Council.	NO	However, if duties are carried out within a <i>regulated environment</i> such as a Child Care Centre while children are being cared for, a blue card is required.
Carrying out plumbing, electrical, drain or general maintenance work in the community or government buildings.	NO	However, if duties are carried out within a <i>regulated environment</i> such as a Child Care Centre while children are being cared for, a blue card is required.
Working in an Aged Care Facility .	NO	
Conducting housing inspections / property maintenance inspections.	NO	However, if duties are carried out within a <i>regulated environment</i> such as a Child Care Centre while children are being cared for, a blue card is required.

* This document should be used as a guide only. Please [contact](#) Blue Card Services for clarification.

Blue Card requirements for local councils

Other roles in Council

There are also other roles within Council that are not regulated by the Act and generally **do not require** a blue card. These include:

- Animal control
- Records /Information Officer
- Multi skilled plant operator
- Communications Officer
- Horticultural Officer
- Grants Officer
- Technical Officer – Civil Design
- Illegal Dumping Officer
- Various Roads Team Members
- Technical Officer – Civil Design
- Wastewater Treatment Operator
- Local Laws Officer
- Plant Operator
- Grader Operator
- Compliance Response Officer
- Events Coordinator.

Blue card monitoring

All blue card applicants and card holders are monitored daily by the Queensland Police Service. This means we are notified if there is a change in an applicant or card holder's police information.

If an applicant or card holder has a change in their police information, we will only notify Council when the person's change in police information is relevant to child-related employment. This can include withdrawing an application or suspending or cancelling a person's blue card.

A suspended or cancelled card means the employee cannot engage in child-related employment. Council should ensure that only roles regulated by the Act require a blue card.

Obligations for Council

As the CEO, you have obligations under the blue card system. Failure to comply with these obligations can be an offence and penalties may apply. Obligations for Council include:

- not starting a person in child-regulated work without a valid card
- taking reasonable steps to confirm the card holder's identity
- linking a card holder when they start Council
- de-linking a card holder when they leave Council
- maintain a register of the people engaged with Council
- develop and implement a child and youth risk management strategy, and
- tell us when there is a change in Council's information for example if your blue card contact's name or contact details change.

Read more about your obligations:

www.qld.gov.au/bluecardorganisations

Need more information?

We can help you identify what roles require a blue card. For more information, please call us on **07 3211 6157** and ask to speak to a member of the Community Information team.

Alternatively, you can contact LGAQ Advisory Services on **1300 542 700**.

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