

# educator news july 2017

## **AMT Code of Practice update**

We recently completed our annual review of the AMT Code of Practice, to bring it into line with changes in regulation over the past 12 months. The revised version of the Code of Practice can be downloaded here:

<http://www.amt.org.au/downloads/practice-resources/AMT-code-of-practice-final.pdf>

The most significant changes have occurred in the standard for Working with Minors. New legislation recently enacted in South Australia will have implications for massage therapists sometime down the track. The previous requirement to lodge a Child Safe policy with the Department of Child Protection is no longer in force. We will keep you updated when the new requirements are established,

In addition, the new Privacy Amendment (Notifiable Data Breaches) Act 2017 will impact practising massage therapists when it commences. AMT will prepare supporting material for members to facilitate compliance with the Act. Stay tuned ...

We encourage you to review the reissued Code of Practice and welcome any feedback you may have about how we can improve the document in future iterations to support qualification delivery.

## **Mandatory Criminal Checks**

AMT is on track to launch our new mandatory criminal history checking program on August 1. From that date, all new applicants to AMT will be required to produce a national police history to be admitted to membership of the Association. Existing members of AMT will need to comply by 1 July 2018. The requirement applies to student members of AMT, as well as full practitioner members.

To support the rollout of AMT's criminal history checking scheme, we have prepared an FAQ document which outlines the key features. We have included the FAQs below and would welcome any input or suggestions you have to improve how we communicate this important initiative to future generations of massage therapists.

## **National police history check FAQs**

### *Why do I need to get a criminal history check?*

The commitment to introduce mandatory criminal checks is part of AMT's broader commitment to public safety. It will bring AMT members more in line with the regulatory requirements for registered health professionals and, along with the AMT Code of Ethics and Code of Practice, will help us to promote AMT members as a safe and ethical choice for members of the public. It will send a clear and unequivocal message that AMT is committed to the highest possible preventive measures to protect the public from



inappropriate conduct.

Furthermore, scrutinising yourself to an independent, third party regulatory body will send a message to your clients that you truly hold ethics central to your professional responsibilities as a massage therapist.

### ***When do I need to supply the certificate to AMT?***

AMT requires all current practitioner and student members to supply a national police history check by 1 July 2018.

If you are a current practitioner or student member of AMT and you already hold a national police history certificate, you can supply your check to AMT at any time leading up to 1 July 2018. You will be required to redo the check three years from the date on the certificate you supply to AMT.

New applicants to AMT membership need to supply a national police check now to be admitted to AMT.

### ***Where do I send my National Police History check certificate when I have received it?***

You need to send your certificate to AMT via one of the following methods:

1. Upload your certificate via your AMT login portal - <https://members.amt.org.au/>
2. Email your certificate to [info@amt.org.au](mailto:info@amt.org.au)
3. Post it to Association of Massage Therapists, PO Box 826, Broadway NSW 2007

### ***Is this a one off check?***

No. AMT members will be required to submit a new national police certificate every three years. The renewal process will be analogous to renewing first aid certification.

### ***I have a record due to a minor offence. Will that impact on my ongoing AMT membership?***

The requirement is not designed to pick up minor offences like shoplifting, road traffic offences, or minor drug and alcohol offences. It is designed to screen for serious indictable offences that may impact on your capacity to practise massage therapy safely and honestly, for example, a sexual assault conviction or a dishonesty offence such as one involving fraud.

### ***How will AMT determine if an offence has implications for fitness to practice as a massage therapist?***

The AMT Board has formally resolved to adopt the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) criminal history standard to determine the relevance of an offence. You can download the AHPRA criminal history standard here:

<http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registration-Standards/Criminal-history.aspx>

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In broad terms, the following factors will be taken into account when determining the relevance of an offence:

1. The nature and seriousness of the offence
2. The period of time since the offence was committed
3. The sentence imposed for the offence
4. The practitioner's behaviour since the offence was committed.

