



safe
communities
Archdiocese of Hobart



Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults
Parish & Pastoral Manual



The Safe Communities logo has been designed to symbolise the role of the Archdiocese of Hobart in the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

The cross in the centre is reminiscent of the Celtic cross of St Patrick (who is the patron of the Archdiocese). The cross is also the primordial symbol of our Catholic faith. It consists of links which remind us that building Safe Communities is an essential element of living our faith. The circle encapsulating the logo represents the eternal God who has no beginning or end.

Blue is the colour associated with St Patrick and our Blessed Mother Mary, the protector of children and adults who are vulnerable. The blue colour is also found in the Archdiocesan crest, reminding us that this work is the responsibility of each person in the Archdiocese. The colour yellow was chosen because it represents faith and the light of Christ who has come into the world to redeem and free us.

Version control

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This manual has been approved by Archbishop Julian Porteous for mandatory implementation by Church personnel in the parishes within the Catholic Archdiocese of Hobart.

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1. Purpose

The Safe Communities Framework is an initiative of the Archdiocese of Hobart to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect. The Framework requires the involvement of everyone in the Catholic Church within the Archdiocese.

This Manual will guide all in the parishes and pastoral communities to take responsibility for creating and maintaining a Safe Community. This is to ensure that we:

- Prevent all abuse and neglect
- Report all disclosures, allegations, incidents or concerns
- Follow the right processes once a report is made.

This manual goes beyond meeting legal obligations and ensuring due process. It is a collaborative project to create an environment in which our children and vulnerable adults will flourish.

The independent company, [Catholic Professional Standards Limited \(CPSL\)](#) was jointly founded by the Australian Catholic Bishop's Conference (ACBC) and the Catholic Religious Australia. CPSL's main function is to develop and audit standards for the protection of children and vulnerable adults who might come into contact with the Church in Australia. The company will audit and report on compliance with these standards.

'Safe Communities' is the Archdiocese of Hobart's effort to meet these standards.

Refer to Appendix B for a brief timeline of the history of child sexual abuse in Australia and the Church's response.

1.1 Introduction

Each child and vulnerable adult is a gift from God with innate dignity and immeasurable value. This worth is not dependant on the way they look, behave, which family they belong to etc.

According to this dignity, each child should be loved and supported to be all they are called to be. The same can be said of vulnerable adults such as those with a mental or physical disability or illness, the aged, and those who for one reason or another require assistance to meet their basic human needs.

[The Catholic Church has zero tolerance for the abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable adults and is committed to acting in their best interests.](#)

It is important that the Church's policies and procedures take the CPSL standards and current research into account, whilst remembering that as a Christian organisation our model is Christ whose primary standard or commandment (from which the others flow) is to love and this invitation may be more demanding than the requirements imposed by regulatory bodies.

Another reason for Church personnel to participate in the work of Safe Communities to develop their competency to work with children and vulnerable adults. Competency refers to the attitude, skills and knowledge needed to work with a particular cohort. Though Church personnel are not expected to be competent in the same way as a trained professional, there exists a special relationship due to the context of faith and Church that can lead children and vulnerable adults to trust in Church personnel, so training is all the more important.

1.2 Safe Communities Framework

[The Safe Communities: Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults Framework](#) was developed in consultation with Archdiocese of Hobart Trust Agencies and Organisations of Catholics.

The Safe Communities: Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adult’s Framework objectives are to create a shared culture of safety for children and vulnerable adult, and:

- Establish systems and processes that provide a safe environment for in all in our care
- Implement safe strategies and practices to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm
- Report, monitor and respond to disclosures or concerns of abuse throughout Tasmania.

This framework is underpinned by our [Safe Communities: Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy](#) (Refer to page 32).

The Framework acknowledges existing strong safeguarding practices of various organisations, including parishes. It seeks commitment to shared responsibility.

The Safe Communities 10 Elements are based on the [Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Child Safe Elements](#). The Archdiocese also includes vulnerable adults and the elements have been adapted for their inclusion.

