



Mandatory Reporting for Ministry Agents

C/2.1.5.3

When to follow this process

This process must be followed each time a ministry agent receives information, has knowledge of, or reasonably suspects that a child under the age of 18 years has been abused, or is being groomed for abuse. This process assists ministry agents to identify their reporting obligations for concerns and matters relating to:

- Current neglect and/or abuse of children or vulnerable adults
- Previous abuse of children who are now adults
- Abuse committed by children

R.E.S.P.O.N.D. process and checklist

Note: the order of the steps may vary depending on the particular circumstances and situation.

- **Reassure** – Reassure the person: “I’m glad you told me”; “It’s important for this to be addressed” or similar words that welcome the information.
- **Ensure** – Ensure immediate danger has been addressed. If there is imminent danger call 000.
- **Statement** – [Statement template](#) must be completed with detailed notes. Do not investigate. Record those to whom you have reported your concerns, both within and outside the church. Take notes as you go, keep a copy for yourself and provide a copy to the church. Ensure notes are secured and kept confidential.
- **Plan** – Plan your next actions. Complete the reporting threshold test (included in the document) to help plan the appropriate action.
- **Obligations** – Obligations to report to both statutory and church authorities must be met. Reporting is mandatory under church policy.
- **Needs** – Needs for practical assistance and referral should be attended to. The reporting and referral guide below will assist you to find the contact details.
- **Debrief** – Debrief appropriately.

NOTE: in the event of a reportable incident involving a child, follow the reporting process, and notify the parent or guardian, unless they are the alleged offender.

Reporting threshold test

1. Section 1: child sexual abuse, physical abuse, grooming

1.1. Are there marks on the child’s body that are evident to you (e.g. bruising) that do not appear to result from normal childhood activity?

- Yes
- No

1.2. Has the child made a reasonably clear statement of sexual or physical abuse?

- Yes
- No



- 1.3. Has the child made an indirect statement or behaviour (e.g. play) that suggests sexual or physical abuse?
- Yes
 No
- 1.4. Are you concerned that an adult, another child or colleague is engaging in grooming behaviours and/or sexual or physical abuse?
- Yes
 No
- 1.5. Have you or someone else witnessed grooming, sexual or physical abuse of the child including via photos, videos or other technology?
- Yes
 No
- 1.6. Are you aware of someone with access to the child who is a known sex offender or who appears to be grooming the child?
- Yes
 No
- 1.7. Is the child displaying behaviours that suggest harm resulting from sexual or physical abuse e.g. is engaging in sexualised play?
- Yes
 No
- 1.8. Is the child engaged in a sexual relationship?
- Yes
 No
- 1.9. Is the child engaged in prostitution or pornography? Do you have information that the child has a sexually transmitted disease or is pregnant?
- Yes
 No

Obligations to report are determined by your answers to the reporting threshold test in Sections 1 through to 5. **If you answered “yes” to any question in section 1 (above):**

- complete the [statement template](#) and submit it to your local Child Protection Investigation Unit (CPIU) AND Synod.

Note: contact details are listed below in the reporting and referral guide.

2. Section 2: Neglect

- 2.1. Do you have information that the parent or care giver has failed to provide the child with the conditions that are culturally accepted in our society as being essential for their physical and emotional development and well-being?
- Yes
 No
- 2.2. Do you have information that the parent or care giver has failed to provide therapeutic intervention, medical assistance, etc.?
- Yes
 No

Obligations to report are determined by your answers to the reporting threshold tests in Sections 1 through to 5. **If you answered “no” to all questions in Section 1, and “yes” to any question in Section 2 (above):**

- complete the [statement template](#) and submit it to your local Department of Child Safety AND Synod.

Note: contact details are listed below in the reporting and referral guide.



3. Section 3: Well-being concerns

3.1. After answering “no” to all previous questions, do you still hold concerns for the well-being of the child?

- Yes
- No

Obligations to report are determined by your answers to the reporting threshold tests in Sections 1 through to 5. **If you answered “no” to all questions in Sections 1 and 2, and “yes” to any question in Section 3 (above):**

- report your concerns to Crime Stoppers, Child Safety Regional Intake Service AND Synod.

Note: contact details are listed below in the reporting and referral guide.

4. Section 4: Historical abuse

4.1. Has an adult made a reasonably clear statement of sexual abuse or grooming committed against them when they were a child and has given you permission to share their statement OR you believe the alleged offender has access to children?

- Yes
- No

4.2. Has an adult made a reasonably clear statement that they witnessed sexual abuse or grooming committed against another adult who was a child at the time AND has given you permission to share their statement OR you believe the alleged offender has access to children?

- Yes
- No

4.3. Are you aware of someone who is alleged to be a child sex offender of a survivor who is now an adult, and the alleged offender has access to a child within the Church AND you do not know that the Church is aware of it?

