



Confidentiality Guidelines for Authorised Officers

DCSI Screening Unit

Authorised Officers need to be aware that any information provided to them in a screening assessment briefing is confidential and must be treated accordingly.

Only nominated/registered Authorised Officers are permitted by the Screening Unit to view the confidential assessment briefings the Unit provides to the organisation during the screening assessment process.

The role of Authorised Officers

Before applying for screening by the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) Screening Unit, organisations are required to nominate an Authorised Officer from their organisation and register that officer with the Screening Unit.

The Authorised Officer is the person within the 'requesting organisation' with whom the Screening Unit will liaise when potential risks are identified during screening assessments. Authorised Officer/s are responsible for receiving confidential screening assessments relating to the employees, volunteers and students who are being screened on behalf of the organisation and are responsible for making final decisions as to the suitability for employment or engagement within that organisation.

Authorised Officers are required to:

- provide their relevant contact details and ensure these details are kept up-to-date;
- ensure they are familiar with the duties and responsibilities of the role(s) for which employees or volunteers are being screened; and
- be in a position of sufficient authority to make a determination about whether risks identified during the screening process can be managed within the workplace/volunteer organisation.

It is important that Authorised Officers ensure that they are fully compliant with their legislative, regulatory and contractual responsibilities pertaining to the confidentiality of information.

Confidential assessment briefings frequently contain highly sensitive personal information, which is subject to a range of legislative, regulatory or contractual protections that stipulate how such information is to be shared and/or used by organisations.

The Screening Unit obtains criminal history reports from the [Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission](#) (ACIC). The Unit is required by the ACIC to ensure that assessment briefings that containing criminal history information are destroyed within three (3) months of the finalisation of a screening assessment. Therefore a strict prohibition applies to making such information a part of an organisation's permanent files.

Note: According to Regulation 13 of the [Children's Protection Regulations 2010](#):

- Individuals who improperly disclose or distribute a person's criminal history information may be subject to a \$10,000 fine;
- Organisations that fail to comply with Standard 7 of the [Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteers who work with children](#) may be subject to a \$5,000 fine.

Failure to observe the above requirements may result in the Screening Unit:

- being required to audit the information handling and storage policies and procedures of your organisation, in accordance with its contractual obligations with the ACIC; and/or
- ceasing to process screening applications for an organisation until such time as the Screening Unit is satisfied requirements are being met.