This Manual serves as part of the parish and pastoral movement effort to meet these 10 Elements.

Table 1: Safe Communities Elements

Elements
1. Commitment to protect children and vulnerable adults
2. Client and community participation in decision making
3. Communication pathways encourage community engagement
4. Equity and diversity are promoted and respected
5. Human Resource practices ensure workers are suitable and supported
6. Responding to and reporting allegations
7. Staff and volunteer training and education
8. Safe physical and online environments
9. Continuous process improvements
10. Documented policies and procedures

The *Safe Communities Framework*, may be obtained from the *Safe Communities Officer*, phone (03) 6208 6222 or email safecommunities@aohtas.org.au

1.3 Application of this Manual

All Catholic Church personnel must adhere to this manual. *Personnel* here refers to any

- cleric (priest or deacon and those in formation for either e.g. seminarians),
- consecrated man and woman who works under the guidance of the Archbishop of Hobart (and those in formation e.g. novices) or in parishes,
- staff
- volunteer
- contractor
- student on placement.

All personnel must attend training sessions to become familiar with the manual and understand how it affects their service to the Church.

2. Children and Vulnerable Adults

The scope of the Safe Communities Framework includes both children and vulnerable adults.

The definition of a child is straightforward, that is, they are under 18 years of age¹.

The definition of a vulnerable adult is not yet specified in Tasmanian legislation².

For the purposes of 'Safe Communities', a vulnerable adult:

Means a person who has recently suffered bereavement, marriage breakdown or other adversity that puts them in particular need of pastoral support, or a person with an intellectual disability, mental illness or other physical, mental or intellectual impairment that makes it difficult for that person to protect themselves from abuse or exploitation³.

2.1 What is Child and Vulnerable Adult Abuse?

There are different legal and operational definitions of child and vulnerable adult abuse in Australia.

Respective professional sectors tend to emphasise the facets of abuse that are most important to their own field.

However, all definitions refers to the physical or psychological damage caused to another person by the abusive behaviour of others, or the failure to protect victims. Commonly the categories of abuse include all forms of:

- sexual abuse (including grooming)
- economic abuse (e.g. for financial gain)
- neglect or negligent treatment
- physical abuse
- emotional or psychological abuse.

These categories for the most part are reflected in the commonly Australian accepted definition of Elder Abuse as:

any act occurring within a relationship where there is an implication of trust, which results in harm to an older person. Abuse may be physical, sexual, psychological, social and/or neglect⁴.

Family violence and the exposure to it, is also considered a form of abuse for both children and vulnerable adults.

¹ *The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act, 1997 (TAS) S 3(1)*

² *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (TAS) S 4*, 'an adult who is accessing a regulated activity'. These regulated activities are yet to be specified by the Tasmanian Department of Justice.

³ Derived from, National Committee for Professional Standards, *Towards Healing*, 2016

⁴ Australian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse Working Definition (1999)

3. Recognising Abuse

It is essential to building a Safe Community that all people involved in the Church have a very clear understanding of what is abuse or neglect.

All personnel must be able to recognise abuse. This will warn would-be offenders that abuse will be noticed and will not be tolerated.

3.1 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a person involves the child or vulnerable adult in sexual activity (not limited to sexual assault or indecent assault), or deliberately puts the child or vulnerable adult in the presence of sexual behaviours that are exploitative or inappropriate to his/her age and development. Considering the child or vulnerable adult to have consented to the activity is irrelevant.

