



STANDARD

Child Safe Scouting Membership Standard



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1 Purpose

This document states the membership related standards to deliver contemporary Child Safe Scouting. It underpins Scouts Queensland's focus of being safe and youth-focused whilst being efficiently and competently managed.

2 Recruitment of Volunteer Adult Members and Employees

2.1 Requirement to complete a Member Application

A Membership Application must be completed in the following circumstances:

- Adults applying for membership of Scouts Queensland; or
- Adults applying to become a Youth Program Supporter; or
- Youth Members who are transitioning to Rover Scouts **and** taking on an Adult Membership role

Youth Members transitioning to Rover Scouts are required to complete the A20 Rover indemnity Form but not a Membership Application.

When completing the Member Application or Rover Indemnity Form, the applicant **MUST** respond Yes or No to the following:

1. Have you ever been found guilty of an offence of any sexual nature committed in Australia or any other country?
2. Have you ever been charged, reported, or defended in a court of law any allegation of sexual abuse, assault or a sexual offence of any kind in Australia or in another country?
3. Have you ever been (or are you currently) subject to any restrictions regarding your contact with children in any employment, volunteer, or personal capacity?
4. Have you ever been dismissed or resigned as a volunteer or employee (or reported by any authority) for improper conduct relating to children in any jurisdiction?
5. Have you been named as the defendant in an Intervention Order, Restraining Order, Apprehended Violence Order or Domestic Violence Restraining Order, or equivalent, in any jurisdiction?
6. You commit to advise Scouts Australia (Qld Branch) if you are ever approached by the authorities in relation to improper conduct relating to children, assault, or any sexual offences by you, whilst you are a member.

The Membership Application for adults and Rover Indemnity Form must include a statement of the Blue Card laws and penalties and the obligations of volunteers should they become a restricted person. The Applicant and in the case of the Member Application for Youth Members, the Applicants parents / care-giver must sign an acknowledgement of the laws and their obligations.

If the answer provided to any of questions 1, 2, 3 or 4 is "Yes", then the Membership Application cannot be progressed until a Blue Card is obtained and a recommendation on suitability is made by the Assistant Chief Commissioner People and Culture.

If the answer provided to question 5 is "Yes" then the applicant shall be invited to provide a confidential statement to the Chief Commissioner for their consideration of the membership application.

If the answer provided to question 6 is "No" then the membership application shall be rejected.

2.2 Requirement to hold a Queensland Blue Card (Blue Card)

The Queensland Blue Card is the Working with Children Card (WWCC).

To maintain their membership, adults, as a pre-requisite to Membership and for Youth Members prior to turning 18 years of age, shall undertake Blue Card screening available on-line through the Blue Card Services Portal.



Membership will be progressed only if the Adult is issued a Blue Card or an Exemption Card. The Exemption Card is available to registered teachers or police officers in Queensland in lieu of a Blue Card when providing regulated services to children which are outside their professional duties.

2.2.1 Members with an Intellectual Disability

Blue Card Services accepts applications from individuals with intellectual disabilities, however they do ask that, where possible, the application form is signed by either a guardian of the individual or a person with power of attorney. If the applicant is physically unable to sign the application, they also would appreciate a notation to that effect on the application form, so that if and when the card is produced, they can make that clear in the area where the signature would normally appear. Applications should also include a covering letter and or copy of the power of attorney document. This will assist with processing and help avoid a request for further information.

2.2.2 International Members

All International Members must provide an International Letter from their National Scout Organisation (NSO) **before** they attend meetings in local Groups. The decision then needs to be made in relation to how long the person will attend the Group. Do they need to be signed up and hold a Blue Card? A Blue Card is **NOT** required if the person is a Guest of a Group and:

- Is observing or supplying information or entertainment to 10 or more people;
- The activity is for 7 days or less cumulative in a calendar year;
- The person is not to be alone with a Scout without an Adult Member present; and,
- If they do not meet the above requirements, including the requirement for an International Letter of Introduction, then they must sign up on the A1 form and apply for a Blue Card while they are attending the Group. Refer to *QBSI 3.6.4.2. Adults Moving from Another National Scout Organisation (NSO) Registering with Queensland Branch* for conditions of Appointment.

Until these Adults hold a valid Blue Card or Exemption Card and have been issued a Certificate of Proficiency, they must always be supervised by a Leader who does hold a Certificate of Proficiency.

2.2.3 Timing of involvement with youth in relation to issue of the Blue Card

Provided that they are not a Restricted Person, an adult who is a parent of a Youth Member and working in the same Group as their child or exempted under the Act may commence working with youth as a Volunteer whilst waiting for their Blue Card to be issued.

An adult who is not a parent of a Youth Member or does not hold an Exemption Card under the Act may not commence working with youth as a Volunteer until they hold a valid Blue Card (that is cannot attend Unit meetings, activities, camps etc.). Once the Blue Card is issued Adults can attend normal Unit activities, however until a Certificate of Proficiency is issued the adult shall always be supervised by a Leader who does hold a Certificate of Proficiency.

