

Mandatory Reporting Tasmania

 **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 Tasmania falls under The Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (Tas.)

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 Tasmania.

WHO ARE MANDATORY REPORTERS?

Tasmania has an extensive list of mandatory reporters including, but not limited to:

- registered medical practitioners
- nurses
- dentists
- police officers
- probation officers
- child welfare officers
- teachers and kindergarten teachers
- school principals
- school counsellors
- ministers of religion
- people who manage child care services
- people employed by or volunteering in government agencies or organisations funded by the Crown that provide health, welfare, education or care for children.

With regard to the Catholic Church specifically, mandatory reporters include clergy, religious, lay ministers, church elders and religious brothers and sisters, who provide services to children.

WHAT REQUIRES REPORTING?

As a mandatory reporter you must make a report as soon as you know, believe or suspect that a child or unborn person:

- is being abused, neglected or is a victim of domestic violence; or
- may be harmed, neglected or killed by a person they live with; or
- if the pregnant mother of an unborn child may require medical treatment as a result of their behaviour or the behaviour of another person.

You do not need proof of abuse or harm to make a report.

HOW DO I MAKE A REPORT?

Call the Advice and Referral Line on 1800 000 123.

If you believe a child is at imminent risk of harm or in immediate danger, call 000.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A REPORT IS MADE?

The staff on the Advice and Referral line will inform you of the next steps to be taken. All reports should be documented by the reporter and stored securely as per the 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. The staff member on the Advice and Referral line will take your details but will not disclose them unless discussing the report with another person undertaking official duties under the Act; or they are ordered to by a court of law.

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

Under the Act, mandatory reporters who do not report concerns of abuse or harm against a child may be fined up to 20 penalty points. Further information about penalty points can be found [here](#).

Mandatory reporting is a legal requirement for organisations providing services directly to children in Tasmania. 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.

Further information regarding mandatory reporting in Tasmania can be found on the Department of Communities Tasmania website: <https://strongfamiliesafekids.tas.gov.au/>