Table 2: Signs of Sexual Abuse

Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kissing, fondling, masturbation, penetration, voyeurism and exhibitionism • Exposure to, or exploitation through, pornography or prostitution • Sexual grooming*
Does not include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact that is solely intended to comfort a child or vulnerable adult who is distressed
Possible physical Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of sexually transmitted infections • Pregnancy • Vaginal or anal bleeding or discharge, or injuries to the genital area
Possible behavioural indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaying sexual behaviour or knowledge that is unusual for the child's age • Displaying overly affectionate behaviours • Drawing, play-acting or describing sexual or promiscuous acts • Difficulty sleeping • Being withdrawn, running away, depression • Self-destructive behaviour • Complaining of headaches or stomach pains • Fear of changing clothes in public • Showing wariness or distrust of adults, or fear of specific people • Displaying aggressive behaviour • Regressing to behaviour such as thumb-sucking and holding old teddy bears • Having unexplained sums of money/gifts
Sexual grooming behaviour⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting like a peer to the child • Sharing secrets • Encouraging emotional dependency • Isolating the child from friends • Talking about sexual and forbidden topics with the child • Focusing on sexual activity • Having unreasonable expectations • Making demands • Being excessively available • Being volatile • Using controlling behaviour

⁵ There are a range of other behaviours that can be indicative of grooming. These are often insidious and involve targeting parents as much as children. Please contact Child Safety Services on 1300 737 639 (24 Hours) if you are unsure.

3.1.1 Understanding grooming behaviour

Grooming behaviour is a pattern of conduct that is consistent with encouraging, enticing, recruiting or inducing a child or vulnerable adult for sexual activity. Grooming behaviours usually build up over a period of time.

The production, possession or dissemination of any material (images, literature or otherwise) by Church personnel, that depicts or describes a child or vulnerable adult in a way that a reasonable person would find offensive, including pornographic or sexual material and material depicting a child as a victim of torture or cruelty is a reportable criminal offence.

3.2 Economic (financial) abuse

Economic/financial abuse occurs when a person engages in controlling, coercive, intimidating or manipulative behaviour for economic or financial gain.

Table 3: Signs of Economic/Financial Abuse

Possible physical Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrongly using someone’s else’s money, belongings or property • Missing belongings, especially valuables • Receipts or bank transactions indicating unusual or inappropriate purchases • Person controlling finances does not have the legal authority • The person does not have access to own personal funds or bank accounts • Forced changes to a person’s will • Absence or lack of food, electricity or other necessities of life • Fraudulent signatures
Possible behavioural indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person does not have enough money to meet normal expenses • The person asserts that they are competent or able to make decisions about their finances and assets, but that others keep taking over • The legal guardian neglects to involve the person in decisions even though the person is competent, e.g. disposing of property that is jointly owned without the consent of both parties • The person is persistently denied purchases and activities due to a lack of money

3.3 Neglect

Neglect means the serious and repeated failure to provide a child or vulnerable adult, for whom there is a duty of care. Necessities include food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical and dental care, school attendance, opportunities for social connection and mental stimulation, or adequate supervision.

Serious neglect can also occur if an adult fails to adequately ensure the safety of a child or vulnerable adult when exposed to dangerous or life-threatening situations.

Table 4: Signs of Neglect

Possible physical Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent hunger, lacking food, inappropriate food or erratic feeding • Malnutrition or low weight • Inattention to basic hygiene • Inappropriate clothing • Chronic sickness/untreated physical problems such as poor dental hygiene
Possible behavioural indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stealing or scavenging for food • Staying at school after school • Children persistently being left alone without adequate care or supervision • Non-attendance at school • Aggressive behaviour • Misusing alcohol or drugs • Academic issues

Signs in parents or caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability or unwillingness to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, medical attention, safe home conditions • Leaving the child or vulnerable adult without appropriate supervision • Abandoning the child or vulnerable adult • Withholding physical contact or stimulation for prolonged periods • Inability or unwillingness to provide psychological nurturing • Limited understanding of the child or vulnerable adult's needs • Unrealistic expectations of the child or vulnerable adult
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3.4 Physical abuse

Physical abuse occurs when a child or vulnerable adult suffers, or is likely to suffer, significant harm from a non-accidental injury or injuries inflicted by another person.

