



SAFE MINISTRY UNIT - FACT SHEET

New Reporting requirements for CHILD PROTECTION 2020

Child Protection legislation in NSW & the ACT make it **compulsory to report** all your child protection concerns.

Non-reporting can have criminal consequences and/or may impact your ability to serve, either through a bar on your WWCC/WWVP and/or the Diocesan Professional Standards Process.

What to report

Any allegation, disclosure or reasonable concern that a child or group of children (0-18yrs) may be at risk of:

- sexual offence (including grooming or acts of indecency)
- sexual misconduct (including sexual comments or communications like sexting)
- ill-treatment
- neglect
- assault
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm
- witnessing domestic violence

Also, if you are aware that another church worker or Minister has engaged in a:

- failure to protect a child from abuse; or
- failure to report child abuse

How to report

Reporting can be complex, including reporting to Police, Child Protection agencies and the operator of the relevant Reportable Conduct scheme (NSW OCG / ACT Ombudsman).

When you have concerns about child abuse or child protection issues in your church **immediately REPORT these to the Safe Ministry Helpline 1800 070 511.**

You may also tell your Minister or a church warden who will report this to the Helpline. The Helpline will then ensure compliance with all statutory reporting requirements.

In NSW under the *Reportable Conduct Scheme*, reporting time frames and fines apply to the Head of Entity (i.e. The Bishop) therefore it is essential when there is an allegation or if you have concerns about a church worker who has a WWCC for the purposes of serving at church that you report concerns immediately to the **Safe Ministry Helpline 1800 070 511.**

NOTE: NSW Child Protection laws now include:

1. **Reportable Conduct Scheme** which is to be operated by the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) applies to all churches see <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/reportable-conduct-scheme>
2. **Mandatory Reporting** to DCJ of risk of significant harm concerns about a child/ren (Child and Young Persons (Care and Protection Act 1998)), which expands to include to all persons in 'religious ministry' and all who provide 'religion-based' activities (including volunteers)
3. The crime of **failure to report child abuse** (S.316a Crimes act)
4. The crime of **failure to protect a child against abuse** (S.43b Crimes Act)