

MAY 2025

# Pre-Engagement Screening Policy

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# 1 Purpose

The Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) is committed to upholding the rights of all Tasmanian children and young people and ensuring they are known, safe, well and learning. This policy helps us meet our obligations under the [DECYP Duty of Care to Children and Young People Policy](#) and the [Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023](#), and supports the implementation of DECYP's [Safe. Secure. Supported. Our Safeguarding Framework](#) and [Child and Youth Safe Standards](#), specifically:

- [Standard 5](#): People working with children and young people must be suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice; and
- [Standard 8](#): Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

This policy outlines:

- Tasmanian Registration to Work with Vulnerable People (RWVP) requirements specifically for Out of Home Carers.
- Tasmanian RWVP requirements for all others including workers, trainees, volunteers, work experience placements, adult students and others seeking access to DECYP sites where children and young people are present, and
- the screening framework to further protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and the Department's integrity, resources and assets.

This policy applies to:

- all workers aged 16 years or over, and as defined in the [Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023](#), which includes, but is not limited to:
  - employees
  - volunteers
  - contractors
  - subcontractors
  - consultants
  - trainees
  - individuals undertaking work experience placements.
- external parties seeking access to DECYP sites where children and young people are present
- students who commence or recommence with DECYP as adults at schools, colleges, trade training centres and international students.
- all Out of Home Carers including:
  - foster carers
  - kinship carers
  - residential carers

- members of foster, kinship and residential carer homes who live in the household and are over the age of 16.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the [Pre Engagement Screening – Recruitment Procedure](#) and the [Pre Engagement Screening – Onsite Access Procedure](#).

## 2 Policy Statement

Pre-engagement screening is a key component to keeping children and young people safe, and in mitigating risks to DECYP's integrity, assets and resources. This policy and accompanying procedures provide a robust screening framework across DECYP for recruitment and ongoing engagement of anyone wishing to work, contract, care or volunteer at DECYP, or access DECYP sites.

The pre-engagement checks covered by this policy include:

- Tasmanian Registration to Work with Vulnerable People (RWVP)
- National Police Check
- Child Safety Concern Check.

Outside of these three specific screening checks there may be other screening requirements specific to individual roles, that fall outside of this policy.

The following table sets out the DECYP pre-engagement screening requirements:

	Tasmanian RWVP	National Police Check	Child Safety Concern Check
DECYP Workers	Yes	Identified Roles	Identified Roles
Adult Students	Yes	No	No
Out of Home Carers	Yes	Yes	Yes
Residents in households of Out of Home Carers aged 16+	Yes	No	No
<b>National Police Check:</b>  Some roles carry high risk and as a result require a National Police Check.  In addition to risk to the safety of children and young people there are possible risks to DECYPs integrity, assets and resources that are also considered. Workers seeking to undertake these roles will require a National Police Check prior to engagement in addition to holding current RWVP.  The requirement to undergo a National Police Check will not apply to existing workers appointed prior to the essential requirement being applied to their role. Current workers are required to undergo a National Police Check where they seek to move to a role within the agency that includes the additional essential requirement of a National Police Check.  DECYP is responsible for meeting costs associated with a National Police Check.			
<b>Child Safety Concern Check:</b>  Out of Home Carers are required to have a Child Safety Concern Check in addition to holding and maintaining Tasmanian RWVP and National Police Check.  DECYP is responsible for meeting costs associated with a Child Safety Concern Check.			

As Tasmanian RWVP is an essential requirement for all workers, all offers of employment and ongoing employment, contracting, care or volunteering opportunities will be subject to holding and maintaining a current Tasmanian RWVP. All Out of Home Carers, regardless of whether they are engaged by DECYP or via a non-Government Organisation (NGO) are also subject to this requirement.

The [Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 \(Tas\)](#) allows for specific exemptions from Tasmanian RWVP under limited circumstances. DECYP however has determined that given the child-regulated activities provided within the Department (i.e. teaching, training or instructing children or providing any form of care for or supervision of children or young people), the multiple sites and diverse nature of child related activities that occur on these sites, and associated risk of harm to children and young people, these exemptions will not apply to workers except in very limited circumstances detailed in the [Pre Engagement Screening – Onsite Access Procedure](#).

A contractor or consultant may be engaged without Tasmanian RWVP under limited circumstances detailed in the [Pre-Engagement Screening Recruitment Procedure](#).

In cases where a Tasmanian RWVP is rejected, revoked, suspended, expired, under investigation, workers may be subject to action under [Employment Direction 6 – Procedures for investigation and determination of whether an employee is able to efficiently and effectively perform duties](#) or [Employment Direction 5 – Procedures for the investigation and determination of whether an employee has breached the code of conduct](#) as appropriate.

## Adult Students

Adult students who do not hold current Tasmanian RWVP or who are not currently enrolled within a DECYP school and are transferring from a non-Government school, state, territory or internationally or from a home-schooling arrangement must hold current Tasmanian RWVP - Volunteer Status (at a minimum) prior to commencing at a DECYP school/college. Adult students are also covered in the [Pre Engagement Screening – Onsite Access Procedure](#) and [Pre Engagement Screening – Recruitment Procedure](#).

