

# Mandatory Reporting Northern Territory

## Systems, policies, and procedures

## STANDARD 6

### EFFECTIVE COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

#### Criteria 6.1

The entity's Complaints Handling Policy outlines the roles and responsibilities, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, reporting obligations and record keeping requirements.

#### Indicators

6.1.1 Policies and procedures address mandatory reporting obligations

*Mandatory Legislation in NT falls under Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT).*

The health, safety and wellbeing of children is paramount in all organisations providing services to children across Australia. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse highlighted the need for improvement in the processes and outcomes of reporting child abuse. NCSS Standard 6 focuses on effective complaints handling and reporting obligations and supports organisations to implement robust and transparent reporting procedures. This fact sheet provides information on mandatory reporting in the Northern Territory.

#### WHO ARE MANDATORY REPORTERS?

All adults in the Northern Territory are legally required to report suspected or known abuse or risk of harm to a child or young person.

#### WHAT REQUIRES REPORTING?

As an adult in the Northern Territory you are considered to be a mandatory reporter. You must make a report as soon as you know, believe or suspect on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is or might be at risk of harm or abuse.

You do not need proof of abuse or harm to make a report, you just need a reasonable belief that a child has been harmed or may be harmed.

#### HOW DO I MAKE A REPORT?

If you believe a child is at imminent risk of harm or in immediate danger call 000 and request the police.

If it is not an emergency, call police on 131 444 or contact your local police station.

You can also report concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of a child to the child protection reporting line on 1800 700 250 or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

If you are concerned about a child but are unsure if a report is required, contact the child protection reporting line on 1800 700 250 to discuss with a professional who will advise you of the next steps to be taken.

You are protected from legal and professional liability if you make a report in good faith.

#### **WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A REPORT IS MADE?**

The staff on the child protection reporting line will inform you of the next steps to be taken. All reports should be documented and stored securely as per the record keeping policies and procedures of your organisation.

#### **WILL THE CHILD OR FAMILY BE INFORMED THAT I HAVE MADE A REPORT?**

All reporters are legally entitled to confidentiality excluding the following circumstances:

- the notifier consents to their details being disclosed
- a court of law requests the information
- it is reasonably necessary to prevent further harm to a child or young person

#### **WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR NOT REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT THE SAFETY, WELFARE AND WELLBEING OF A CHILD?**

All adults in the Northern Territory are legally bound to report any concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of a child. Mandatory reporting should be included in child safeguarding policies and procedures including the Code of Conduct. Failing to report regarding concerns about the welfare, safety and wellbeing of a child will also lead to disciplinary action within an organisation.

More information about mandatory reporting in the Northern Territory can be found on the Northern Territory Government website: <https://nt.gov.au/law/crime/report-child-abuse>