

Question on Notice

No. 552

Asked on 14 May 2026

MR J MARTIN ASKED THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE AND MINISTER FOR INTEGRITY (HON D FRECKLINGTON)

QUESTION:

With reference to blue card applications, including National Reference System and Blue Card System checks—

Will the Attorney-General advise, for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 April 2026, the average and median (reported separately) processing time in calendar days for finalised applications (a) where no police information or other relevant information was identified, (b) where police or other relevant information was identified and a risk assessment was required and (c) for the those in (b), where the applicant was required to provide additional information?

ANSWER:

I am advised Blue Card Services data is reported in business days and calculates average timeframes, rather than the median.

Average processing time includes the time taken to receive assessable information from external agencies and, where required, additional information from the applicant.

In 2025-26, as at 30 April 2026, the average processing time in business days for finalised blue card applications was:

- a) 1.76 days, where no police or other relevant information was identified;
- b) 29.64 days, where police or other relevant information was identified and a risk assessment was required. This includes the time taken for information to be provided to Blue Card Services, which can be considerable; and
- c) 76.40 days for more complex matters. This includes the time taken for information to be provided to Blue Card Services, including additional information from the applicant, which can be considerable.

The *Working with Children Check Act 2000* is protective legislation which warrants a precautionary approach in the assessment of a person's eligibility to hold a blue card, to ensure decisions are made in the best interests of children.

Given this precautionary approach, some applications can take longer to process, as it is imperative that all relevant information is obtained, every applicant provided with natural justice, and a thorough and robust assessment undertaken to ensure a decision is made in the best interests of children.