

**From:** admin (CHILDRENSACTIONPLAN)  
**Sent:** Friday, 17 April 2015 2:37 p.m.  
**To:** Marni Darrah  
**Subject:** Safety checking of children's workers starts 1 July 2015

Kia ora koutou

I am really pleased to be able to tell you about an important next step in keeping our children safe.

On 1 July 2015 the first phase of new improved safety checking of people who work with children comes into force. New government regulations made under the Vulnerable Children Act 2014 will require State-funded organisations who work with children to have all their paid children's workforce safety checked.

The regulations and accompanying information to support compliance will be published at the end of May and are likely to include requirements for:

- identity verification
- reference checks, interviews, Police vetting, and seeking information from professional bodies (as relevant)
- considered judgment
- periodic re-checking every three years

**We're phasing the safety checking requirements in over three to four years to give people time to have all their workforce checked.**

**Phase one on 1 July will require State-funded employers to ensure core children's workers starting a job with them as employees or contractors are safety checked before they start work.**

Core children's workers work alone with, or have primary responsibility or authority over, children. Examples of roles that may meet these definitions include teachers, nurses and youth counsellors. Safety checking requirements will be staggered for State-funded children's workers:

- 1 July 2016 new non-core workers starting a job or contract
- 1 July 2018 existing core workers (i.e., those currently employed, or engaged as a contractor)
- 1 July 2019 existing non-core workers

Government agencies will be taking an educative approach to supporting compliance, not a punitive one, although organisations that put children at risk may be prosecuted.

From 1 July 2015, the Act will also prohibit people with certain child abuse, sexual offending or violence convictions from working in core worker roles (these are specified in Schedule Two of the Act).

Anyone convicted of the listed offences won't be able to work in core children's worker roles unless they are granted an exemption.

You can access more detail on the Children's Action Plan website including a good practice guideline on safety checking Social Development Minister Anne Tolley released last month. [www.childreensationplan.govt.nz](http://www.childreensationplan.govt.nz)

One of the things that may be changing for State-funded organisations who work with children is that they will need to conduct more regular Police vetting. Police would like to remind employers that they should generally only seek a Police vet for people actually working with children or vulnerable adults.

I encourage State-funded employers to take this one step at a time – government agencies will be there to help and support compliance, and priority will be given to safety checking new core workers, so there is no need to safety check your other workers yet.

The vision of the Children's Action Plan is that every child deserves to be protected from abuse and neglect and the new safety checking regulations are part of this programme to support the children's workforce to better protect and support all children.

If you have any queries please don't hesitate to email us. [admin@childrensactionplan.govt.nz](mailto:admin@childrensactionplan.govt.nz)

With regards,  
Sue Mackwell  
National Children's Director

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