Table 5: Physical Abuse Signs

Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive discipline • Beating • Shaking • Burning • Attempted strangulation • Hitting a person around the head or neck • Using weapons (such as belts or sticks)
Does not include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separating children who are fighting • Moving a child out of harm's way • Exercising appropriate control over a child • Touching a child to attract their attention or guiding them.
Possible physical indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained bruises, bite marks, scratches, lacerations or welts • Burns (including cigarette burns) or scalds • Fractured bones, especially in children under 3 years old, dislocations, sprains and twisting • Drowsiness, vomiting, fits or pooling of blood in the eyes, which may suggest a head injury • Abdominal pain, which may be caused by ruptured internal organs • Swallowing of poisonous substances, alcohol or other harmful drugs
Possible behavioural indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing wariness or distrust of adults, or fear of specific people • Wearing long-sleeved clothes on hot days (to hide bruising or other injuries) • Frequent hospital visits • Unexplained absences • Academic problems • The person's explanation of injury is not consistent with the injury itself • There is a family history of violence or exposure to domestic violence • Parents or caregivers use excessive or unreasonable discipline
Signs in parents or caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent visits with the child or vulnerable adult in their care to health or other services with unexplained or suspicious injuries • Explanation offered by the parent is not consistent with the injury • Family history of violence • History of experiencing abuse as a child themselves • Fear of injuring the child or vulnerable adult in their care • Use of excessive discipline

3.5 Emotional (psychological) abuse

Emotional abuse involves unreasonably controlling or intimidating another person. It may disturb their emotional development or cause mental harm, apprehension or fear.

One-off incidents can cause psychological harm. However, emotional abuse is generally deemed to have occurred if the behaviour is frequent or persistent.

Table 6: Signs of Emotional (Psychological) Abuse

Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejection • Isolation • Bullying • Threats • Violence • Derogatory name-calling and put-downs • Persistent and deliberate coldness • Denying a child freedom or ability make their own choices • Encouraging a child to engage in inappropriate or risky behaviours • Exposing a child to domestic violence
Does not include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable discipline by parents or caregivers
Possible physical Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays in emotional, mental, or even physical development • Physical signs of self-harming
Possible behavioural indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaying or reporting low self-esteem or feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves • Inability to value others • Difficulty trusting people • Lack of people skills necessary for daily functioning • Exhibiting high anxiety • Displaying aggressive or demanding behaviour • Extreme attention-seeking or risk-taking behaviour • Being withdrawn, passive and/or tearful, constant running away from home • Self-harming, suicide attempts • Obsession with pleasing or obeying adults • Anorexia or over-eating

4. Responding to and Report Abuse

Personnel and communities must be aware of the processes to follow when responding and reporting abuse.

A summary of the reporting process can be found in **Appendix F**. This must be visible, publicised and made easily accessible in accordance with the communications strategy in this Manual.

4.1 Why do I need to make a report?

Reporting is essential to uncover any hidden abuse, to prevent further abuse (injury or death) in the future, and to help professionals provide better care for the person because they are aware of the nature and extent of the problem.

There are organisational disciplinary measures for failing to follow policy.

4.1.1 The law and reporting abuse

By law, under the *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997*, clause 91(1) it is an offence to fail to protect a child from harm either intentionally or fail to take action. Penalties include: fines or two years in prison. Clause 92(1) states it is an offence to leave a child unattended without making provision for their supervision and care for a time which is unreasonable. Penalties include fines or three months in prison. Civil actions as a breach of statutory duty may also occur.

4.2 Who should report

In Tasmania, [*The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997*](#) lists 'prescribed persons' who are 'mandatory reporters' such as teachers and other people who work with children.

However, **all adults** must comply with Section 13 (1) of the Act. This includes reporting abuse. The Act states:

An adult who knows, or believes or suspects on reasonable grounds, that a child is suffering, has suffered or is likely to suffer abuse or neglect has a responsibility to take steps to prevent the occurrence or further occurrence of the abuse or neglect.