- Yes
- No

4.4. Are you aware of someone who is a convicted child sex offender who has access to a child within the Church AND you do not know that the Church is aware of it?

- Yes
- No

Obligations to report are determined by your answers to the reporting threshold tests in Sections 1 through 5.

If you answered “no” to all questions in Sections 1, 2 and 3, and “yes” to any question in Section 4 (above):

- offer to refer the person for professional support, and
- offer to assist the person to report their matter to CPIU
- if it is evident that a risk to the well-being of children is present,
 - inform the person that you are required to report the matter to the Synod and do so.
- If you are aware of any matters listed in items 4.1 to 4.4 which occurred within the church, or any historical abuse to a child which may lead to legal action against a minister, a lay person in the church, or against the church,
 - inform the person that you are required to report the matter to the Synod and do so.

For additional guidance, discuss the matter with the delegated position within Synod.

Note: contact details are listed below in the reporting and referral guide.



5. Section 5: criminal misconduct, bullying, spiritual abuse, boundary violations, breaches of required behaviour

5.1. Are you aware of spiritual abuse, boundary violations, bullying, breaches of behaviour identified in the code of conduct, or criminal misconduct committed by a ministry agent?

- Yes
- No

5.2. Are you aware of spiritual abuse, boundary violations, bullying, breaches of behaviour identified in the code of conduct, or criminal misconduct committed by a member of a church council?

- Yes
- No

5.3. Are you aware of spiritual abuse, boundary violations, bullying, breaches of behaviour identified in the code of conduct, or criminal misconduct committed by an appointed leader, helper volunteer or employee within the congregation?

- Yes
- No

Obligations to report are determined by your answers to the reporting threshold tests in Sections 1 through 5.

If you answered “no” to all questions in Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4, and “yes” to any question in:

- Section 5.1 or 5.2 (above), report the matter to the presbytery chair;
- Section 5.3 (above), report the matter to the church council chair.

Note: contact details are listed below in the reporting and referral guide.



Reporting and referral guide

6. Section 1: Reporting

Reporting to the Synod	Contact details
Synod Abuse and Harm Hotline	1800 586 591 complaints@ucaqld.com.au
Safe Ministry with Children	https://ucaqld.com.au/synod-services/safety/safe-ministry-with-children/
Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer (Synod office)	07 3377 9833 safeministrywithchildren@ucaqld.com.au
Manager, Health and Safety (Synod Office)	07 3377 9703 Health.Safety@ucaqld.com.au

Reporting to Police	Contact details
Emergency	000
Contact Policelink (Queensland) Report suspicious activity via an online report	131 444 Online: https://forms.police.qld.gov.au/launch/SuspiciousActivity/
Crime Stoppers Make an online report	1800 333 000 Online: https://www.crimestoppers.com.au/give-information
Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer (Synod office)	07 3377 9833 safeministrywithchildren@ucaqld.com.au

Reporting to the Department of Child Safety	Contact details
Report Child Abuse	https://www.csyw.qld.gov.au/child-family/protecting-children/reporting-child-abuse
Use the reporting guide to help you decide	https://secure.communities.qld.gov.au/cpguide/engine.aspx
During business hours , call the regional Intake Service closest to where you live	Brisbane Phone: 1300 682 254 Central Queensland Phone: 1300 703 762 Far North Queensland Phone: 1300 684 062 Ipswich Phone: 1800 316 855 North Coast Phone: 1300 703 921 North Queensland Phone: 1300 706 147

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Reporting to the Department of Child Safety	Contact details
	South East Phone: 1300 679 849 South West (Darling Downs) Phone: 1300 683 390
After hours and on weekends: Child Safety After Hours Service	1800 177 135 or (07) 3235 9999. The service operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Make an online report	07 3377 9833 https://secure.communities.qld.gov.au/cbir/ChildSafety#
Child Safety Services' Enquiries Unit	1800 811 810

7. Section 2: Referring

Support for families	Contact details
Family and Child Connect	http://familychildconnect.org.au/
Elder Abuse Prevention Unit	Helpline: 1300 651 192 epu@uccommunity.org.au
Domestic and Family Violence (1800 RESPECT)	1800 737 732
The National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline	1800 880 052 hotline@workfocus.com
The National Relay Service (hearing impaired)	1800 555 677
Translating and Interpreting Service (non-English speaking background)	13 14 50

Support for survivors of abuse	Contact details
Royal Commission website	https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/contact
National Redress Scheme	Call: 1800 737 377 https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/
Uniting Church National Redress Scheme	https://ucaqld.com.au/national-redress-scheme/ Email: redress@ucaqld.com.au
Lifeline	13 11 44



Revisions

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Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
2.0	03.01.2020	Risk and Assurance Manager	30.01.2020	ED Risk and Assurance	Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer
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