

DCSI Screening Unit

Recent Screening Unit Changes



Government of South Australia
Department for Communities
and Social Inclusion

The following information is designed to provide you with a clearer understanding of the impact of recent changes in the Screening Unit, especially people working across multiple sectors or disciplines who are required to undergo more than one kind of employment screening.

As you would be aware, on 12 August 2013 the Screening Unit launched new processes that separated child, vulnerable person and aged care sector employment screening and general employment probity checks.

As of **26 AUGUST 2013** the Screening Unit will not process applications received on old versions of the Informed Consent Form for resubmission. Old versions of the Consent Form will be returned to applicants.

Why did the Screening Unit make these changes?

These changes were made to ensure that the Screening Unit complies with its legislative, regulatory and intergovernmental obligations, most importantly the National Exchange of Criminal History Information for People Working with Children (ECHIPWC).

ECHIPWC facilitates the exchange of expanded criminal history information between the States and Territories, including spent convictions, pending charges and non-conviction charges. The Screening Unit will also be able to request the circumstances information of charges and convictions to provide contextual details to better understand offences. This information will be particularly useful where applicants have come to South Australia from other jurisdictions, or where expanded criminal history information about the applicant is held in another jurisdiction.

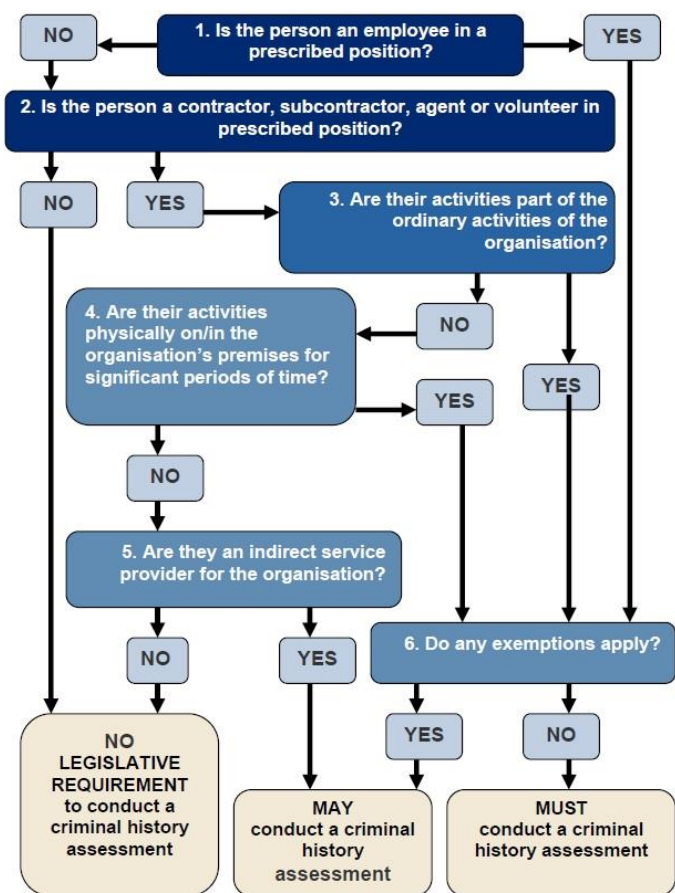
Effect on the Screening Unit

ECHIPWC places strict controls on the sharing and use of expanded criminal history information, and only permits its use for child-related purposes. As a result, the DCSI Screening Unit has implemented safeguards to protect expanded criminal history information from use for any other purpose. The safeguards included a requirement for separate process for different types of screening. Consequently the forms are indicative of much broader changes within the Screening Unit. Each form represents the first step in separate and distinct risk assessment processes based upon different kinds of available information and legislative obligations.

Impact Upon Employers and Organisations

It is important that Employers and Volunteer Organisations are aware of their legislative, regulatory or contractual obligations regarding the screening of their employees and volunteers. Policies which require people to undergo screening are not set by the DCSI Screening Unit. However, the following summary of the different kinds of employment screening might assist you in identifying which forms of screening are required by particular cohorts of students:

Child-related Employment Screening: under the [Children's Protection Regulations 2010](#) (SA), certain organisations are required to ensure that certain employees and/or volunteers (people holding prescribed positions") undergo screening by an authorised screening unit (the DCSI Screening Unit), or undertake their own criminal history assessments in accordance with the [Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteers who work with children](#) (the Standards).



This flowchart was issued by the Department for Education and Child Development as part of the Standards to help determine which employees and volunteers are required to undergo criminal history assessments.

The *Children's Protection Act 1993* (SA) defines a prescribed position as one in which a person is engaged in the following:

- (a) regular contact with children or working in close proximity to children on a regular basis, unless the contact or work is directly supervised at all times; or
- (b) supervision or management of persons in positions requiring or involving regular contact with children or working in close proximity to children on a regular basis; or
- (c) access to records of a kind prescribed by regulation relating to children; or
- (d) functions of a type prescribed by regulation.

If you have any queries about whether or not you or someone in your organisation is required to undergo child-related employment screening, contact the [Department for Education and Child Development](#).

Vulnerable Person-Related Employment Screening: there are no legislative or regulatory requirements for people to undergo screening before they commence working with vulnerable people. Some Government Departments and non-government organisations may require people working with vulnerable people to undergo this form of screening as a condition of employment or contractual responsibility if they do not qualify for child-related employment screening.

Aged Care Sector Employment Screening: the Commonwealth [Aged Care Accountability Principles 1998](#) (the Principles), made under the [Aged Care Act 1997](#), require organisations funded by the Commonwealth to provide aged care services to be satisfied that a person has not committed a precluding offence (murder, sexual assault, or assault for which a sentence of imprisonment was imposed). The Department of Health and Ageing recommends that other offences recorded on a person's criminal history record be assessed to determine their suitability for employment, and the DCSI Screening Unit will assess such information accordingly. More information can be found on the [Department of Health and Ageing's website](#).

General Employment Probity Checks: there are no formal legislative or regulatory requirements for a person to undergo General Employment Probity Checks. The Screening Unit will analyse a person's criminal history to help employers determine whether anything in a person's criminal history indicates they might not be able to fulfil the inherent requirements of a role within their organisation.

Contact Us

If you have any queries about the information above, please email screening@dcsi.sa.gov.au.