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

22 April 2020

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 will 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 will be in place for a 6 month period and will end on 22 October 2020.

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@kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au on the applicant's behalf.

Please note that most Service NSW centres are still open, and applicants who would 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 continuing 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

Authorised carers and adult household members whose clearances are due to expire between 26 March 2020 and 26 September 2020 do not need to apply to renew their clearances, as these have been extended by six months. More details are available in our [1 April COVID-19 response update](#).

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 26 March 2020 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 22 April 2020 and will be updated over time.