



Canberra Bridge Club

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Drafted by:	Alison Russell-French	Approved by CBC Committee on:	19 Sept 2023
Responsible person:	President	Scheduled review date:	Sept 2024

Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Policy

Introduction

The Canberra Bridge Club (CBC) is an incorporated association which offers members a friendly, supportive environment in which to play bridge. It is the largest bridge club in the ACT and owns its own premises in Deakin. The Club offers bridge sessions for all levels of expertise, including beginners, improvers, intermediate and those who compete at a national level.

This document sets out the policy of the CBC for compliance with the Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Act and the governance structures, responsibilities and processes that have been established to give effect to that policy.

Background

The *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011* (the WWVP Act) commenced operation in the Australian Capital Territory in November 2012.

It requires people who have contact with vulnerable people (children and vulnerable adults) while engaging in regulated activities and services to be registered with the Office of Regulatory Services (ORS).

It is an offence to work with vulnerable people without a registration. Offences apply to the person and, in certain circumstances, the employer.

Policy

The CBC is committed to the highest standards of integrity, fairness and ethical conduct, including full compliance with all relevant legal requirements, and requires that all its Committee members, officers, managers, employees, volunteers and contractors acting on its behalf meet those same standards of integrity, fairness and ethical behaviour, including compliance with any legal requirement.

There is no circumstance under which it is acceptable for the CBC or any of its employees or contractors to knowingly and deliberately not comply with the law or to act unethically in the course of performing or advancing the CBC's business.

Because offences under the WWVP Act apply to the person (and, in certain circumstances, the employer), the CBC will ensure that its employees or volunteers are aware of their responsibilities under the WWVP Act, are given appropriate support in complying with the WWVP Act and are registered.

PROCEDURES

The ACT Government has published "A Guide to Working With Vulnerable People In The ACT", available at <https://ablis.business.gov.au/ACT/resource/AD2307.pdf> . The information below is based on this document and further information may be found there.

Definitions

Who is a vulnerable person?

A person is defined as being vulnerable if they are a child under the age of 18 years or an adult who is experiencing disadvantage and accesses a regulated activity or service related to the disadvantage.

Who is an employer?

For the purposes of the WWVP Act, an employer is an agency, organisation or individual who engages an employee or volunteer in a regulated activity or service.

Who is an employee?

For the purposes of the WWVP Act, an employee is a person who is engaged by an employer to provide one or more regulated activities or services to vulnerable people and receives a monetary payment (remuneration) from an employer for providing those regulated activities or services (including sub-contractors).

Who is a volunteer?

For the purposes of the WWVP Act a person is a volunteer if the person is engaged to provide a regulated activity or service to vulnerable people and does not receive payment for providing the activity or service (apart from any payment for expenses).

What does being registered to work with vulnerable people mean?

Being registered to work with vulnerable people enables a person to work or volunteer with vulnerable people in a regulated activity.

What is a regulated activity?

Regulated activities are outlined under Schedule 1 of the WWVP Act and begin in different years depending on the type of activity or service. For the CBC, relevant activities or services are for people with disabilities engaging in activities that are managed and run by the CBC.

There are provisions for exemption as described under section 12 (2) of the WWVP Act. For example, registration is not required for a regulated activity (other than an overnight camp) that an individual engages in for no more than 3 days in any four-week period, and 7 days in any 12-month period.

For further information about the applicable exceptions, the WWVP Act is available at: www.legislation.act.gov.au

Registration

How will a person know if they are working or volunteering in a regulated activity and will need to be registered?

Information to help determine whether a person is working or volunteering in a regulated activity can be found at:

<https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/s/article/working-with-vulnerable-people-wwvp-registration-tab-overview>

Is there any cost for registration?

An application fee (\$146 in 2023) applies to obtain a registration to work with vulnerable people. Fees are the responsibility of the individual, not the employer, and are a tax- deductible expense.

A similar fee is applied by other Australian jurisdictions operating a card-based registration system for people working with children.

There is no cost to volunteers unless they are also employed in another service that is considered to be a regulated activity.

Are self-employed people required to be registered?

A self-employed person would have to be registered if they are engaged in, or providing a service to vulnerable people that is considered being a regulated activity.

Will people convening peer support groups be required to be registered?

In some instances, convenors will require registration. However, if they participate as a member of the peer support program, they are not required to register under

section 12(2) (f) of the WWVP Act – i.e. where they are *engaged in an activity in the same capacity as a vulnerable person*.

Can a person work or volunteer with vulnerable people if they are not registered?

A person must be registered if they are going to be working or volunteering with vulnerable people in a regulated activity or service on a regular basis.

However, if they have applied for registration and ORS has not made a decision about their registration, they may be able to engage in a regulated activity if the named employer agrees and they are supervised at all times while undertaking the regulated activity.

It is the employer's responsibility to ensure an employee/volunteer is supervised if it is a condition of their registration or while they are waiting on a registration decision.

Self-employed people should ensure they are registered prior to engaging in a regulated activity.

For a more detailed overview please see the fact sheet – '*When do I need to register?*' or visit the ACT legislation register: <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2011-44/default.asp>

Are potential staff or volunteers able to be registered to work with vulnerable people prior to being employed?

Yes, people may apply for registration at any time.

Does a person need to provide evidence of being registered?

Based on the outcome of the ORS risk assessment a registration card may be issued with a unique identifying number that is valid for up to three years. The card must be carried at all times while engaged in a regulated activity so that it can be produced to verify current registration.

An employer will be able to validate a registration with ORS through the unique ID on the card.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The CBC Committee is responsible for developing, adopting and reviewing this policy.

The President of the CBC is responsible for the implementation of this policy, for monitoring changes in privacy legislation, and for advising on the need to review or revise this policy as and when the need arises.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- CBC HR Policies and Procedures
- CBC Work Health and Safety Policy
- CBC Volunteer Management Policy

AUTHORISATION

(signed – Tim Mather)

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President

Date of Approval by CBC Committee: 19 September 2023

Name of Organisation: **Canberra Bridge Club**