

Goondiwindi SILO Inc t/a Gateway To Training



Blue Card Screening Requirements

Purpose

Goondiwindi SILO Inc t/a Gateway To Training (GTT) is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all young people and will endeavour to provide a safe and supportive service environment for its clients, staff and volunteers.

This document relates to GTT's implementation of the Queensland Blue Card System as required by the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (the Act) and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011.

Under the Act, GTT is a regulated business and is required to comply with all components of the Blue Card System.

The purpose of this document is to set the guidelines and clear procedures for compliance with the Blue Card screening requirements.

Working with Children Screening

The Blue Card System requires diligent screening of relevant persons employed, volunteering or visiting schools, education and care services in order to secure the welfare and best interests of children and young people and create a safe and supportive service environment.

All applications must be made through the processes outlined and on the relevant forms located on the Queensland Government's Blue Card Services website – www.bluecard.qld.gov.au

Types of Blue Cards

Blue Card

Positive Notice Blue Card-V (Volunteer SILO Committee Member)

- Valid for three years unless cancelled or suspended
- Must not begin in the role until their Blue Card-V application has been approved and a Positive Notice and Blue Card-V has been issued
- Volunteers holding an existing valid Blue Card can commence in the role when the Blue Card has been validated online and when a form has been lodged to link the cardholder to GTT
- A person with an existing valid Blue Card-V cannot use that card to commence paid employment until it has been transferred to a Blue Card-P and the required fee paid to Blue Card Services – the employee may begin employment once the transfer from is lodged

Positive Notice Blue Card-P (Paid GTT Employees)

- Valid for three years unless cancelled or suspended
- May commence employment once their Blue Card-P application has been lodged with Blue Card Services or a current Blue Card-P has been validated online and when a form has been lodged to link the cardholder to GTT

Exemption Card

Positive Exemption Card-E

- Applies only to registered teachers and police officers when they are employed or volunteer in a role outside their professional practice
- There is no expiry date on an exemption card
- May commence employment or volunteering once their Exemption Card-E application has been lodged with Blue Card Services or a current Exemption Card-E has been validated online and when a form has been lodged to link the cardholder to GTT

Requirement to hold a Blue Card

Note that at each of its sites GTT provides child-related services that are regulated by the Act and therefore it is a compulsory requirement for:

- All GTT employees to hold a Positive Notice Blue Card-P
- All SILO Management Committee members to hold a Positive Notice Blue Card P or V
- All registered teachers, police officers and health practitioners registered with AHPRA undertaking paid employment with GTT or volunteering on the SILO Committee to hold a Positive Exemption Card-E

Employees or SILO members who have a Blue Card cancelled or suspended; or receive a negative notice after a change in police information will not be permitted to continue their employment with GTT or position on the SILO Management Committee.

Employee and Volunteer Obligations

Change in police information

GTT employees and SILO Management Committee members must inform the Executive Officer if there is a change in their police information. Note that the employee or volunteer is not required to disclose the specific nature of the change, only that a change has occurred.

Upon receipt of this notification, the Executive Officer and the employee or volunteer must complete a *Change in Police Information Notification* form and lodge it immediately with Blue Card Services. Note that the employee or volunteer must not continue working in regulated employment until this form has been lodged.

Notification of other changes

GTT is required to notify Blue Card Services of any:

- Changes in details of a person holding a Blue or Exemption Card
- Changes in the organisation's contact person/s' details
- Employees and volunteers who leave the organisation

To ensure their eligibility to undertake child-related work, employees and volunteers must advise Blue Card Services about any of the following changes:

- Personal information – address, contact number, name, eligibility etc
- Employment circumstances
- Lost or stolen cards

Renewal of Blue Cards

Employees:

- must submit a renewal application before the expiry date of their Blue Card to continue working in regulated child-related employment
- must not work in child-related employment if their Blue Card has expired and they have not lodged a renewal application
- are eligible to work once their new application has been lodged

Volunteers:

- must apply at least 30 days before their Blue Card expires to continue working in child-related employment and therefore can continue to work even if their Blue Card expires before a new card is issued
- must not work in child-related employment if their Blue Card has expired and they have not lodged a renewal application
- are eligible to work only when their new Blue Card is issued

Nominated Contact Person

GTT's Executive Officer is the designated contact person who is responsible for managing Blue Cards and Exemption Cards within the organisation. Blue Card Services will send all notifications to the Executive Officer and they are the only person with whom Blue Card Services can discuss an applicant's Blue Card status with unless additional authorisation is provided.

