

FACT SHEET

DCSI Screening Unit

Vulnerable Person Related Employment Screening



Government of South Australia
Department for Communities
and Social Inclusion

What is Vulnerable Person Related Employment Screening?

Vulnerable person related employment screening, conducted by the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) Screening Unit, is an assessment of an individual's criminal conviction history to determine their suitability for employment or volunteering with vulnerable people.

When is it required?

There are no legislative or regulatory requirements for organisations to use the vulnerable person related employment screening through the DCSI Screening Unit.

Some South Australian 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 through contractual responsibility if they do not qualify for child or disability services employment-related screening.

Vulnerable person-related employment screening may be relevant for:

- health professional roles, ie nurses, radiographers, specialists;

- people working with information and communications technology (ICT roles) in which they have or will have access to files regarding vulnerable clients;
- people volunteering in aged care services that are not covered under the *Aged Care Act 1997*.

Employer organisations may also ask employees for a National Police Certificate and conduct their own assessment in line with organisational requirements.



What does it involve?

Vulnerable person-related employment screening by the DCSI Screening Unit involves an assessment of an individual's

criminal conviction history to assess any potential risk of harm a person might pose in relation to the inherent requirements of a role either working or volunteering with vulnerable people.

The DCSI Screening Unit provides a 'point in time' assessment of risk, based on the information disclosed to it at the time of screening. Information may be shared with an employer.

A risk assessment provided by the DCSI Screening Unit is intended to assist an organisation to make informed decisions about recruitment of its employees and volunteers. Screening is considered as one part of the recruitment process. The final decision-making responsibility about engagement rests with the employing organisation.

Procedural Fairness

Applicants must give their written informed consent to undergo screening.

Matters are assessed in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. If the DCSI Screening Unit assesses information about an applicant that indicates they may pose a risk of harm if engaged to work or volunteer with vulnerable people the DCSI Screening Unit will contact the applicant to discuss the matter before finalising the assessment. Applicants will also have access

to a review process in the event they do not agree with a screening outcome. Further information is available on the website.

How long does it take?

The screening process will only commence once the DCSI Screening Unit has received a correctly completed form.

If there is no criminal conviction history to assess, screening should be completed within **30 business days**.

However, if the DCSI Screening Unit obtains information that requires further assessment, additional time may be required. In some cases, it may take **more than 8 weeks** to finalise, depending on the relevance, complexity, and amount of information that requires assessment.

What does it cost?

Screening fees are gazetted annually. Refer to the DCSI website for the current fees.

How often is screening required?

DCSI Screening clearances are valid for three years.

A clearance letter issued by the DCSI Screening Unit, providing a clearance for vulnerable person-related screening, is portable across organisations within South Australia.

Is it different from a National Police Certificate?

Yes. A vulnerable person related employment screening involves an assessment of an applicant's criminal conviction history to assess any potential risk of harm an applicant might pose to the safety or wellbeing of vulnerable people.

There is no such assessment with a police certificate: it is simply a record of a person's criminal conviction history.

Contacting the Screening Unit

Please email the Screening Unit. Your query will be directed to the appropriate area for a response.

Email:

DCSIScreeningUnit@sa.gov.au

Website:

www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/services/screening

Postal address

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