## Out of Home Carers

Individuals who apply to become an Out of Home Carer via a Non-Government Organisation (NGO) are subject to the same pre-engagement screening requirements as those who are engaged directly by DECYP. These requirements are included in the contractual arrangements between DECYP and the NGO.

Prior to engagement, the NGO is required to:

- ensure that the Out of Home Carer has Tasmanian RWVP and
- conduct a National Police Check and Child Safety Concern Check.

DECYP will not approve an application to become an Out of Home Carer with an NGO without evidence of current Tasmanian RWVP and a satisfactory National Police Check and Child Safety Concern Check. Additionally, the NGO is required to inform DECYP where an Out of Home Carer's registration:

- conditions have changed or removed or

- has been suspended or cancelled.

## **Tasmanian RWVP and Site Access**

Tasmanian RWVP plays an important role in protecting children and young people across all DECYP sites, in addition to protecting DECYPs integrity, resources and assets. RWVP (equivalent) clearances from interstate jurisdictions are not an accepted alternative to Tasmanian RWVP. The reason for this position is that DECYP considers Tasmanian RWVP to be a more rigorous and comprehensive check than that undertaken in other jurisdictions. Sites who engage interstate visitors are to advise the visitor that they are to obtain Tasmanian RWVP prior to their engagement with DECYP children and young people, and plan wherever possible for sufficient time to allow the provider to obtain a Tasmanian RWVP. See the Pre Engagement Screening - Onsite Access Procedure for further information.

### **Child Related Activity**

Where a request for access is for a child-related activity, such as volunteering with a classroom of students, an individual must hold Tasmanian RWVP and check in at the site front office kiosk or sign in register before commencing their activities. Exceptions to this rule are very limited due to the risk it poses to children and young people.

Parents and guardians are permitted to enter the school site of their child or young person without holding Tasmanian RWVP if that access is deemed necessary to support their child or young person, as long as that access does not involve a child-related activity.

A list of permissible exceptions to the site access requirements is provided in the [Pre Engagement Screening - Onsite Access Procedure](#).

Subject to the outcome of the risk assessment process, a manager, principal, CFLC leader, site manager or contract manager may allow a person without Tasmanian RWVP to have supervised contact with children and young people in a child related activity (other than an overnight camp or volunteering on an excursion) provided they are always accompanied by an employee with current Tasmanian RWVP.

### **Non-Child Related Activity**

Anyone not engaging in child-related activities, for example individuals making a delivery to a site, may also be granted limited site access without Tasmanian RWVP. However, it is these examples of site access that must be assessed on a case-by-case basis, placing the safety of children and young people front and centre. For example, someone requiring access to drop off a delivery to reception will be risk assessed at a lower risk than someone who requires access past reception to an area where children and young people are present, to complete a service.

A list of exemptions, the risk assessment process and further information to support decisions made to provide site access are also outlined in the [Pre Engagement Screening Procedure – Onsite Access](#).

### 3 Maintenance, Fees and Status of RWVP

It is the responsibility of those required to hold Tasmanian RWVP to ensure that they hold a valid and current RWVP at all times. The cost associated with obtaining a Tasmanian RWVP is the responsibility of the individual. Additionally, any change in the status of an individual's Tasmanian RWVP must be communicated to the manager, principal, CFLC leader, site manager or contract manager as soon as possible and where practicable, before engaging with children or young people, where:

- registration conditions have been changed or removed or
- registration has been suspended or cancelled.

### 4 Awareness and Reporting

Any concerns regarding the safety of children and young people must be reported in line with the [Office of Safeguarding Children and Young People's Step by Step Guidance for Concerns Information and Incidents of Abuse](#)

### 5 Related policies

- [DECYP Duty of Care to Children and Young People Policy](#)

### 6 Related procedures

- [Pre-Engagement Screening – Recruitment Procedure](#)
- [Pre-Engagement Screening – Onsite Access Procedure](#)
- [Selection Procedures](#)

### 7 Supporting information/tools

- [State Service Code of Conduct](#)
- [Employment Direction 6 – Procedures for investigation and determination of whether an employee is able to efficiently and effectively perform duties.](#)
- [Employment Direction 7 – Pre Employment Checks](#)
- [Child and Youth Safe Standards](#)
- [Safeguarding Framework – Standard 5 – Engaging New Workers](#)
- [Safeguarding Framework – Standard 8 – Safe Environments](#)
- [Office of Safeguarding Children and Young People's Step by Step Guidance for Concerns, Information and Incidents of Child Abuse](#)

- [RWVP On-Site Access Quick Reference Guide Registration to Work with Vulnerable People – Consumer, Building and Occupational Services \(CBoS\)](#)

## 8 Definitions

### Adult Student

A student who joins the DECYP system who is over 18 years of age on day one of term one in a DECYP school year, or who turns 18 during the school year. Adult students do not include students who turn 18 during their continuing education with DECYP.

