



## Policy Document

<b>PRE-ENGAGEMENT SCREENING</b>		Document # AOH-HR020	Print Date N/A
		Prepared By: HR Advisor	Date Prepared: 4 Nov 2014
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Standard: Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013		Approved By: Business Manager	Date Approved: 10 Nov 2014

**Preamble**

This policy applies to all Archdiocese of Hobart (Archdiocese) employees and volunteers involved in recruitment processes and applicants who apply for a position within the organisation that has been identified as requiring pre-engagement screening, which may include but not limited to:

- work history checking (reference checking);
- criminal history check;
- Working with Vulnerable People validity check;
- right to work in Australia check; and/or
- functional capacity evaluation screening.

**Purpose**

The purpose of pre-engagement screening is to ensure that Archdiocese of Hobart's recruitment and selection processes do not result in the engagement of an applicant who:

- has been fraudulent regarding their skills, experience or fit for the role;
- has a criminal history that would prejudice safe and proper operations;
- has an invalid Working with Vulnerable People card;
- does not have a right to work in Australia;
- is unable to perform the inherent physical demands of a position.

The Archdiocese acknowledges the importance of ensuring all employees and volunteers are provided with a safe and secure workplace and is committed to:

- promoting an ethical and professional work environment; and
- ensuring that pre-engagement screening is conducted consistently and in a non-discriminatory manner.

The Archdiocese will not employ an applicant to an identified position who does not consent to pre-engagement screening. Pre-engagement screening information is not to be used for any purposes other than the purposes of the recruitment process.

**Position Descriptions**

Any positions that have been identified as requiring a Working with Children Check, National Police Criminal History Check or Functional Capacity Evaluation must have this requirement clearly identified in the position description. All applicants should expect to be reference checked and have their right to work in Australia checked.

## **Interviewing and Reference Checks**

All applicants for paid employment or unpaid voluntary positions should be interviewed by the parish priest/manager (or representative) and engaged in accordance with the policies and practices of the Archdiocese.

Prior to making an offer of employment it is critical that referees be contacted, particularly former employers. An applicant's written references are not sufficient.

Ideally the parish priest/manager should obtain an applicant's permission to contact referees. Although inadvisable, there is no legal constraint to contacting a former employer who is not listed as a referee. The Archdiocese's Human Resources Advisor recommends discussing such action beforehand with the applicant in all circumstances. It is desirable to contact more than one former employer and have a set of questions prepared to ask referees. The Human Resources Department (HR) has prepared a reference check template, available from the Intranet, and recommends contacting three (3) relevant previous employers to ensure a rounded response.

## **Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE) Screening**

The FCE assessment helps to ensure that the position will not cause or aggravate any existing injury or disease and is only one of several factors used to determine the most suitable applicant to place in a specific position. The assessment will be entirely relevant to the specific position requirements and any legislative obligations pertaining to specific categories of work, and should be considered along with the interview, reference checks and management approval.

The following needs to be noted:

- Employment cannot be refused to an applicant with a disability/impairment on the basis of screening that discloses a disability/impairment unrelated to adequate performance of the position;
- The Archdiocese of Hobart is obliged to make reasonable adjustments for applicants with disabilities/impairments to enable performance of genuine occupational requirements; and
- Genuine occupational requirements need to be accurately identified and considered 'reasonable' (i.e. majority of current and potential employees meet the genuine occupational requirements).

## **National Police Criminal History Check (NPCHC)**

The decision to conduct a NPCHC must be based primarily on a strong link between the relevant duties of a particular role and an applicant's suitability to perform those duties.

The Archdiocese requires all preferred applicants for paid employment and voluntary positions apply for a NPCHC through the Human Resources Department. Most roles within the Archdiocese will fit within the following guidelines:

- The duties of the position will or may involve direct and/or unsupervised contact with, or access to, a child or children;
- The duties of the position will or may involve direct and/or unsupervised contact with, or access to, an elderly person/s;
- The duties of the position will or may involve direct and/or unsupervised contact with, or access to, other vulnerable persons;
- The duties of the position will have responsibility for the regular handling of money or administration of financial accounts of the Parish/Archdiocese of Hobart;
- The duties of the position will have responsibility for the handling of poisons, firearms or controlled substances;
- As otherwise determined by the Archdiocese.

The Archdiocesan HR Department manages the application, outcomes and renewals process for NPCHC. The process can be completed in person, online, or by mail; the cost of the check is covered by the relevant department, Parish or program. For more information please call Human Resources.

### **Right to Work in Australia**

The Archdiocese is obliged to take reasonable steps, at reasonable times to ensure illegal workers are not employed. Right to work in Australia checks will be completed as required. The HR Department uses the VEVO verification system provided by the Department of Immigration to check work rights status, and can do so upon presentation of passport information. Compliance with working rights is the responsibility of the employee and their supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for providing the appropriate documentation to the HR Department in order to undertake a right to work in Australia check.

### **Working with Vulnerable People Registration**

All active clergy, regular supply clergy, employees and volunteers who are engaged in child related employment (working with vulnerable people) with the Archdiocese are required to be registered. Please see the *Working with Vulnerable People Policy* for more information.

### **Confidentiality and Documentation**

The Archdiocese of Hobart will ensure that all records relating to pre-engagement screening are maintained in a secure environment.