



Fact Sheet: National Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC)

A Guide for Parish Volunteers

Firstly, we would like to thank you for expressing an interest to take part in the parish community as a volunteer, it is the collective initiative of people such as yourself that ensures the growth and connectedness of the Catholic Church.

Before actively participating in your chosen ministry, you may need to have some background screening checks completed to ensure you are suitable for the ministry selected, this is due to legal and ethical reasoning.

National Coordinated Criminal History Checks or NCCHC are required for the following parish ministries:

- Pastoral visitation to aged care facilities.
- Pastoral visitation to the sick and homebound.

Please note, there may be further ministries identified by your Parish Priest that will require a NCCHC. If in doubt, please seek advice from the parish office who can liaise with the Office of Professional Standards and Safeguarding for the Wollongong Diocese to provide clarification if unsure.

WHAT IS A NCCHC?

In NSW a Police Check from the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) is known as a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check, it is a certificate that provides the disclosable court outcomes and any pending charges that are associated with an individual's name. NCCHC enables the parish and diocese to determine if an individual is suitable for certain ministries.

WHY IS A NCCHC NECESSARY?

As per the NSW Health Policy Directive: *Volunteers - Engaging, Supporting and Managing Volunteers* pursuant to Part 6 of the *Accountability Principles 2014 (Cth)* and the *Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth)*, NCCHC are an essential requirement for volunteers of any organisation when entering aged care facilities. The parish and the diocese, therefore, have a legislative obligation to ensure volunteers who enter aged care facilities have a NCCHC for liability purposes, but also to ensure the safety of those requiring support.

As a risk mitigation strategy, the diocese in consultation with parishes has extended this requirement to also include volunteers who enter the residence of those who are sick and homebound. This is to safeguard the life and property of people under the parish's duty of care.

HOW DO I OBTAIN A NCCHC?

If utilising the diocese recommended provider, *VerifyNow*, you will need to supply the parish with the following: **Full name, email address, contact number, whether this is a volunteer or employee check, postcode and ministerial position requiring a check.**

The Diocese of Wollongong engages the provider *VerifyNow* to conduct its NCCHC for employees and volunteers. *VerifyNow* are an Australian based accredited organisation that complete screening checks. The **application process is online** and requires the following:

- Personal Information (Full name, birth details, contact information, 5 year's history of residential address/ addresses)
- Identity documents, including:
 1. A "selfie" where you are holding a photo ID document.
 2. Evidence of change of name (if applicable)
 3. Identity documents with former name (if applicable)
- Your consent for *VerifyNow* to undertake identity verification via document verification service (DVS)
- Your consent for *VerifyNow* to run the nationally coordinated criminal history check with the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC)
- This will require the use of technology and access to your email as such if you require assistance, please contact the parish office, who may be able to provide assistance.

Where the parish is unable to offer support, you may **seek approval from the parish** to utilise an external provider (for example NSW Police, Australia Post, or another accredited body) [this may require payment at the time of application, however, reimbursement can be made through the parish office with a formal receipt], or if you have been issued a NCCHC at your place of employment, or another volunteer role it will be accepted if it meets the following requirements:

- 1.1 The certificate must be obtained for the purposes of the ministry role; or
- 1.2 If a person seeks to submit a certificate that has been obtained for a purpose other than their ministerial role it will still be accepted if it meets the timeframe requirements (as outlined in 1.3).
- 1.3 The date of issue on the certificate must be within a reasonable timeframe (no more than 1 month prior to their commencement of their ministerial role within the parish).
- 1.4 Supply a copy to the parish office who will pass this onto the Office of Professional Standards and Safeguarding for review (verification@dow.org.au)

For **in-person applications**, Australia Post can assist (they are classified as an external provider so you will need to seek authorisation from the parish and comply with the above requirements). When applying at the post office you will need to complete the [Australia Post Application for National Police Check form](#) and take along your **4 ID documents**. For more information, please see the Australia Post website.

HOW DO I LOG INTO VERIFYNOW TO COMPLETE MY NCCHC?

If you are an applicant, you will receive an email from *VerifyNow* with the login information, this is sent to the address you supplied to the parish office. You will also need the postcode that was uploaded in your information to the parish.

HOW LONG WILL MY NCCHC TAKE TO BE PROCESSED?

Depending on the provider a NCCHC can take anywhere from a few days to 4 weeks. Please note, if your application goes to ACIC for review the process **may** take longer. You will be advised as soon as your NCCHC has been issued and cleared.

WILL I RECEIVE A COPY OF MY NCCHC RESULTS?

No, the Catholic Diocese of Wollongong will retain the certificate on file in a secure manner, you will be supplied with the organisations' reference number for your check along with the date of issue and expiry, to be shared if necessary.

HOW LONG IS MY NCCHC VALID FOR?

The diocese requires NCCHC to be re-applied for every 3 years for active volunteers from the date of issue. NCCHCs do not have a standardized expiry date as it is a point-in-time check, which means the results only reflect police records on the date and time the result is released. Therefore, when completing a new NCCHC in 3 years' time the same application process as set out above will need to be conducted.



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