

Working With Children Check Policy

Date of issue/update:	March 2020
Policy approved by:	Melbourne Royal Board
Contact person:	Di Silvestro, Executive Manager, People & Culture

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Melbourne Royal continues to act in compliance to the *Working with Children Act 2005* (VIC) and the Working with Children Regulation 2016 by monitoring the suitability of staff, volunteers and contractors that work with children via the Working with Children Check process.

The Working with Children Check (WWC Check) is the primary means of Melbourne Royal fulfilling the objectives of the Act in protecting children from physical and/or sexual harm by ensuring that people who work with them are subject to a screening process and only issued with a valid WWC Check when they have been assessed as being suitable by the Victorian Department of Justice.

Melbourne Royal will assess and verify the suitability of staff and volunteers who will work with children at Melbourne Royal events and represent Melbourne Royal, especially during our peak operating period at the Melbourne Royal Show.

A valid WWC Check is the minimum standard for all adults performing child related work.

If a volunteer's occupation exempts them from the requirement to have a WWC Check e.g. teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption prior to commencing work or volunteering with Melbourne Royal.

2. Definitions

WWC Check – Working With Children Check

Children – Children under the age of 18

MRS – Melbourne Royal Show

AIBA – Australian International Beer Awards

MRWA – Melbourne Royal Wine Awards

ADSA – Australian Distilled Spirits Awards

AFA – Australian Food Awards

AICA – Australian International Coffee Awards

3. Application

The following classes of Melbourne Royal workers, paid and unpaid are likely to require the WWC Check (when a WWC Check is required is detailed later in this Policy):

- **Salaried Melbourne Royal Staff** who have been notified that a condition of having a WWC Check is detailed in their Contract of Employment. New staff will be required to obtain/have a valid employee WWC Check when applying for the position. Melbourne Royal will refund the application fee for current staff who need to renew their WWC Check as it expires after 5 years.
- **Melbourne Royal Board Directors** through their presence at events, competitions and judging during the MRS.

- **Committee Members, Judges and Stewards** who are representing Melbourne Royal during the MRS.
- **Event Volunteers** through the Volunteers Program who will be present during the MRS. Exceptions are event volunteers who assist with AIBA, MRWA, ADSA, AICA and AFA.

Indicative Roles - Where the following Contractors require a WWC Check:

- **Carnival and Game Operations** including all carnival areas
- **Interactive Exhibitors** where there is direct contact with children (e.g. face painting)
- **Stage and Event Crew**
- **Photographers and videographers**
- **Other event contractors who may be working on-site during the Melbourne Royal Show or other events where children are present**

Indicative Roles - Where Contractors will likely not require a WWC Check:

- **Stallholders** – where an exhibitor is manning a site for the purposes of selling goods with no direct contact with children (see the explanation in this policy regarding the meaning of “direct contact”).
- **Contractors** – where no work is performed during the MRS or other events where children are not present.

The above lists of indicative roles are only indicative and should not be taken as legal or other advice that you do or do not require a WWC Check. Instead you should consider whether your position/role/engagement requires “child related work” as set out below.

4. Policy

Melbourne Royal is an organisation that offers both entertainment and education activities to children and as a result that will involve employees, contractors and volunteers having regular direct contact with children (those who are under 18 years of age).

Who needs a WWC Check?

Anyone who is engaged in voluntary work, practical training and/or paid employment for Melbourne Royal may be required to have a WWC Check, if they are working in “child-related work”.

“Child related work” involves an individual having **direct contact** with children in the course of their work for Melbourne Royal, rather than merely incidental, rare or intermittent contact with children.

Direct contact means any contact between a person and a child that involves –

- a) physical contact; or
- b) face to face oral communication; or
- c) physically being within eyeshot;

where the above contact is not directly supervised by another person.

So if the work you are required to perform for Melbourne Royal, involves:

- direct contact with children and you are not supervised when that contact occurs; and
- the direct contact you have with children (as described above under ‘Direct Contact’) is not intermittent or merely incidental to your work,
- then under the Act, you do need a WWC Check.

Melbourne Royal will notify you if it considers you are required to have a valid WWC Check prior to commencement and request this from you. However, it is important that you are also aware of the requirement to have one in the above circumstances and obtain one even if Melbourne Royal does not expressly require you to obtain one. If your circumstances change during your employment e.g. transfer/the work changes over time, you may during your employment or engagement with Melbourne Royal be required to have a valid WWC Check.

