

# Disability Services and Other Legislation (Worker Screening) Amendment Act 2020

The Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (the Department) is responsible for implementing changes to disability worker screening in Queensland.

## Background

The *Disability Services and Other Legislation (Worker Screening) Amendment Act 2020* was passed on 4 December 2020. When it commences, the Act will implement NDIS worker screening in Queensland.

This means:

- The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commissioner has extended the transitional arrangements for worker screening until 1 February 2021.
- Queensland will commence NDIS worker screening by early 2021.
- The Bill will commence by proclamation which means that the commencement date will be confirmed once formally approved.
- From commencement, new employees of NDIS registered providers will need to apply for a clearance at the [Worker Screening website](#).
- Existing yellow card holders are able to continue to work for registered NDIS providers until their card expires or is cancelled. Further details about arrangements for existing card holders will be published before commencement of NDIS worker screening.

The Department is also launching a new online and automated application process that links with the NDIS Worker Screening Database (NWSD) and strengthens identity checks.

## Impact on people with disability

This Act will enhance safeguards for people with disability. It will introduce:

- a no card-no start law to ensure people who need to be screened are checked before they start working with people with disability
- a stronger framework for excluding people convicted of concerning offences
- a stronger decision making framework that focuses on risk and considers a broader range of information
- national daily monitoring of changes in criminal history
- expanded screening requirements so more people need to be screened to work with people with disability.

Self-managed NDIS participants can choose to have workers of unregistered providers screened. Further details about how to do this will be published before commencement.

## Impact on disability workers

Workers and volunteers will apply for a clearance through the Queensland online application process rather than the current process where the employer applies on their behalf. Paper-based application forms will also be available for those unable to apply online.

## **Impact on disability service providers**

Employers will access the NDIS worker screening system through the NWSD. They will use the NWSD to confirm they are proposing to engage the applicant.

Employers will also receive notifications and communications about people they employ with clearances or exclusions from the NWSD.

## **Queensland Disability Worker Screening**

A small number of workers other than NDIS service provider employees will also need screening. Queensland will maintain a separate but similar state-based system to screen these workers.

People covered by this system will include, for example, workers in the Queensland Government-run Accommodation Support and Respite Services, and Queensland Government-funded disability advocacy services.

## **People who need a blue card too**

People who work with children with disability will need both an NDIS worker screening clearance and a blue card. People who need both will be able to apply for both at once for one fee from commencement.

People who apply for and get an NDIS worker screening check and subsequently require a blue card to work with children with disability, will be able to apply for a blue card for a reduced fee.

## **Keep up to date with transition news**

More detailed information and resources to assist the disability services sector will be released by the Department in the lead up to transition.

Regular updates on the transition to NDIS worker screening will be available on the 'Latest News' link on the [Worker Screening website](#).

Or call 1800 183 690 for assistance.

