



## PROTOCOL: Child Related Activity Register

This document provides guidance on the Catholic diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes legal obligations, governance and safeguarding practices encompassing preparation, ongoing management and audit responsibilities of the Child Related Activity Register (**the Register**) and worker engagement requirements administered by the Parish Priest/Administrator/Chaplain and assisted by the Catholic Diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes Safeguarding Office.

### Who does this Guidance apply to?

This guidance applies to Clergy and Religious Appointees, Employees, Volunteers, work experience students and trainees (**Workers**) the Diocese. Workers who must be included in the Register are those Workers within the Parish and Chaplaincy Communities who hold a Working With Children Check (**WWCC**) verified through the Office of the Children's Guardian online **PORTAL** by the Parish and/or Chaplaincy, for the purpose of their engagement within the Parish and/or Chaplaincy Community. Clergy and Religious Appointees have their WWCC verified by the Chancery and do not need to be included on this Register.

### Legal Obligations of the Parish Priest/Administrator/Chaplain

This Protocol and Guidance Document provides information and guidance regarding the responsibilities of the Parish Priest/Administrator/Chaplain in fulfilling his legal obligations as the employer under the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*. The documents form part of the Diocesan Policy and Protocols to ensure that the bishop meets his obligations as Head of Entity under the *Children's Guardian Act 2019 NSW*.

***Under Section 9 (1)(a) of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012, an Employer faces a substantial fine of up to \$5,500 for an individual (i.e. 50 penalty units) or \$11,000 for a corporation (i.e. 100 penalty units) if they employ a person who is required to obtain a WWCC but know or have reasonable cause to believe, that the person does not hold one.***

Under s.39 of the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*, the Office of the Children's Guardian (**OCG**) has powers to monitor and audit compliance to ensure organisations are meeting their obligations.

The administrative process relating to setting up and maintaining the Register and the requirements of the bi-annual audit are described in the **Guidance Document: Child Related Activity Register**. The Safeguarding Office will conduct a bi-annual audit of the Register to ensure compliance with legislation and to make sure the bishop meets his obligations as Head of Entity.

## Definitions

<b>Working with Children Check (WWCC)</b>	Refers to the background checking process which is a prerequisite for individuals engaged in Child-Related Work, and involves a full national criminal history check and a review of reported workplace misconduct
<b>PORTAL</b>	Refers to the Office of the Children's Guardian online portal where a Parish and/or Chaplaincy Community verifies a Workers WWCC
<b>Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG)</b>	Refers to the independent statutory body managing the Working with Children Check and the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
<b>Safeguarding Induction Training</b>	Refers to Safeguarding Induction Training attended by new Workers in which they are informed of their Safeguarding responsibilities and Diocesan Policy and Protocols.
<b>Safeguarding Training Program</b>	Refers to a scheduled program that Workers are required to attend to ensure they are trained and supported to effectively implement Diocesan Safeguarding Policy and Protocols.
<b>Reportable Conduct Scheme</b>	Refers to an allegation-based scheme that monitors how organisations investigate and report on certain conduct (known as 'reportable allegations' and 'reportable convictions') made against Employees, Volunteers or contractors who provide services to Children. In NSW this is operated by the Office of the Children's Guardian.
<b>Verification via Office of the Children's Guardian PORTAL</b>	Refers to when a Parish and/or Chaplaincy Communities verifies a Workers WWCC through the Office of the Children's Guardian online <b>PORTAL</b> .

**In the diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes, the Parish Priest/Administrator/Chaplain by his Canonical Role of Governance is required to:**

**1. Understand the legal obligation to ensure the Register is complete**

- a. Confirm with the assistance of the Safeguarding Office the roles in the Parish and Chaplaincy Community that are properly Child-Related and that those engaged in those roles have a

current and verified WWCC. Those Workers are considered WWCC Holders. **A WWCC should never be required of those who do not exercise a Child-Related role;**

- b. The Register is available on the Safeguarding Website;
- c. Those that have a valid WWCC Exemption (as outlined in the Act) are required to be included on the Register;
- d. The Register shall contain the following information as a minimum;
  - i. Name of Worker (Employee and Volunteer)
  - ii. Date of Birth
  - iii. WWCC Number or Exemption information
  - iv. WWCC verification date on the Office of the Children's Guardian **PORTAL**
  - v. WWCC verification outcome
  - vi. Expiry date
  - vii. Start date of role
  - viii. Role/Ministry Title
  - ix. Paid or volunteer work
  - x. Safeguarding Induction Training completion date
  - xi. Safeguarding training date
- e. Submit a copy of the highlighted sections of the Register (hiding the sections of the Register not required) to the Safeguarding Office bi-annually (January and July) to enable the Safeguarding Office to undertake an audit of the Register.

## **2. Inform Workers of their legal obligations under the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* and the *Children's Guardian Act 2019***

- a. Apprise all those involved in Child-Related activities in the Parish and/or Chaplaincy Community of their obligations in terms of Reporting Crimes to the NSW Police, Mandatory Reporting and the Reportable Conduct Scheme. This should be done each time a new WWCC Holder for the Parish and/or Chaplaincy Community is appointed during the Induction process.
- b. Provide information on relevant parts of the legislation that apply as detailed in Diocesan Policy and Protocols or make contact with the Safeguarding Office for advice.

## **3. Inform Workers of their Parish and Chaplaincy Induction responsibilities as a WWCC Holder**

Inform new Workers that WWCC Holders are required to undertake Safeguarding Induction Training. Registrations can be made via the Safeguarding Office.

## **4. Inform Workers of their Parish and Chaplaincy Safeguarding Training responsibilities as a WWCC Holder**

Require ongoing Safeguarding Training as directed in the **Protocol: Mandatory Safeguarding and Child Protection Training** for all WWCC Holders. Information relating to safeguarding training and training dates can be found on the Diocesan website or by contacting the Safeguarding Office.

## 5. Reporting Concerns

- a. All WWCC Holders for the Parish and/or Chaplaincy Communities are legally obligated under the *Children's Guardian Act 2019* to report concerns of Reportable Conduct in relation to a Child (under 18).
- b. Immediately notify the Safeguarding Office of any allegation of misconduct towards a Child (under 18 years) by any person involved in a Child-Related activity.

**Visit the diocese's Safeguarding website to access the diocesan Policy and Protocols including:**

### **Related Documents:**

1. **Fact Sheet:** Who needs a Working With Children Check
2. **Guidance Document:** Child Related Activity Register
3. **Excel Template:** Child Related Activity Register
4. **Protocol:** Mandatory Safeguarding and Child Protection Training