"The biggest gift we can give to our children, is our love and protection. Let us be there for them. I call on everyone in society to take their responsibilities in doing their utmost to helping end child abuse. Stand up for our children who are voiceless and denounce abuse at all cost. Make our homes, our communities and our society safe for children to thrive."

- Minister Patricia Francourt

"There is no duty more important than ensuring that their rights are respected, that their welfare is protected, that their lives are free from fear and that they can grow up in peace."

- Kofi Annan

For further inquiries and support, contact us on

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Victoria

Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs

Department of Social Affairs

CHILDREN (WORKING WITH CHILDREN SUITABILITY CHECK) REGULATION, 2024

Introduction

The Social Affairs Department have the statutory responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of children under the Children Act. The powers vested in the Social Services enable it to assume a coordinating role in the protection of children against all forms of abuse.

The Monitoring and Compliance section of the Social Services Division was established during the year 2021, through the enactment of Children (working with children suitability check) Regulations from the Children Act 2022. The Monitoring and Compliance Section is mandated to help develop and implement the suitability check framework as per Cap 28 of the Children Act, which highlights the importance of the check as a mechanism to warrant the safety of our children.

WHAT IS A SUITABILITY CHECK ?

A Suitability Check is a process used to conduct a thorough background check to verify the validity and accuracy of the documents and information provided by a candidate. This check is performed before granting clearance to the individual or giving approval to an organization that requires the information prior to hiring the applicant.

The purpose of the Suitability Check is to go beyond a basic police character certificate and conduct a comprehensive vetting of individuals. This helps to minimize risks and prevent those who may pose a threat to children from working with them.

Who is Eligible for Suitability Check?

Applies to all workers engaged in child related work; and persons involved in volunteer work with children on a continuous basis, such as:

- Educational Institutions;

- Childcare Providers (Childminders, Day Care Operators, Assistants etc.) ;

- Social Workers and Assistants;

- Health Care Professionals (Hospitals, Community Health Centers, Private Clinics, Pediatric Service);

- Religious Organisations;

- Clubs, Associations or Movements;

- Sports Services (coaching or tuition for children)

Documents needed for check

- National Identity Card / Passport

- Police Character Certificate

- Medical Fitness Certificate

- Reference letter from 2 recent previous employees

- Proof of current Address

- Gainful Occupation Permit (GOP) for foreigners

Offences and Penalties

A worker, shall not:

⇒ engage in child-related work without a current clearance;

Any person who does so, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of level 2 on the standard scale or to imprisonment not exceeding 2 years, or to both.

⇒ An employer shall not engage, or continue to engage, another person as a worker, knowing that the worker does not have a current clearance.

An employer who does so, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of level 3 on the standard scale or to imprisonment not exceeding 3 years, or to both.

⇒ A person who in, or in relation to, an application for the carrying out of a suitability check or in connection with a re-assessment gives information that is false or misleading in a material particular, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of level 3 on the standard scale or to imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or to both.

"GET CHECKED, FOR THE BETTERMENT OF OUR CHILDREN"