

Relevant History Assessments (police checks and screenings)

The *Children's Protection Act 1993* requires sport and recreation organisations that provide a service wholly or partly for children to ensure that all volunteers and staff, that work in a prescribed position, have a relevant history assessment (previously referred to as a criminal history assessment) completed to assess their suitability to work with children.

There are two options for undertaking this assessment.

1. The organisation can conduct an assessment on relevant history using, as a minimum, a National Police Check. For volunteers in most organisations this check can be provided free under the Volunteer Organisation Authorisation Number (**VOAN**) Scheme.
2. The organisation or individual may apply for a child-related employment screening to be completed by the Department for Community and Social Inclusion (DCSI) Screening Unit. For volunteers this screening currently costs **\$58.30**.

What is a DCSI Child-Related Employment Screening?

A **DCSI screening** is more thorough than a police check and the assessment is conducted by trained staff rather than staff or volunteers from a club or association.

In addition to the criminal history provided by a Police Check the DCSI screening considers:

- information from South Australian government databases such as child protection information;
- publicly available information sourced from professional registration bodies relating to persons disciplined or precluded from working with children or vulnerable people;
- information from South Australian police, courts, prosecuting authorities including information about charges for offences alleged to have been committed (regardless of the outcome of those charges);
- expanded criminal history information obtained from other jurisdictions, including spent convictions, pending charges and non-conviction charges and, importantly, circumstances information around charges or convictions

Recent changes that are impacting on some organisations

Some organisations have developed and implemented policies that require the DCSI screening to be conducted rather than an assessment of the Police Check with the aim to achieve a higher level of protection for children. At this stage this is mainly impacting on the sport organisations that are hiring facilities and these organisations will either pay for the screenings to be conducted or ask their volunteers to cover the individual cost.

For example policy changes introduced by the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) require organisations hiring school facilities to ensure their staff and volunteers in certain roles to have had a DCSI screening completed.

The Office for Recreation and Sport understands that there is some confusion throughout our sector regarding current obligations for screening. The impact of policy changes through contract arrangements with organisations may present an added cost burden for a number of community organisations.

If your organisation would like further clarification of this information please visit:

http://www.ors.sa.gov.au/create_a_child_safe_environment

or contact Senior Project Officer Sport Culture and Ethics 1300 714 990.