

Question on Notice

No. 990

Asked on 23 August 2018

MR D JANETZKI ASKED THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (HON Y D'ATH) –

QUESTION:

With reference to pages 106-107 of the 'Queensland Family and Child Commission: Blue Card and Foster Care Systems Review' concerning average processing times —

Will the Attorney-General advise what the average processing time was for every withdrawal or cancellation of a blue card application concerning a disqualifying offence from 2015 to 2018 (reported separately by year)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Toowoomba South for his question.

The blue card system mitigates past, present and future risks to children through:

- screening people working with children and deeming people ineligible to work with children based on their known police or disciplinary information;
- monitoring all blue card holders and applicants on a daily basis through an electronic interface with the Queensland Police Service (QPS) for changes in their Queensland police information; and
- legislatively requiring child-related organisations to implement policies and procedures to manage risks to children.

People with no known police or disciplinary information are automatically issued with a blue card. Where a person has known police or disciplinary information, Blue Card Services undertakes a thorough assessment which is underpinned by a robust decision-making framework.

Where a person's police information is concerning, Blue Card Services considers a broad range of information (e.g. police and court briefs, sentencing submissions, child protection information etc). When making a decision about an application, the welfare and best interests of a child are the paramount consideration.

Daily monitoring means that Blue Card Services can take immediate action if there is a concerning change in the person's Queensland criminal history. Where a blue card holder is charged with a disqualifying offence, their blue card is **immediately suspended**.

The average processing time over the last six financial years for blue card applications withdrawn due to the return of police information containing a charge or conviction for a disqualifying offence is as follows:

Average processing times for blue card applications withdrawn due to the return of police information containing a charge or conviction for a disqualifying offence.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015 - 16	2016 – 17	2017 - 18
Average processing time (business days) for applicants with a paid employment child-related activity type (i.e. where the person can commence while their application is processing)	11	7	5	8	7	4
Average processing time (business days) for applicants with a volunteer or business child-related activity type (i.e. where the person requires a blue card before they can commence)	15	10	6	5	6	4

These figures represent the total time from the receipt of the police check to the point where the application is withdrawn.

Once Blue Card Services receive police information from QPS that the person has a charge or conviction for a disqualifying offence, steps are taken to **immediately withdraw** the application.