An Adult may not commence as a paid employee until they hold a valid Paid Blue Card.

2.3 Reference checks

All Adults shall be requested to provide at least two names of referees for reference checking as part of their application for Membership. Only one referee may be a current adult member of Scouts Queensland and cannot be a family member. Reference checks will be thoroughly completed for every Adult. Copies of the reference check will be maintained at the Branch Office.



Ultimately, the decision for Membership suitability rests with the Chief Commissioner for Volunteers and the General Manager for employees. Scouts Queensland will adopt a “Four Eye” approach to screening which involves two senior persons at the Branch level making an independent assessment on each applicant.

2.4 New Member Induction

When an Adult wishes to support Scouts Queensland as a Volunteer or as an employee or as a Rover Scout, his/her induction shall include:

- face to face discussion and completion of IAVP phase 1,
- formal training in the Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics and CYM-POL-01 *Child Safe Scouting Policy*, the CYM-STD-01 *Child Safe Scouting Reporting Standard*, and the Policy and Rules of the Association.

As part of an Adult Member’s induction, they shall be informed of their obligations under sections 229BB and 229BC of the Criminal Code.

The person who accepts the Adult as a Member is responsible for ensuring these matters are addressed thoroughly and in accordance with this Standard. Adults are to formally acknowledge that they have received this discussion / training.

2.5 New Member Training and Development

Scouts Australia Child protection training is **mandatory** for Adult Members and is to achieve the following outcomes;

- Adults are to be able to identify the signs of Child Abuse;
- Instil in Adults a strong awareness of Child Protection and Child Safe Scouting and reporting imperative; and
- Adults are able to participate in discussion in how to respond to Children who report abuse and the process for reporting.

All Adults shall complete the on-demand Scouts Australia training modules SP-Child and SP-WHS within three months of signing up for their role and resit the mandatory modules every three years to maintain their Membership

Additionally, every Adult (including but not limited to parents/guardians, spouses or partners of parents/guardians, siblings or other relatives of youth members), not falling within the above scope who are actively involved with young people are to be made aware and have access to Scout Queensland Child Safe Scouting documentation.

3 Ongoing Membership Obligations

State legislation requires Adults to inform Blue Card Services immediately they become aware they are being investigated or reported or charged by any authority concerning a disqualifying offence and/or Child Protection matter. Similarly, Scouts Queensland requires Adults to immediately inform Branch of such issues. Upon disclosure, Scouts Queensland will suspend the Adult until the matter has been finalised.

A Blue Card holder is responsible for renewing his/her Blue Card (or equivalent) before it expires. Scouts Queensland shall suspend any Adult who does not apply to renew their Blue Card before the expiry date and such suspension shall remain in place until the Blue Card is renewed.

An Exemption Card holder is responsible for renewing his/her Exemption Card (or equivalent) before it expires. A Blue Card holder or Exemption Card holder must carry their Blue Card with them when attending and/or participating in Scout activities.

All Adults shall resit the mandatory on-demand training modules every three years to maintain their Membership.



4 Suspension or Terminations of Membership

Scouts Queensland reserves the unfettered right to suspend or dismiss a Member at its discretion.

Scouts Queensland shall terminate the membership of any Member where there is any doubt as to a Member's suitability, even if a matter is unsubstantiated, not concluded or not resolved with certainty and may do so even without confirmation of any wrongdoing. Where Scouts Queensland is placed in this position, care will be taken to demonstrate Procedural Fairness however, Procedural Fairness will not displace the need for Scouts Queensland to act in a child protective manner.

Scouts Queensland shall not proceed with an application for Membership of an Adult where a doubt about suitability exists.

Scouts Queensland will terminate the membership of any Member:

- who becomes a Restricted Person which occurs:
 - o when a State Authority informs the Branch that the Member has been charged, reported or investigated for a Child Abuse matter or
 - o when a person advises the Branch that he/she has been charged, reported or being investigated for a Child Abuse matter or
 - o where their Blue Card has been declined or cancelled.
- Where completion currency of mandatory training modules, SP Child and SP WHS, is not completed within the first 3 months or has expired.

The automatic suspension or termination of a Membership may be reviewed by Scouts Queensland once the matter has been concluded by Blue Card Services.

Scouts Queensland retains the unfettered right to decline a request for reinstatement of a suspended or terminated Member. Where any doubt as to a Member's suitability exists, a Members re-application shall not to be considered.

The consequence of suspension is that the Member shall not participate in any Scouting activities, regardless of whether children are present or not. They are not to wear uniform and may under no circumstances purport to be an active Member of Scouts Queensland (both domestically and/or internationally). The notice of suspension shall specifically include these restrictions.

If any child sexual abuse related allegations are substantiated, the offender's membership shall be terminated immediately and never reinstated. The National Office of Scouts Australia shall be notified of the termination of membership by updating of the relevant National database. Regardless of the legal outcome, Scouts Queensland reserves the right to refuse reinstatement of an alleged offender who has been cleared or not charged by the Police at its discretion.

