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Delays in processing applications

Update – 15 June 2021

On 10 June, the National Police Checking Service released an update on delays in processing checks.

The update reminds employers that a delay in processing does not necessarily mean that an applicant has any criminal history.

"A delayed police check is in no way an indicator that an applicant has any criminal history to be disclosed. The ACIC strongly urges employers not to discriminate against applicants who are experiencing delays in receiving their check."

[Update on delays in processing checks \(265KB\)](#)

7 May 2021

Some Working with Children Check applications may take longer than usual to process. Here is information provided by the National Police Checking Service.

The National Police Checking Service (NPCS) is currently experiencing an unprecedented use of the system, and due to a number of factors outside their control, there may be significant delays in the processing of checks.

Police checking in Australia is a partially manual, name-based process, involving many stakeholders. The NPCS aims to return checks as quickly as possible, however turnaround times are not guaranteed.

There are many reasons as to why some checks take longer than others to process, including:

- The check subject having a common name, or a name that matches with many potential Persons of Interest on policing systems
- The check subject having old police information that requires manual collection and processing of hardcopy records
- The relevant police agency having inaccurate or incomplete records which need to be investigated properly before the check can be finalised
- Transferring information between the various state and territory police agencies before the information can be vetted and/or released

- Workloads within each police agency.

The NPCCS facilitates over a million checks each year, which may result in over 7000 referrals to police each day. Resourcing constraints within all affected agencies will also likely impact upon the ability to turn around these check results more quickly, primarily during peak periods.

The NPCCS completes around 70% of police checks within minutes, providing a result back to the submitting agency. The remaining 30% of checks are referred to one or more police agencies for manual processing. When responding to concerns about timeframes, the NPCCS team escalates concerns to the relevant police jurisdiction, however as there is no definitive amount of time it takes to process a police check, it is always advisable to allow as much time as possible.

You can help to reduce any unnecessary referrals to our police partners by ensuring that application data is submitted accurately and in full.

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding.