



Purpose

This document provides a record that all ministry agents confirm their understanding and commitment to the Safe Ministry with Children (SMC) [Mandatory Reporting Process for Ministry Agents](#). Completion of this document fulfils one of the four requirements of the SMC Ministry Agents Refresher training.

Scope

This document applies to all ministry agents. Lay Preachers complete the requirements for SMC Lay Workers Refresher Training.

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
- previous abuse of children who are now adults, and
- 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.

Revisions

Document number		C/2.1.7.2				
Office use only	Version Number	Approval date	Approved by	Policy owner	Policy contact	Effective date
	1.1	06.11.2019	ED Risk and Assurance	ED Risk and Assurance	Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer	06.11.2019
Next scheduled review		01.11.2024				



Reporting threshold test

Section 1: child sexual abuse

- 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?
Yes No
- 1.10 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 (above). **If you answered 'yes' to any question in section 1:**

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.

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 test (above). **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.

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 test (above). **If you answered 'no' to all questions in sections 1 and 2, and 'yes' to any question in section 3:**

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.

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
- 4.5 Are you 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?

Yes No

Obligations to report are determined by your answers to the reporting threshold test (above). If you **answered ‘no’ to all questions in sections 1, 2 and 3, and ‘yes’ to any question in section 4:**

offer to assist the person to report their matter to CPIU and to refer them for professional support.

Inform the person that if it is evident that a risk to the well-being of children is present, you are required to fulfill your reporting obligations.

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

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

Section 5: criminal misconduct, bullying, spiritual abuse, boundary violations

5.1 Are you aware of spiritual abuse, boundary violations, bullying, or criminal misconduct committed by a ministry agent?

Yes No

5.2 Are you aware of spiritual abuse, boundary violations, bullying, or criminal misconduct committed by a member of a church council?

Yes No

5.3 Are you aware of spiritual abuse, boundary violations, bullying, 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 test (above). **If you answered ‘yes’ to any question in section 5.1 or 5.2,** report the matter to the Presbytery Chair. **If you answered ‘yes’ to any question in section 5.3,** report the matter to the church council chair.

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

Reporting and referral guide

Section 1: Reporting

Reporting to the Synod

- Phone 1800 586 591
- Email complaints@ucaqld.com.au
- Online ucaqld.com.au/contact-us/report-abuse/

Reporting to the police via the Child Protection Investigation Unit

Contact your local Child Protection Investigation Unit (CPIU) or CPI officer at the local police station.

Reporting to the Department of Child Safety

For contact details of your local Department of Child Safety’s Regional Intake Service visit communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety

Reporting to Crime Stoppers

Phone 1800 333 000

Email admin@crimestoppersqld.com.au

Online www.crimestoppersqld.com.au

Section 2: Referring

Referring families for ongoing professional support

In cases where the concern is not taken up by the Child Safety Regional Intake Service (RIS) a family may require additional support and assistance to address challenges they face. With their permission, you may support families or individuals to access the support services of Family and Child Connect (FCC) or Intensive Family Support Services (IFSS).

IFSS provides active intervention for families with multiple or complex needs. FCC is a central referral point for families and professionals to link families and children to appropriate support services. Contact with IFSS and FCC can be made by phone on 13 FAMILY or online communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety

Services provided by FCC and IFSS are according to residential zones. If a service is not available in the child’s residential zone, contact your local Child Safety Regional Intake Service to discuss your concerns.

Referring to the Interim Redress Scheme

Survivors of child sexual abuse in a church institution may be eligible to apply for redress. Survivors should be encouraged to speak with the Interim Redress support workers by phoning 1800 874 995 or emailing ucrdress@changeutures.org.au For more information see the Queensland Synod website on Redress.

Referring survivors of historical abuse

In the event that the survivor does not wish to report to the police, the Synod will de-identify the alleged survivor and report the matter to the CPIU.

A victim and/or a survivor (or their family) may require additional support. A full list of support services available in Queensland is available at childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/support-services/queensland

Applicant’s signature

Name

Date