All staff and volunteers that work at events where there are children present, are required to list Melbourne Royal as an employer with WWC Check and provide valid Working with Children Card information, or proof of eligibility for exemption, to Melbourne Royal prior to the confirmation of any work shifts in which they will perform child-related work.

Staff and volunteer WWC Check information will be stored in secure CRM and HRIS and reviewed for validity prior to any performance of child-related work.

5. Process

Employees

1. Employees must provide evidence of an employee WWC Check or proof of their application for a WWC Check to People & Culture prior or soon after their commencement at Melbourne Royal.
2. People & Culture will maintain records of WWC Checks and complete periodic checks to ensure that WWC Checks are current and valid and have remained so for those individuals employed or engaged by Melbourne Royal who are required to have them.

Melbourne Royal Board Directors

1. Directors must provide evidence of an employee WWC Check or proof of their application for a WWC Check to People & Culture as part of their role as a Director at Melbourne Royal.
2. People & Culture will maintain records of WWC Checks and complete periodic checks to ensure that WWC Checks are current and valid and have remained so whilst engaged as a Director.

Competition Volunteers (Stewards, Judges, etc) – registration managed via CRM

1. Competition Coordinators to ensure all relevant roles that require a volunteer WWC Check is detailed in the CRM process and that international judges have pre-filled exemption assigned to their contact record prior to sending them a CRM registration link.
2. Competition Coordinators invites volunteer to accept role via CRM registration.
3. Volunteer registers via CRM process which requires valid WWC information, or for volunteer to select that they are exempt and to email proof of exemption (e.g. home state WWC or VIT card) to volunteers@melbourneroyal.com.au. Volunteer Program Manager to manually update CRM records upon receipt of exemption proof.
4. Volunteer Program Manager to email a list of non-compliance to Competitions Manager to follow up.
5. Competitions Manager / Competition Coordinators to continue with defined integrity check process to ensure all necessary WWC Checks are received prior to competition.

Show Volunteers - registration managed via CRM (all vocational, corporate, community volunteers)

1. Volunteer registers via CRM process which requires valid WWC information, or for volunteer to select that they are exempt and to email proof of exemption (e.g. home state WWC or VIT card) to volunteers@melbourneroyal.com.au. Volunteer Program Manager to manually update CRM records upon receipt of exemption proof.
2. Volunteers Program Manager to continue with defined integrity check process to ensure all necessary WWC Checks are received prior to competition.

Contractors

1. All contractors will receive a contract detailing the requirement of a WWC Check if necessary for their role.
2. Proof of WWC Check should be uploaded via DocuSign at the time of signing their contract.

3. Upon signing a contract with Melbourne Royal, contractors are responsible for ensuring that they have and maintain a current WWC Check in line with the contract terms and conditions.
4. Contractors who hire subcontractors are responsible for ensuring these subcontractors comply with the WWC Check legislation. This expectation is detailed in the Contractor Agreement which part of the terms and conditions of accepting the contract.

WWC Check Exemptions

Where a person is exempt from having to have a valid WWC Check, Melbourne Royal may request a current police check (no longer than 3 months old) be provided.

WWC Check Reimbursement

Employees who need to apply or renew their WWC Check will be reimbursed for all related expenses. Contractors and Volunteers will be responsible for any costs relating to their WWC Check.

WWC Check Renewal

A WWC Check has a valid period of 5 years. If you have a WWC Check and the date of expiry must be monitored. Employees, contractors and volunteers must renew the WWC Check before it expires to continue doing child-related work. You can renew your card up to six months before its expiry.

It is illegal to do child-related work after your card expires, however, you can renew your card online up to three months after its expiry. After this time, if you still need a Check, you will need to complete a new application.

6. Compliance

If an individual has a requirement to have and retain a valid WWC Check and does not comply with this requirement or Policy, they are deemed to be unable to fulfil their role at/with Melbourne Royal.

7. Policy References

Recruitment Policy

8. Policy Review

Melbourne Royal may amend and vary this policy from time to time to improve the effectiveness of its operations with respect to WWC Checks and to comply with legislation.