

2026/27 SLSNSW Working with Children Check Requirements

Introduction

Surf Life Saving is committed to providing a safe environment for children and young people. The SLSA Child Safe Policy provides a framework of policies, procedures, resources and education to support clubs in meeting this commitment. A key action area of this program is to **screen and recruit the right people**, ensuring that, where applicable, members have a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC), verified by the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG).

This document outlines the legal requirements and responsibilities for members and clubs in relation to WWCCs in NSW.

Summary of Changes 2026/27 Season

This season we have changed and clarified requirements for complaint managers and water safety roles at nippers and carnivals.

- Complaint Managers are no longer required to have a WWCC but must still complete the SLS Child Safe Awareness (18 years +) course.
- The WWCC flow chart has been updated to clarify the requirements for members in water safety roles in Nippers and at carnivals.
- The Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) have reinforced that verification and re-verification of WWCC renewals must be completed on the Employer Portal of the Office of the Children's Guardian website for all volunteers and employees.
- SurfGuard must be updated **after** the club verifies the member's WWCC number on the OCG Employer Portal on their website.
- The cost for a WWCC for paid employees increased to \$112 from the 1/7/2026. A WWCC for volunteers is still free.

The NSW Working with Children Check

Under the [Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Act 2012](#) and the [Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Regulation 2013](#), a WWCC is a prerequisite for anyone in a child-related role, either paid or voluntary.

The WWCC is managed by the [Office of the Children's Guardian](#) (OCG) and involves a national criminal history check and review of findings of workplace misconduct. The result of a WWCC is either a **clearance to work with children** for five years, or a **bar against working with children**. Cleared applicants are subject to ongoing monitoring, and relevant new records may lead to the clearance being revoked.

The WWCC cannot identify people who have not previously been caught or are yet to offend.

Who needs a WWCC?

SLSNSW members who work directly with children under the age of 18 must complete a WWCC, unless their role falls within one of the scheme's defined exemptions.

Exemptions which are most relevant to SLS include:

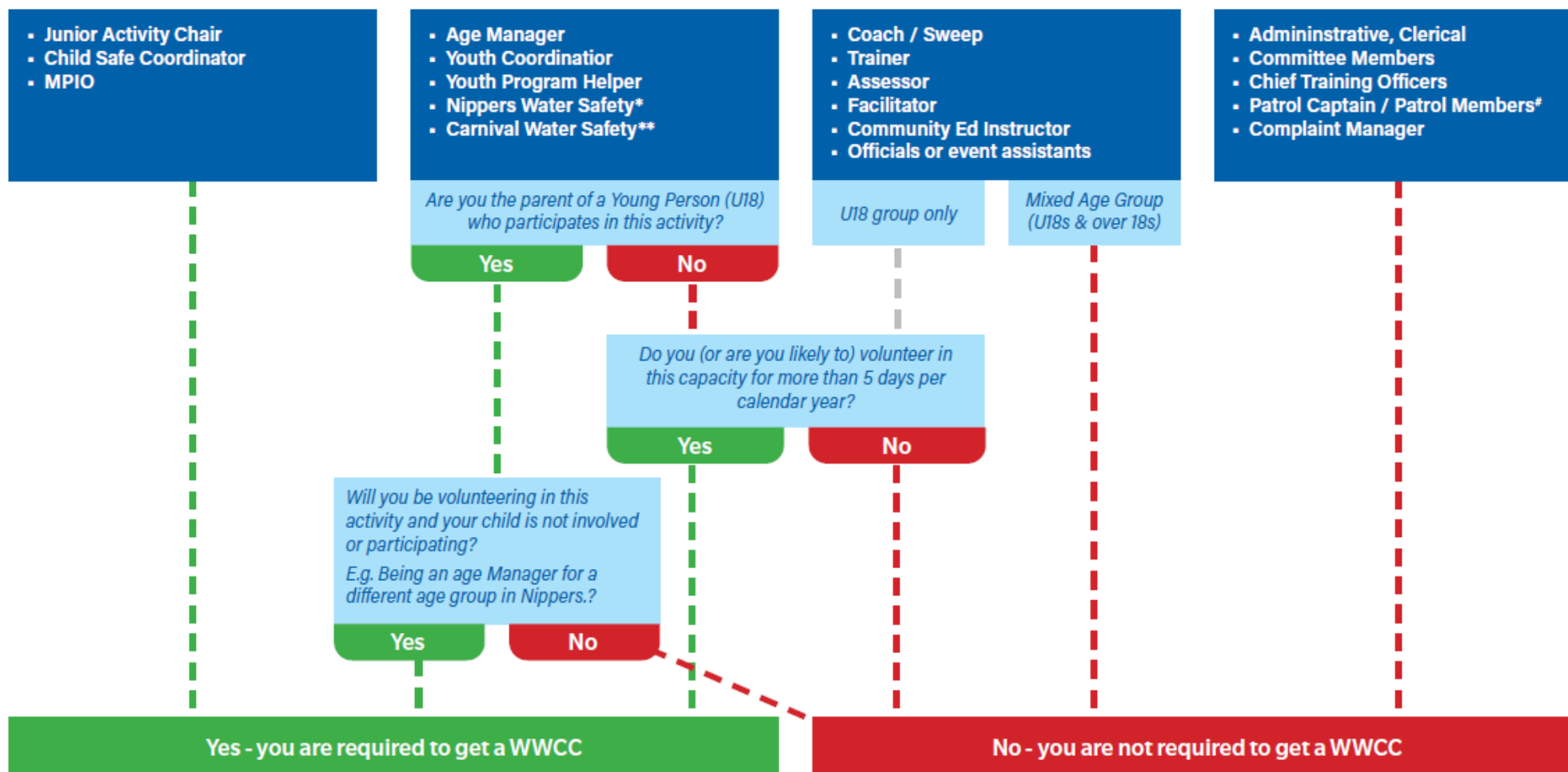
- Children (under the age of 18)
- Administrative, clerical or maintenance work
- Very short-term work (less than 5 working days in a calendar year) such as a visiting speaker, assessor or performer.
- Volunteering by a parent or close relative where the child participates*.
- Co-workers and supervisors where a child works (e.g. Patrol Captains or patrolling members)
- Interstate visitors volunteering at a one-off event (e.g. State Championships) for up to 30 days a year if they hold the WWCC in their home jurisdiction.

