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COVID-19 changes to WWCC proof of identity requirements for authorised carers and adult household members

26 July 2021

New authorised carers who are self-isolating or minimising travel and contact with others may be unable to attend a Service NSW centre to provide proof of identity, as part of the NSW Working with Children Check application process. In response, the NSW Government has introduced temporary changes to the Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013 to make it easier and safer for authorised carers (foster, or relative or kin carers) and their adult household members to provide proof of their identity.

What has changed

From 22 April 2020, authorised carers and adult members of carers' households have the option of providing certified copies of their proof of identity documents to their designated agency (foster care agency) as part of the application process, instead of attending a Service NSW centre in person. This includes carers' own children turning 18 years, as well as young people in statutory out-of-home care who continue living in their carers' home after turning 18 years (see below). The Principal Officer of the designated agency will then forward the person's proof of identity documents to the Children's Guardian.

The change to the Regulation is in place for a limited period and will end on 22 October 2021.

Please note that the alternative proof of identity process is not available to staff and contractor carers (such as direct care workers, or staff authorised as emergency, respite or special out-of-home care carers). Direct care staff and contractors are required to attend a Service NSW centre in person to provide proof of their identity when applying for a clearance.

Application process for authorised carer applicants and adult household members

1. Apply for a WWCC using the online application form. An application (APP) number will then be sent to the applicant via email.

2. Provide your designated agency with certified copies of your identity documents, along with their APP number and proof of identity form.
3. The Principal Officer of the designated agency forwards the documentation to the Children's Guardian at check@ocg.nsw.gov.au on the applicant's behalf.

Please note that most Service NSW centres are still open, and applicants who prefer to attend a Service NSW centre to provide proof of their identity are still able to do so. You can [check the opening hours of Service NSW centres.](#)

Applicants who choose to provide certified documents to prove their identity should be aware that there may be a delay in processing their application, as these applications require additional manual processing by staff at the Office of the Children's Guardian.

[More information for authorised carers and adult household members, including step-by-step guidance for providing proof of identity using this new process](#)

Young people in foster care turning 18

Young people can apply for a Working With Children Check from the age of 17 years and 9 months and can also follow the new process above for providing proof of their identity. Young people who are refused a clearance may apply to the Children's Guardian for a continuing residence approval if they were in

out-of-home care immediately before they turned 18. If an agency is concerned that a young person may not be granted a clearance, the agency should support the young person to apply for a continuing residence approval as soon as possible. A continuing residence approval, if granted, will not allow the young person to engage in child-related work. It is only for the purpose of continuing to reside in a foster care placement.

Please note that a Working With Children Check clearance is only required for young people who continue to reside in a foster care placement after they turn 18. Young people in residential care do not require a clearance to continue residing with children and young people who are under the age of 18 years.

[More information about continuing residence approvals \(154.7KB\)](#)

Clearances that are due to expire

The Children's Guardian has extended all Working With Children Check clearances that are due to expire between 19 July 2021 and 26 September 2021, for three months. The three-month period applies from the person's current clearance expiry date. People who are granted an extension will be advised by email and the system will be automatically updated. Employers should update records to indicate the change in the clearance expiry date for affected employees. More information about this [extension of clearances is](#)

[available here.](#)

The Children's Guardian will continue to monitor the extended clearances for criminal and workplace records and will advise employers if anyone becomes barred from working with children through continuous monitoring.

Clearances that have expired

Authorised carer applicants and adult household members whose clearances expired before 19 July 2021 must apply for a new clearance and may use the new process above for providing proof of their identity.

Applications when proof of identity has not yet been provided

Authorised carer applicants and adult household members who applied to renew their clearances before 26 March 2020 but who have not yet attended a Service NSW centre to provide proof of their identity may also follow the new process above for providing proof of their identity.

See also

[More updates for statutory out-of-home care and adoption](#)

Note: This advice is current on 26 July 2021 and will be updated

over time.