Church personnel and members of a parish may not be considered mandatory reporters according to this legislation. However, as adults they **must by law** report abuse or neglect of a child or vulnerable adult.

4.3 What to report

Report any of the following:

- Disclosure of abuse or neglect
- Allegation of abuse or neglect
- Incident of abuse or neglect
- Suspicion of abuse or neglect
- Incidents of Church personnel contravening the Statement of Commitment, behaviour standards or policies and procedures in this manual.

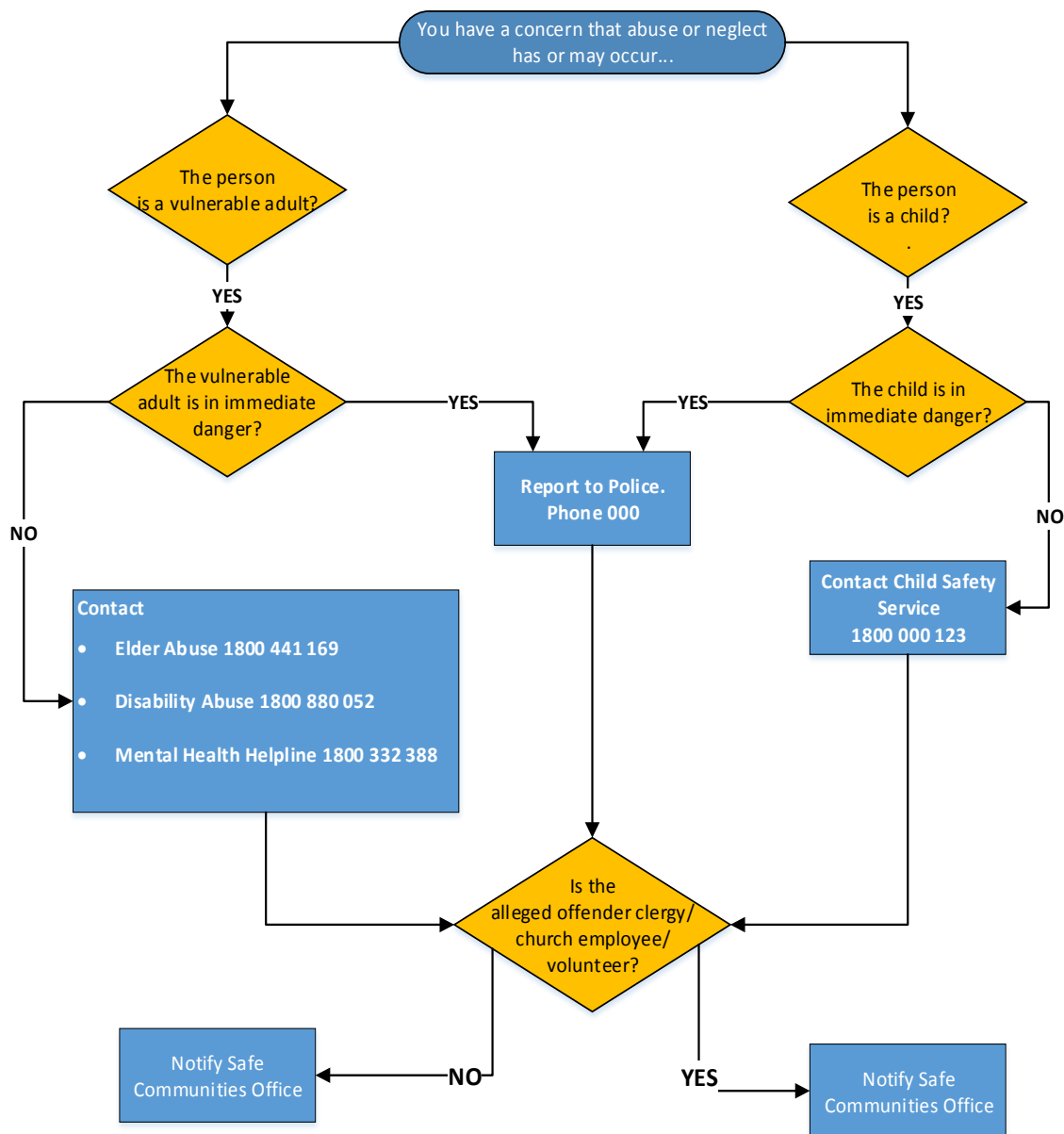
4.4 How to respond to a disclosure or allegation of abuse or neglect

