



## Mission Resourcing

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# Police Vetting Policy & Process for Lay Workers and Volunteers

## Purpose of Police Vetting

Ministry work puts a person in a position of trust, therefore to ensure the safety of our members Conference decided that Police Vetting Checks are mandatory for all active Presbyters, Deacons, stationed Lay Ministers, and volunteers and paid lay workers over the age of 17, who work with children, youth and vulnerable adults.

Police Vetting checks allows the Church to access details of any recorded criminal convictions. If there are any records which raise concerns, further discussion will take place before a decision is made in regards to the role of the applicant.

These checks **must be** updated every five years.

Under the Vulnerable Children Act 2014, people who work with children are to undergo a safety check. The new legislation has divided children's workers into two groups;

1. Core Children's Workers – These are workers who are working in fully or partially state-funded enterprises or organisations.
2. Non-Core Children's Workers – These are workers who are working in churches and organisations which are not funded by the state

## Process

The following process is written to facilitate the Police Vetting process determined by the NZ Police;

1. **The Parish Council (or in some cases the Leaders Meeting\*\*);**
  - a) **Designates a person to manage the police vetting check process on behalf of the Parish / Congregation.**
  - b) **Identifies the people required to complete a Police Vetting check by listing them on the Parish Checklist for Police Vetting checks.**

\*\* A Leaders Meeting may be given this responsibility by the Parish Council, in some cases the Leaders Meeting of a congregation will be in better position to identify who should be involved.

2. **The designated person then requests each lay worker(s) and volunteer(s) identified on the Parish checklist to complete the consent form.**

The form must be filled in by hand and signed by the person concerned. A copy of a current photo identification of the applicant, must be attached to the consent form for verification (E.g. Current Passport or Current Drivers Licence)

Please note the following:

- The applicant must read the information about the Request and Consent Form before signing and authorising the Police to disclose any personal information it considers relevant to their application to the Methodist Church for the purpose of assessing their suitability.
- Vetting checks can only be carried out with the consent of the applicant given on the correct consent form and the form must not be older than three months when submitted by Mission Resourcing. It is recommended that in case of any difficulties or delays in the system that consent forms are submitted promptly.
- Legislation requires that all children's and youth workers be police vetted as per the designated schedule (refer Safety Checking the Childrens' Workforce Flowchart').

**3. The completed original consent forms with the completed Parish checklist must then be sent by post to the Mission Resourcing Office for processing.**

To: Mission Resourcing  
Private Bag 11-903  
Ellerslie  
Auckland 1542

Please note the following:

- Photocopies or faxed forms **cannot** be processed. This is a requirement of the agreement entered into with the Police Vetting Service.
- Consent forms can be obtained on request from the Mission Resourcing Office or from the Mission Resourcing website [www.missionresourcing.org.nz](http://www.missionresourcing.org.nz)
- Mission Resourcing will retain all original consent forms in a secure place until the results have been received from the NZ Police Vetting Service Centre (Unless requested by the NZ Police). The NZ Police Vetting centre requires between 2-4 weeks to process requests for police checks.

**4. Once Mission Resourcing receive the results the following will take place:**

- **A copy of the completed Parish checklist will be filed into the Parish file at Mission Resourcing.**
- **The original Parish checklist and the original Police check with the results will be sent to the Parish designated person.**

Please note the following:

- In order to meet the obligations of the Privacy Act and to safeguard the integrity of the process, police check information will be dealt with by mail not by email or fax. Email may be used for general enquiries about process but not for specific information about people

**5. The designated person must then;**

- a) File the checklist in a secure place for the Parish records.**
- b) Return the original Police check and the results to each applicant for their records. Please refer below in regards to the process for an unsatisfactory report.**

Parishes must not retain any copies of individual completed Police vetting forms or results, all the information required are included on the Parish checklist.

Please note the following:

- It is the responsibility of the Parish Superintendent to ensure that all the rules and regulations concerning safety checks are duly followed.
- Should an '**unsatisfactory**' report be received the Parish Superintendent will be advised by Mission Resourcing. Mission Resourcing will report on the findings

and recommend a decision or process forward, however the decision will need to be made by the Parish Council (although depending on the severity of the report, please note that the Synod Superintendent and General Secretary may need to be involved).

The Parish Superintendent in consultation with the Parish Council will decide whether the person should remain in their current position. The decision made will depend on various factors including but not restricted to:

- The nature of the offence and the relevance to the current situation
  - The length of time since the crime was committed
  - Age and maturity now as compared to when the crime was committed as well as the seriousness of the crime
  - Pattern of crime. E.g. A short spate may indicate a 'phase' but a regular pattern may indicate continuing inappropriate behaviour
  - The position which the person is currently holding
- Details of Police Vetting are to be disclosed ONLY to the individual(s) tasked with handling this information and the individual who is the subject of the police vetting. The Parish, Synod Superintendent and the General Secretary will only be informed if an adverse report is received. No details are to be disclosed to any other person or committee, including the Parish Council.
  - Information supplied by the Police must be destroyed (shredding or some other secure means) once it is no longer useful – that is, when the person leaves the parish, no longer holds an office / position in the parish.

#### **What is Police Vetting?** (Sourced from the NZ Police website)

Police vetting searches the Police database for any information held about the person being vetted. Criminal conviction information is released in accordance with the Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004.\*

#### **Information released may include;**

- Information that NZ Police consider relevant to the application
- Active charges and warrants to arrest
- Any information received or obtained by NZ Police and any interaction with NZ Police in any context (including family violence). This may include information about;
  - Behaviours of a violent or sexual nature that may not have resulted in a conviction
  - Any interaction, including as a victim, with Police, whether it resulted in a criminal conviction or not.
- Conviction history

Information about traffic infringements, other than those resulting in demerit points or a suspended driver's licence, is not available.

In the interests of natural justice, organisations must discuss this information with the person before making any employment decision. It might well be that there is no longer any risk.

Where the person being vetted is concerned about the accuracy of information, the Police welcome correction.

**IMPORTANT:** Police vetting is not a complete background check in itself. It should be used only as part of a robust recruiting and screening process. This includes your thorough verification of two to three ID's including one which is photographic (refer Consent Form). You are encouraged to become familiar with [www.dia.govt.nz/Resource-material-Evidence-of-Identity-Standard-Index](http://www.dia.govt.nz/Resource-material-Evidence-of-Identity-Standard-Index) particularly, but not restricted to cases where concern about the validity of documents exists.

*Updated May 2016*