** This is not a blanket exemption for all parents. Parents will require a WWCC if they:*

- *are volunteering on overnight camps;*
- *are volunteering for an activity and their child is not participating (e.g. doing water safety or age manager for a different age group in Nippers)*
- *are volunteering as part of a formal mentoring program; or*
- *are volunteering in a role which involves intimate, personal care of children with a disability.*

Do you require a WWCC?

If you perform multiple roles in surf life saving, please check all the roles that may apply to you and obtain a WWCC where needed.



* Nippers Water Safety – If you are doing water safety for Nippers - you may be covered under an exemption if you are ONLY doing water safety for groups your own children are participating in.

** Carnival Water Safety – If you are doing water safety for Carnivals you will NOT be covered by an exemption because you will be providing water safety for other groups, not just groups your children are in.

* Patrol Captains and Patrol Members are exempt as they are considered 'co-workers' of patrol members who are under 18 years.

Can I ask all members to do a WWCC?

Asking someone who is covered by an exemption under the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 to complete a WWCC means that you are not compliant with the legislation. If you are not compliant with the legislation, you may be contacted by the Office of the Children's Guardian and given a timeline within which to become compliant. If you do not comply according to the timelines, the matter can escalate, and penalties may apply.

Member responsibilities

Members who require a WWCC have a responsibility to apply for this check, and to provide the club with their WWCC number.

Club Responsibilities

Clubs have a responsibility to;

- **Identify** child related roles that require a WWCC for volunteers and/or employees
- **Inform** the volunteers and/or employees of the need to get a WWCC
- **Verify** WWCCs and renewals online through the WWCC Employer Portal with the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG).
- **Record and update SurfGuard** with current WWCC information and the date of verification with the OCG.
- **Suspend or reject membership and/or participation** of volunteers and/or employees if required, depending on the outcome of the WWCC.

Applying for a WWCC – information for applicants

Those who already have a WWCC can simply provide their **WWCC Number, WWCC expiry date, full name and date of birth** to their club for online verification with the OCG.

Those who do not already have a WWCC will need to follow the below steps:

1. Complete the [online application form](#) (once the form has been submitted an Application Number will be received).
2. Take the Application Number and [proof of identity](#) to a Service NSW Centre.
3. Once received, provide their WWCC Number to the club for verification on the OCG website.

Child-related roles cannot be undertaken until the Club has completed the online WWCC verification with the OCG and the result is **'Application in Progress'** or **'Cleared'**.

Once you have provided proof of identity, most people will receive their WWCC number within a few days. However please allow up to four weeks as in some cases waiting times may be longer.

Verifying WWCCs and acting on verification outcomes – information for clubs

The process for Clubs who undertake child-related activities involves:

1. Register as an 'employer' with the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG)

If not already completed, register via the [registration portal](#). Online help can be found [here](#).

2. Identify who will need a WWCC and inform the individuals.

It is recommended that you document that an individual has been informed they need a WWCC, to ensure this person gets their WWCC before starting in a child-related role.

The **'Notes'** field under the 'Declaration' section on a member's SurfGuard profile could be used for documenting and tracking who has been contacted.

In SurfGuard, find the Members Profile and from the toolbar click **'Membership(s) / find 'Member Protection (Surf Life Saving NSW)'** on the right-hand side / click the edit icon / use the **Notes** under **Declaration**.

