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WHO IS REQUIRED TO HOLD A BLUE CARD?

All foster and kinship carers and their adult household members must hold a valid Blue Card (**Working with Children Check**) to confirm their suitability as carers and eligibility to work with children and young people in Queensland. Carers and other adult household members must have a Blue Card before they can be approved as foster or kinship carers by the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA). Young people in the household must have a valid Blue Card by the time they turn 18. Blue Cards are issued by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG). This is a detailed national check inclusive of, but not limited to:

- A person's criminal history inclusive of pending charges and non-convictions;
- Any disciplinary information held by certain professional organisations; and
- Police investigation information into allegations of serious child-related sexual offences.

WHO CANNOT APPLY FOR A BLUE CARD?

People convicted of a disqualifying offence: A disqualified person is:

- Convicted of a disqualifying offence (see *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*);
- 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; or
- The subject of a sexual offender order under the *Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003*.

People who are negative notice holders: Remains current until it is cancelled. You can apply to cancel this, two (2) years after it was issued. People convicted of serious offences can only hold a Blue Card in exceptional circumstances.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A BLUE CARD?

When you apply to become a foster or kinship carer, Mercy Community (MC) will assist you to complete a Blue Card application form online or by completing a paper form. If you already hold a valid Blue Card, this must be validated and linked to the DCYJMA. In this case, MC will provide you with the relevant form.

Once your application is approved, you will be issued with a Positive Notice Letter and a Blue Card.

HOW CAN I RENEW MY EXISTING BLUE CARD?

Blue Cards are valid for a period of three (3) years. Carers are responsible for monitoring their own, and their adult household members' Blue Card currency and expiry dates. Existing Blue Card holders must submit an application (online or by completing a paper form) to renew their Blue Card prior to the expiry date of their current card. MC will check in with you to ensure you have submitted your application and to provide assistance as required.

Where a carer or adult household member fails to renew a Blue Card and the Card expires, the child in care other arrangements will need to be made for the child's care a new Blue Card is received.

WHAT IF I AM REFUSED A BLUE CARD?

If you are refused a Blue Card, you have a right to have the decision reviewed by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT).

WHAT IF THERE ARE CHANGES TO YOUR POLICE INFORMATION?

Card holders are obligated to tell MC or Blue Card Services when there is a change in their police information.

More information can be found by visiting: <https://www.qld.gov.au/law/laws-regulated-industries-and-accountability/queensland-laws-and-regulations/regulated-industries-and-licensing/blue-card>

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