### Carer

Where a child or young person has experienced abuse or neglect or parents are not equipped to provide care or protection, the child or young person may be placed into care with a carer in the form of a family or kin carer (kinship care), with trained and accredited carers (foster care) or in purpose-built homes with paid staff (residential care).

### Child or Children

Anyone under the age of 18 in the context of this document. Any reference to a child or children has the same meaning as a young person or young people.

### Child-Related Activity

Child-related activity is defined as work that:

- involves an adult working with children under 18 years old (both paid and unpaid work),
  - usually involves direct contact with a child or children, including physical, face-to-face, written, oral or electronic contact and;
  - the contact with the child or children is a usual part of the person's duties and is not occasional direct contact incidental to their work.

### Child Regulated Activity

An activity or service that relates to a child or children and is regulated in accordance with the [Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013](#) (Tas).

### Contact

As defined in the [Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013](#) (Tas) contact between a person and a vulnerable person as part of taking part in a regulated activity, means contact that:

- a) would reasonably be expected as a normal part of taking part in the regulated activity
- b) is not incidental to taking part in the regulated activity
- c) is one or more of the following:
  - physical contact, including taking part in regulated activity at the same place as the child
  - oral communication, whether face to face or by telephone
  - written communication, including electronic communication
  - dealing with a record relating to a child
  - making a decision that affects a child.

### Child Safe Organisation



An organisation that consciously and systematically creates an environment in which children's rights, safety and wellbeing are at the centre of thought, values and actions; engages with children and young people to create conditions to reduce the likelihood of harm; creates conditions that increase likelihood of identifying potential harm; and responds to concerns, suspicions, allegations and disclosures of abuse.

### **Child Safety Concern Check**

Out of Home Carers are required to have a Child Safety Concern Check in addition to holding and maintaining Tasmanian RWVP and National Police Check. This is facilitated by Services for Children and Families which will check if the carer has had any safety check notifications.

### **Consultant**

A consultant is a particular type of contractor engaged to provide recommendations, specialist or professional advice (or more generally non manual services) to assist or influence DECYP decision making or deliver a particular service.

### **Contractor**

A contractor is an individual or organisation engaged under a contract (other than an employee) to provide goods/and or services to an agency. A contractor will usually work under the direct supervision or direction of a DECYP employee.

### **Employee**

An individual employed by the Department for Education, Children and Young People under the [State Service Act 2000](#) (Tas).

### **Engagement**

The formal mechanism that applies to the appointment of workers (including Out of Home Carers) to undertake specific work within or on behalf of DECYP.

### **Essential Requirement**

Essential requirements are the conditions approved by the Director of the State Service Management Office that must be satisfied prior to engagement in a particular role.

### **External Parties**

Someone, who is not a DECYP worker, who is seeking access to a DECYP site and will be risk assessed on a case by case basis.

### **Incidental Contact**

Incidental contact may occur when a person works in the same place of work as a child but does not provide services to them. Incidental contact does not involve physical touching, building rapport or more than minor cursory communication with a child.

### **Manager**

An employee who has direct line management responsibility for one or more employees.

### **National Police Check**

A National Police Check (or Conviction Check) is a summary of an individual's conviction history in Australia at that point in time.

## **Out of Home Care**

The Out of Home Care system provides formal care for children and young people.

The [Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997](#) (Tas) provides the framework and mandate for government and non-government services, community members and families to respond to situations where a child or young person is unable to live safely at home with parents or primary care givers because of concerns to their safety and wellbeing.

## **Registration to Work with Vulnerable People**

The [Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013](#) (Tas) sets out the requirements for individuals to hold Registration to Work with Vulnerable People to ensure the protection of vulnerable persons from risk of harm during regulated activities.

## **Safeguarding Framework**

The Safeguarding Framework describes DECYP's approach to safeguarding children and young people from abuse, with particular emphasis on child sexual abuse. All DECYP workers must comply with their legal obligations and the Department's requirements for safeguarding children and young people.

## **Volunteer**

Persons who are not an employee and undertake activities without payment which will benefit the school or community, including and not limited to:

- members of the School Association and associated committees
- volunteers across Libraries Tasmania
- volunteers in the school committee, uniform shop or library
- volunteers for activities (swimming carnivals, athletic carnivals, sporting competitions, school fairs)
- parents/guardians engaged in classroom help (reading, cooking, gardening), attending excursions or school camps
- parents/guardians participating in the Learning in Families Together (LIFT) program
- persons accompanying children on intrastate/interstate school trips.

## **Workers**

Means any employees, contractors, consultants, subcontractors, trainees and volunteers within DECYP.

## **Work Experience Placement**

A non-contractual, short-term workplace-based placement, for which the primary purpose is to provide the person with practical exposure to the work environment. This may include student teacher, intern, practicum placements within DECYP settings and school-based apprenticeship placements.

## **Young Person or People**

Any person aged 12 to 17 but also defined under the [Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997](#) (Tas) as a person aged 16 or 17. In the context of this document, any reference to a young person or young people has the same meaning.

## 9 Legislation

State Service Act 2000 (Tas)

Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (Tas)

Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (Tas)

Teachers Registration Act 2000 (Tas)

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