



Applying for a Blue Card



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Need to apply for a Blue Card for child related employment?

*A **Blue Card** is a legal requirement for all people working with children and young people (unless a specific legislative occupational exemption applies).*

***Blue Cards** are designed to protect the safety and wellbeing of Queensland children and young people.*

This fact sheet explains:

- What is a Blue Card?
- Do I need a Blue Card?
- How Do I get a Blue Card?
- How to obtain legal advice?

ATSILS is a non-profit, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community based organisation with 28 locations across Queensland. We provide innovative and culturally competent legal services covering criminal, civil and family law areas.



FREE CALL 1800 012 255



1. Do I need a Blue Card?

Everyone who is employed, or volunteers their time to work with children or young children must have a Blue Card (unless a specific legislative occupational exemption applies).

You need a Blue Card if you work with children or young people in any of the following areas:

- Childcare
- Church groups, clubs and associations
- Sporting and active recreation groups
- Private teaching, coaching or tutoring
- Schools
- Religious representatives
- Health, counselling and support services
- Child protection

2. How Do I get a Blue Card?

You have to apply to the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian for a **Blue card for Child Related Employment**. If you need legal advice or support, our organisation is available to provide legal assistance and advice Mon - Fri business hours.

We recommend that you contact ATSILS Civil law team for advice and assistance if you have made an application for a Blue Card and the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian asks you to make a submission about your suitability for a Blue Card for Child Related Employment.

We recommend that you contact ATSILS Civil law team for advice and assistance if you have had an application for a Blue Card refused, and you want to appeal that decision. We can then advise you of your legal rights in a way which will allow you to make informed decisions as to the option which is in your best interest.

ATSILS can provide initial Advice in relation to:

- making an application for a Blue Card,
- requesting additional information and making submissions to support your application,
- reviews of decisions to refuse your application
- appeals of negative notice.

3. The Blue Card System

The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian have a mission – *To improve the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people in Queensland.*

The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian through the authority of the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 has the power and the responsibility to promote and protect the rights, interest and wellbeing of children and young people in Queensland, particularly those:

- who are in, or may enter, foster care, residential care facilities or detention
- who have no appropriate person to act on their behalf
- who are not able to protect their rights, interest or wellbeing, or
- who are disadvantaged because of a disability, geographic isolation, homelessness or poverty.

The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian is responsible for administering the Blue Card system which has three main parts:

- The Blue card screening process which assesses an applicant's eligibility to work with children based on their known past police and disciplinary information.
- The Daily ongoing Monitoring of applicants' and cardholders' police information to ensure immediate steps are taken to protect children if required
- Reducing future risk by requiring organisations to implement risk management strategies aimed at minimising risks of harm to children.





4. Blue Card Application Process

There are a range of difficulties people may experience while applying for a Blue Card and it is important to seek support either informally or formally to ensure your best chance of success. Most difficulties can be easily worked through with the right support. Some example of difficulties may include:

- Lack of information or knowing where to find the support
- Numeracy and literacy
- Understanding the questions/wording blue card application
- Identification
- Concerns regarding police or professional disciplinary
- Responding to request for further information or requests for submission
- Remoteness or rural location
- Timeframes

It is important the Blue Card application FORM is correctly filled out and lodged with the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian.

If you need to make a Blue Card application, we encourage you to seek support from your employer or volunteer agency and the Blue Card contact centre as soon as you can. This will help to reduce the time that it takes to get a decision on your application. The length of time that it can take to get approval for your Blue Card, is often a frustration experienced by organisations, professionals, workers and volunteers.

Two types of Blue Card applications

There are two types of Blue Card applications –

- Paid Employee Blue Card Application
- Volunteer Blue Card Application.

Each application has to be made using the correct FORM. There is a **Paid Employee Blue Card FORM** and there is a **Volunteer Blue Card Application FORM**. You can find a link to the Commission's Blue card application forms at the web sites below:

For a Paid Employee Blue Card FORM, go to:

<http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/bluecard/applications/paidemployees.html>

For a Volunteer/Student Blue Card FORM, go to:

<http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/bluecard/applications/volunteersandstudents.html>

5. Obtaining Legal Advice?

ATSILS provides innovative, professional and culturally competent legal service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Queensland.



FREE CALL 1800 012 255

We can be contacted toll free on **1800 012 255**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We have 28 offices located across Queensland so you will be put in touch with the closest regional office that is able assist you with your legal needs. In some instances, ATSILS might have a conflict of interest and will not be able to provide you with legal advice. If this is the case, you may wish to try Legal Aid Queensland on their Indigenous Information line on **1300 65 01 43**.

This document is current as at February 2016. It is intended as a guide only and to provide general information. This document should not be relied upon as legal advice. Whilst all reasonable care has been taken in the preparation of this information, no liability is assumed for any errors or omissions.