1. Stay calm and listen.
2. Do not ask leading questions.
3. Assess the situation, is the person in immediate danger?
4. Reassure the person that, in telling, they did the right thing.

5. Let them know what happens next and who needs to be told.
6. Report to the relevant authorities as soon as possible. Use the Safe Communities 'Report Abuse' form.
7. Make a written record as soon as possible afterwards. (This will help you complete the 'Report Abuse' form).

Refer to the cheat sheet in Appendix I for a further description of this.

Figure 1: Abuse Report Line



Important things to remember:

- **Do not** investigate.
- **Do not** disclose the allegations to the alleged offender(s).
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed to a person reporting.
- Protect the person’s privacy. Do not tell people who do not need to be informed.

Figure 1 outlines the line of reporting for parish priests and pastoral leaders.

4.5 Reporting contacts

All allegations of abuse in the first instance must be reported to the relevant civil authorities.

Reporting suspected Child abuse or concerns

Issue or concern	Report to
Immediate concerns - contact the Police	Police: 000
Concern that Child or Young Person is currently at risk of significant harm	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Child Safety Services: 1800 000 123
Allegation of child abuse by a church worker (Whether current and/or historical matters)	Report to Safe Communities: 03 6208 6222

Reporting suspected Adult abuse or concerns

Issue or concern	Report to/or provide contact details
Immediate concerns contact the Police	Police: 000
General suspicions e.g. physical, sexual or financial abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elder Abuse 1800 441 169 National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline 1800 880 052 (guides referral pathway) Mental Health Helpline 1800 332 388
Allegation of adult abuse by a church worker	Report to the Safe Communities: 03 6208 6223
<p>NOTE: For disclosures by adults of alleged current or historical sexual abuse by a non-church worker - Report to the Police 000 to seek advice, particularly where the alleged perpetrator may still be around children and/or vulnerable adults.</p>	

In the event of an allegation about Church personnel, the concern must be recorded in the *Report of Suspected Abuse Form* (Refer to Appendix H). This must be sent to the Archbishop. The Archbishop may refer the matter to the Director of Professional Standards.

A substitute officer such as the Vicar General or Archdiocese Business Manager may act for the Archbishop if he is unable to provide an immediate response to an allegation or concern.

At any time, any person who makes an allegation has the right to report any matter to the police or other authorities.

Remember, notifying the Church enables the Church community to best provide support to the child and vulnerable adult (and their family), to review their policies and procedures (if necessary) and take any steps needed to make the parish safe.

The 'Respond to and Report Abuse' signage (Appendix F Appendix E) outlines the main steps and is to be displayed prominently.

4.6 What happens once a report is made?

Once the Archbishop has received the report concerning Church personnel, his office will ensure the Police and other civil authorities have been contacted.

It is best if the report is made by the complainant, and the Church will provide support for them to do so.

If the Church's response to the matter is to be handled by the Director of Professional Standards, this person will remain in contact with the complainant, their parents/guardians and the alleged offender (unless doing so would jeopardise the safety of the child or vulnerable adult).

If a report has been made, or is to be made, to the civil authorities, the Director of Professional Standards will only take the following steps if it does not impede their investigations. All Church personnel will offer their full cooperation with the civil authorities at all times.

If for whatever reason, the Director of Professional Standards is unable to manage this matter, the Archbishop may delegate a substitute officer to manage this issue.

4.7 Confidentiality

It is very important to ensure the safety of all parties once an allegation is made, including the notifier. The subject matter is highly sensitive and should be dealt with in a way that respects the privacy and confidentiality of all involved, unless doing so would compromise the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult, or any investigation.