3. Complete the online verification through the Employer Portal with the OCG

Login to the [OCG Employer Portal](#) and use the WWCC Number, family name and date of birth to verify. Online help can be found [here](#).

This is a vital step in the verification process. Without it, you have not confirmed that the WWCC is valid. This step also enables Surf Life Saving to be notified by the OCG if the individual becomes barred from working with children in the future.

4. Enter the WWCC details into SurfGuard

The following details must be recorded on SurfGuard after verification on the OCG website. The OCG does not store this information on their system for later recall.

In SurfGuard, find the Members Profile and from the toolbar click **'Membership(s) / find 'Member Protection (Surf Life Saving NSW)'** on the right-hand side / click the edit icon / use the **Notes** under **Declaration**.

SurfGuard Field – Working with Children Check	Information to be Entered by SLSC
Declaration	The declaration form is NOT REQUIRED in NSW.
Notes	Note if you have informed the member that they need a WWCC. Write the result of the online WWCC verification or other important notes. <i>e.g. Status: In Progress / Cleared / Barred / Interim Barred / Not Found. Type of work – volunteer or paid</i>
WWCC not required	Exemptions – Tick this box if the person is in a child related role but is covered by a WWCC exemption under the legislation.
Reason	Write what exemption the person is covered by. <i>e.g. Exempt – only volunteers in a group their child participates in.</i>
Registration/Verification Date	The date the club completed the online verification in the Employer Portal on the OCG website
Expiry Date	The WWCC expiry date
Registration No	The WWCC Number

Barred or Interim Barred results

If the club receives a 'Barred' or 'Interim Barred' result during the initial verification process or at any other point during the person's engagement with the club, then the person must immediately cease any child-related roles. **See point 6 "Removing someone from a child-related role" for further information.**

5. Appoint or remove a worker depending on the outcome of the WWCC verification

Status	Meaning
Application in progress	A Working with Children Check application is being processed. In most cases the applicant may work with children. If the applicant becomes barred or is not cleared to work with children, the Office of the Children's Guardian will contact you and advise you of what to do next.
Cleared	This applicant is cleared to work with children until their Working with Children Check expires (date shown in result).
Barred	The applicant has been barred and cannot work with children, paid or unpaid. It is an offence to engage a barred individual in child-related roles.
Interim barred	The applicant been barred and cannot work with children, paid or unpaid, pending the outcome of a risk assessment. It is an offence to engage a barred individual for child-related roles.
Not found	The database cannot find a matching result because the: • Data entered for online verification (name, date of birth and/or WWCC number or application number) has errors; • Application has been withdrawn or terminated without an outcome; • Application process has not been completed (i.e. completed the online form; presented proof of identity; paid any applicable fee). It is an offence to engage this individual in child-related roles.
Closed	The applicant's check has been closed. It is an offence to engage this person in child-related roles.
Expired	The applicant does not have a current WWCC. It is an offence to engage this person in child-related roles.

6. Removing someone from a child-related role

The WWCC is valid for up to five years. During this time, cleared applicants will be subject to ongoing monitoring. Surf Life Saving Clubs will be notified by the OCG (using the club contact details supplied in the club Employer Portal on the OCG website) if the individual becomes barred from working with children in the future.

Receiving notifications from the OCG - If the OCG sends a notification advising the Club that a person has become barred (or has an interim bar) **you must immediately remove** them from the child-related role. It does not matter whether they are paid or unpaid, supervised or unsupervised.

Note, the OCG will not advise SLSNSW of the reason for the change in status, so it is the responsibility of clubs to advise the SLSNSW [Chief Executive Officer](#) and update the member's SurfGuard record.

The club has the option to:

- Dismiss the member;
- Suspend the member from child-related roles, pending the outcome of an appeal; or
- Transfer the member to a non-child-related role within the club (although the club is under no legal obligation to find an alternative position for a barred individual).

7. Provide the SurfGuard data to the OCG if required as part of the Compliance Program

The OCG have implemented a [Compliance Plan](#) which aims to ensure Clubs understand and comply with their legal responsibilities. The compliance program is primarily focused on achieving compliance and not engaging Clubs in enforcement action.

Membership Protection Report in SurfGuard

If required, there is a report in SurfGuard which can be utilised by clubs to assess their compliance with WWCC requirements. **Menu > Member Reports > Report Type: Membership Protection Details > Select Advanced search** and select the registered season and status of the memberships to be viewed.

8. **Monitor WWCC records** to ensure that those in child-related roles renew their WWCC before their current WWCC expires.
9. **Re-verify WWCC renewals** – You must re-verify all WWCC renewals and update SurfGuard with current information and date of verification with the OCG.

Further Information

For additional information/clarification on these requirements, please visit the WWCC Frequently Asked Questions document or email memberservices@surflifesaving.com.au