***I have lived in one or more countries other than Australia for more than a year in the past ten years. Do I need a special kind of police check?***

If you have lived overseas for twelve months or longer during the past ten years you will also need to provide a national police record check from the relevant country/ies.

The check/s must:

- cover the whole time you lived in the country
- be issued by the national police service of the country.

As it often takes some time to receive an overseas check you should apply early. The deadline for supplying police check documentation to AMT is 1 July 2018.

***I am a student member of AMT. Do I need to supply a national police certificate to AMT?***

Yes. All practitioner and student members of AMT will be required to provide the check. The only class of membership that will not be required to participate in the criminal check process is auxiliary members of AMT.

***How much will it cost to obtain a national police certificate?***

Based on current rates, it will cost around \$50.00 to obtain a certificate. This works out at roughly \$16.00 per annum on the three-year renewal cycle.

***What if I don't supply or renew my national police certificate?***

AMT will be forced to downgrade you to the non-practitioner level of membership (auxiliary). You will not be eligible for status as a health fund provider or be provided with the same level of benefits and support as practitioner members of AMT.

***I already have a working with children check/working with vulnerable people check/blue card/ochre card. Will that be enough to submit to AMT as evidence of a criminal history check?***

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No. Although these kinds of checks generally include a national police check, each State and Territory has its own laws, and different exemptions and exclusions apply. Additionally, each State and Territory has different renewal cycles for these checks.

AMT needs a checking system that is nationally coherent and one that will work with the designated three-year renewal cycle.

### *How do I obtain a national police certificate?*

AMT requires a 'Name Only' Police Certificate. This is a certificate that is based on a search of your name against the criminal history records held by police services Australia wide.

To see what information is captured in the certificate, you can download a sample here:

<http://ww1.cvcheck.com/NPCSecurityFeatures.pdf>

There is a range of ways to apply for the certificate. You can apply via the police department in your state (this will involve an in-person visit to a police station). There is also a range of accredited online suppliers that make it possible for you to apply from the comfort of your own home and then download the certificate onto your computer/device.

Below are links to the police departments in each state and to a range of accredited online suppliers where you can obtain a national police certificate:

ACT - <https://afpnationalpolicechecks.converga.com.au/>

Northern Territory - <https://forms.pfes.nt.gov.au/safent/Apply.aspx?App=CHC>

NSW - <https://npcoapr.police.nsw.gov.au/asp/dataentry/Introduction.aspx>

Queensland - <https://www.police.qld.gov.au/apps/reports/policeCertificateName>

South Australia - <https://www.police.sa.gov.au/services-and-events/apply-for-a-police-record-check>

Tasmania - <http://www.police.tas.gov.au/services-online/police-history-record-checks/>

Victoria - [http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media\\_ID=72672](http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media_ID=72672)

Western Australia - <https://smarteform.auspost.com.au/aponlineforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=auspost-npc-avk>

### **Accredited online check providers**

Please note that this is just a sample of online suppliers of national police certificates. To check that the online entity you have chosen is accredited, please refer to this list:

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[https://www.acic.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1491/f/2017/06/acic\\_national\\_police\\_checking\\_service - full list of accredited organisations\\_23062017.pdf](https://www.acic.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1491/f/2017/06/acic_national_police_checking_service_-_full_list_of_accredited_organisations_23062017.pdf)

Providers

<https://www.nationalcrimecheck.com.au/>

<https://cvcheck.com/national-police-check>

<https://policecheckexpress.com.au/>

<https://www.fastpolicechecks.com.au/about-fast-police-checks/>

### **AMT's YouTube channel**

Just a reminder that AMT's 50th anniversary conference presentations are all available for download from our YouTube channel. This includes Rebecca Barnett's presentation centering on AMT's ongoing research with the Australian Research Centre in Complementary and Integrative Medicine, which contains a lot of life-affirming news for RTO educators and the industry at large! You will find AMT's YouTube channel here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRJENFpS1dZI66oTSH4UIRw>