Responsibilities

Organisational responsibilities

The organisation is responsible for:

- complete and transparent processes to support compliance implementation and maintenance of its internal Blue Card System;
- maintaining a complete and accurate Blue Card Register;
- ensuring timely renewal of Blue Cards;
- responding to negative notices and suspension of Blue Cards; and
- regular internal audits to ensure reliability of data and records

Screening responsibilities

The Executive Officer and the Operations Manager are responsible for ensuring that all requirements of the Working with Children Check screening process are met, including:

- all relevant persons performing regulated employment are required to complete Working with Children Check screening and that are informed that they are consenting to do so by signing the form;
- the appropriate approved form is completed accurately;
- the following verbal 'disqualified person' warning is given to all applicants: *"I am required by law in Queensland to provide you with a warning that it is an offence for a disqualified person to sign a Blue Card application form. If you are unsure whether you are a disqualified person you should contact Blue Card Services for more information before signing the application form."*;
- all identification is sighted and verified that the full and correct name, date of birth and signature on the identification matches the applicant's details as provided;
- the required form/s are lodged in a timely manner to Blue Card Services;
- the application is accompanied with the prescribed fee for a Blue Card-P, if required;
- existing applications are linked to the organisation by way of formal advice to Blue Card Services;
- the Blue Card Register is accurately maintained and complete;
- all relevant current employees and volunteers have their renewal applications processed as per legislative requirements; and
- that Blue Card Services are advised of all employees and volunteers who leave the organisation and/or cease undertaking regulated employment with the organisation

Employee Register

- GTT is required to establish and maintain an employee register of all paid employees and volunteers involved in child-related activities within the organisation
- Under the Act, Blue Card Services has the power to conduct an audit of the organisation to ensure that it maintains an employee register
- If a complaint is made in relation to an individual or the organisation, Blue Card Services may request a copy of GTT's employee register

GTT will maintain an electronic register recording all GTT employees and SILO Management Committee members which includes:

- Personal details – full name and date of birth
- Requirement to hold a Blue Card – if not, why not eg if an exemption applies under the Act
- Card type - Paid, Volunteer, Student or Business
- Blue Card status – valid card; application in progress; or negative notice
- Date application was submitted
- Blue Card number
- Blue Card expiry date
- Renewal date for submission of form – at least 30 days prior to expiry date
- Whether identification documents have been sighted for the applicant or Blue Card holder
- Linked existing Blue Card holder to the organisation
- Receipt of confirmation of a valid card or application from Blue Card Services

Record Keeping

GTT will ensure that appropriate and confidential records in relation to the following are maintained:

- whether a negative notice has been issued;
- any change in status to a Blue Card or Exemption Card eg change in police information; or the cancellation or suspension of a Blue Card or Exemption Card;
- if there is a change in police information, the date Blue Card Services was informed of the change;
- if an employee leaves the organisation and the date Blue Card services were informed; and
- any changes to the employee or volunteer's personal information, including the date they informed Blue Card Services – noting that it is an offence for an employee to fail to notify Blue Card Services on the appropriate form of any change in personal details within 14 days

Monitoring and Compliance Audit

Reviews

- The Executive Officer or their nominee will continuously monitor the internal Blue Card related processes for compliance
- The Executive Officer will prepare a six monthly report to be provided to the SILO Risk Management Standing Committee to ensure 100% compliance in terms of currency of card holders and accuracy of data
- The SILO Risk Management Committee will review GTT's internal Blue Card processes on a six monthly basis and report to the SILO Management Committee

Complaints

In the event that any person has a concern that the processes of GTT's internal Blue Card System have not been complied with, they are able to make a complaint in writing to the Executive Officer.

Managing breaches

All breaches of the Act and/or GTT's internal Blue Card System and associated procedures, either reported or identified, are to be managed appropriately and as soon as practicable by the Executive Officer or their nominee.

Reporting breaches:

- Any breaches or suspected breaches of GTT's Blue Card System must be reported immediately to the Executive Officer (or their nominee) using GTT's Breaches Report form
- All reports of breaches or suspected breaches will be treated in a consistent, fair, confidential and supportive manner

Investigating breaches:

- The Executive Officer (or their nominee) will investigate the alleged or suspected breach and communicate with all parties involved as required
- Recommendations from an investigation may include the need to:
 - provide further training on the requirements of the Blue Card System
 - review current policies and procedures
 - develop new policies and procedures

Consequences and outcomes:

Based on the outcome of the investigation, the following consequences and/or courses of action may take place:

- Allegation found to be baseless and confirmation that there was no breach:
 - no action taken against the alleged perpetrator
 - no action taken against the reporter as per GTT's Whistleblower Policy
- Breach of the Blue Card System confirmed:
 - reported directly to Blue Card Services
 - perpetrator is instantly dismissed
 - review undertaken of GTT's Blue Card System to ascertain its effectiveness and implement improvements immediately

Recording breaches:

- All breaches and suspected breaches must be recorded on GTT's internal Breaches Report form and be signed by the person reporting the incident and the person receiving the report
- The completed and signed Breaches Report form including the record of the outcome; consequence; and follow up actions will be kept on file, ensuring that appropriate confidentiality is maintained at all times