In the case where a child offends against another child, Scouts Queensland shall act in the interests of the victim and other children who may be at risk. Scouts Queensland maintains the unfettered right to limit or terminate a Youth Member's membership in the interest of the safety of others.

5 Induction of parents of new Youth Members

Parent/ carer interviews are conducted prior to each Youth Member joining Scouting and contact will then be maintained with parents/ carers as youth progress to subsequent aged-based Sections so that relevant information about the youth including any specific behaviour and medical needs is shared. Where necessary, leaders will work with parents/carers or guardians to develop robust behavioural management plans that are approved by parents and implemented in a collaborative manner between parent(s)/carers and leaders.



Further, the induction activity shall emphasise the Youth Member's right to be safe and feel safe and identify what the new Youth Member should do (including who they should contact) in the event that they do not feel safe or in the event that something has happened to that Youth Member regardless of whether the matter may be reportable or not.

To maintain a Child Safe environment, Scouts Queensland shall conduct an on-going awareness programs.

6 University students participating in Scouting as part of the University Curriculum

Where a university student is required to observe or participate in the Scouting Program as part of their university curriculum, they are already required to hold a Blue Card acknowledged by the university.

Prior to each and every occasion where the student will have direct engagement with the Youth Members, this Blue Card is to be validated by the formation. This can be done through the "Online Validation" process on the Blue Card Services Portal.

There is no requirement for a group to register the student with the organisation, though each formation is encouraged to follow best practice in recording attendance through a sign-in/out register. Adult membership and Blue Card "Online Validation" are not required if the student is attending as a part of the university requirements provided they are:

- Observing or supplying information or entertainment to 10 or more people; and
- Observing on no more than seven occasions for regular program activities only; and
- will not be alone with a Youth Member without a Leader present.

If they do not fit the above conditions, they must complete a Membership Application and complete the Blue Card Confirmation Form to continue attendance with the group.

7 Record Keeping

Scouts Queensland will maintain systems to hold records covering:

- Screening and reference checks for all Adults and Working with Children Checks capable of providing a reminder system for renewal is due and capable of identifying any Adult with an out-of-date check.
- Suspended/cancelled member register accessible by the Chief Commissioner and authorised persons.
- Risk Register (Child Safety) accessible by the Chief Commissioner and authorised persons.

All records concerning Child Abuse cases shall be maintained securely and confidentially. These detail records are to be held indefinitely by Scouts Queensland and summary records by the National Office as appropriate. Access to the information will be strictly controlled and open only to authorised personnel within Scouts Queensland.

Scouts Queensland will share any records they hold with the Police or other authorised investigatory body as requested by them.

8 Sharing of information

Scouts Queensland shall keep records of all screening and regular screening updates as well as decisions taken regarding employees and volunteer Adult Members. Scouts Queensland shall update the National database with the name and relevant details of any person whose Membership has been terminated or declined by the Branch for the purpose of cross-checking Membership applications across Branches.

Scouts Queensland shall unreservedly share any information pertaining to a Child Protection matter as requested by Child Protection Authorities both within Queensland and interstate, in the interests of child protection.



When sharing any information in relation to allegations of child abuse concerning Scouting members or at Scouting activities to a 3rd party (other than the Child Protection Authorities) Scouts Queensland shall consult with the investigating authority about Scouts Queensland conducting any internal investigation into the matter so as not prejudice the investigating authority's investigation. For this reason, Scouts Queensland would not normally conduct its own internal investigations into such matters.

9 Public Statements

Public statements by Queensland Branch regarding Child Protection SHALL only be made by the Chief Commissioner, the Chair of the Branch Executive Committee or General Manager. In all cases, the details of reports, the names of people involved and the circumstances are to be restricted to only those who need to know.

10 Non-compliance with this Standard

Non-Compliance includes but is not limited to:

- Failing to undertake training or retraining as required by this Standard;
- Failing to provide induction activities as required by this Standard;
- Not having a current Blue Card as required; and,
- Failing to protect children from sexual offending;
- Failing to adhere to Scouts Queensland Child Protection Policy.

On behalf of the Chief Commissioner and the General Manager, the Assistant Chief Commissioner People and Culture is responsible for the management of matters of non-compliance.

All matters of alleged non-compliance may be reported by email to complaints@scoutsqld.com.au.

All allegations of non-compliance will be treated in the strictest confidence to protect the privacy of children and young people.

11 Terms and definitions

The following key terms and definitions are unique to this Standard. Please refer to the [Scouts Queensland Glossary](#) for other terms not included in this section.

Term	Definition
Blue Card	Queensland's Working With Children Card
Blue Card Services	The Queensland Government authority which administers the blue card system— Queensland's Working with Children Check.
Blue Card Services Portal	On-line access to Blue Card Services to help manage Blue Card obligations and records.
IAVP	Individual Adult Volunteer Plan

12 Related documents

Document Type	Document Title
Standard	CYM-STD-02 Child Safe Scouting Program Delivery Standard
Standard	CYM-STD-03 Child Safe Scouting Reporting Standard
Procedure	CYM-PRO-01 Child Safe Scouting Procedures