



Blue card requirements of Lay Preachers and Lay Workers (paid and volunteer)

C/2.1.2.11

Purpose

Outlines the obligations for all lay roles, to comply with the [Safe Church Policy](#) and the Synod Wide [Blue Card Policy](#).

Scope

Applies to all religious representatives, lay preachers, and all people aged 18 or over in lay roles working with anyone young or vulnerable, within the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod.

Obligations

1. All workers (paid or volunteer) in a child-related role must comply with the Synod Wide Blue Card Policy and must hold a valid blue card or exemption card which is linked to your congregation or presbytery. This includes all religious representatives, lay preachers, and all first aid officers.
 - 1.1. All blue card and exemption card applications and renewals can be made online using [Blue Card Services](#).
 - 1.1.1. On the application form, you should list the details of your church council chairperson as the organisation's contact person.
 - 1.1.2. The church council secretary should be listed as the organisation's contact person on the application form for the church council chairperson.
 - 1.2. If you work or volunteer in more than one location, you must link your blue card or exemption card to each place, unless your position is a presbytery position.
 - 1.2.1. For example, you volunteer with the Kids Church at your home Church, and you also volunteer doing Religious Instruction for a local school.
 - 1.2.2. In this situation you must ensure that your blue card is linked to the school where you volunteer with Religious Instruction and also the Church where you volunteer with Kids Church.
 - 1.2.3. In the case where you hold a presbytery position and work across several congregations or locations, your blue card or exemption card must be linked to the presbytery.
 - 1.3. If you work in a role that makes decisions about programs and activities or approves and appoints people to roles serving the Church, (eg Church Council members), you **must** comply with the Synod Wide Blue Card Policy and must hold a valid linked blue card.
2. **No card, no start:**
 - 2.1. No card, No Start means that paid workers must have a blue card (not just a pending application) before they can start working with children. You must **not** use a volunteer blue card for paid child-related work.
 - 2.2. You can continue to work in paid employment, volunteer, run your business or undertake your student placement as long as you submit your renewal application before your current card expires.
 - 2.3. If you don't apply to renew your card before it expires, you will be subject to the No Card, No Start policy and will not be able to continue working or volunteering until a new blue card has been issued.
 - 2.4. Failing to hold a valid blue card or exemption card is a breach of the Safe Church Policy as well as a breach of legislation. A Policy breach must be recorded. Following the [Safe Church Breach Procedure](#), complete a [Breach Report](#), recording the breach in a [register](#).

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- 2.4.1. The individual may receive a fine of up to \$80,650.00 (500 penalty units) or 5 years imprisonment.
- 2.4.2. The organisation may be subject to a fine of up to \$32,260.00 (200 penalty units) or 2 years' imprisonment.

3. Change in police information:

- 3.1. If you hold a valid blue card or exemption card and have a change in your police information, you must advise Blue Card Services and your presbytery. If you are charged with a serious offence, your blue card will be automatically suspended, and you must cease child-related work immediately.
- 3.2. Failing to notify your presbytery or Blue Card Services of the change in police information, is a breach of the Safe Church Policy as well as a breach of legislation. A Policy breach must be recorded.
 - 3.2.1. The individual may be subject to a fine of up to \$16,130.00 (100 penalty units).
 - 3.2.2. The organisation may be subject to a fine of up to \$32,260.00 (200 penalty units) or 2 years' imprisonment.

4. Change in type of employment:

- 4.1. If you hold a blue card, you must tell Blue Card Services when you change roles, or type of work. If you are an existing volunteer card holder and intend to start in paid child-related work or business, you need to transfer your existing volunteer blue card to a paid blue card or a business blue card. This process can be completed online. You must not use your volunteer blue card for paid child-related work.
- 4.2. A person who holds a paid blue card can use their paid card for all types of child-related work, including volunteering.
- 4.3. Failing to hold a paid blue card for a paid child-related role or failing to advise Blue Card Services of your change in employment status is a breach of the Safe Church Policy as well as a breach of legislation. A Policy breach must be recorded.
 - 4.3.1. Failing to hold a valid paid blue card for paid child-related work may result in a fine of up to \$68,925 (500 penalty units) or 5 years imprisonment.
 - 4.3.2. Failing to advise Blue Card Services of your change in employment status may result in a fine of \$1,613.00 (10 penalty units).
 - 4.3.3. The organisation may be subject to a fine of up to \$32,260.00 (200 penalty units) or 2 years' imprisonment.

Information and support

Additional information may be obtained by contacting Blue Card Services or from bluecard.qld.gov.au

For blue card questions in relation to the Safe Church Policy (audits, blue card types, registers), contact the Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer on 07 3377 9833 or safechurch@ucaqlld.com.au

Revisions

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Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
8.0	19.07.2024	General Manager Risk and Safeguarding	19.07.2024	General Manager Risk and Safeguarding	Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer
Next scheduled review		19.07.2026			