Parishes and pastoral communities are expected to share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk.

Some complainants may make disclosures anonymously. However, anonymous complaints are to be treated carefully. The Church will be unable to act on an anonymous complaint, except to inform the Police.

4.8 Record keeping

All paperwork and information related to the engagement and management of employees and volunteers should be held for at least seven years from the termination of the engagement with the parish or pastoral community. The records should be legible and kept securely, and in an orderly fashion to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of the records.

Note: Where an allegation is made against an employee or volunteer, this person's file should be held indefinitely.

Documentation associated with an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child or vulnerable adult **must** be kept confidential by having hard-copy documentation stored in a locked filing cabinet and electronic documentation stored in a password-protected folder. Access to records and discussion about the matter will be strictly limited to authorised parties, and staff of civil authorities.

4.9 Non-compliance

A breach is any action (or inaction) by personnel or a member of the parish that fails to comply with the obligations set out in the Safe Communities Framework and this Parish Manual.

Outcomes for breaches will depend upon the nature of the breach, and may include:

- Reminder of the relevant component of this Manual
- Closer supervision
- Further education/training
- Mediation between those involved
- Review of current policies and procedures, and development of new policies and procedures
- Disciplinary procedures
- Notification of misconduct to the Police, Professional Standards Office and dismissal in the case of proof of abuse having been perpetrated
- Review of risk assessments
- Safety plans for 'Persons of Concern' who want to be part of the parish community.

4.10 Persons of Concern

If a 'Person of Concern' is brought to your attention at your parish or pastoral community, contact the Vicar General for advice. A 'Person of Concern' is someone who has been convicted or has pending charges relating to sexual offences and wishes to be involved in the life of the Church.

To ensure the safety of all, the individual may enter into a *Covenant of Care* which sets out the responsibilities of the parish and the individual. The Covenant will be reviewed regularly.

The Safe Communities Officer can assist priests and pastoral leaders following direction from the Vicar General.

5. Healing and Support

Survivors of abuse and others impacted by harm are welcome to access counselling and support services through contact with the Director of Professional Standards or by contacting CatholicCare Counselling Services. CatholicCare provide services from Hobart, Launceston, Burnie and Devonport.

There is no 'burden of proof' placed on people to access counselling. A person will receive services on the strength of their word that they were affected by child sexual abuse or other forms of harm.

The information that is shared with Healing and Support is confidential.

CatholicCare Tasmania

- **Hobart** (03) 6278 1660
- **Launceston** (03) 6332 0600
- **Devonport** (03) 6423 6100 or 1800 819 447
- **Burnie** (03) 6431 8555 or 1800 819 447

www.catholiccaretas.org.au

Other Tasmanian support services include:

- **1800 Respect** 1800 737 732
- **Blue Knot Foundation** 1300 657 380
- **Elder Abuse Helpline** 1800 441 169
- **Find and Connect Tasmania** 1800 161 109
- **Laurel House (Northern Tasmania)** (03) 6334 2740 or (03) 6431 9711
- **Lifeline** 131 114
- **National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline** 1800 880 052
- **Sexual Assault Support Services (Southern Tasmania)** (03) 6231 1817
- **Victims Support Services** 1300 300 238

Further support services can be found on the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* website: <http://childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/support-services/tasmania>

6. Personnel practices

6.1 Recruitment

Good recruitment and selection procedures help identify the right people to work with children and vulnerable adults and discourage those who are unsuitable from applying.

Organisations need to ensure that they do not discriminate deliberately or accidentally. This particularly applies to the recruitment process. For example, no interview questions should be asked about certain characteristics of a person such as their age, family status, disability or race/nationality.

Position Description:

- Develop position descriptions for all roles, which defines the positions, tasks, and the skills and experience required. The position description should state the essential selection criteria required to carry out the role. A template position description may be obtained from Human Resources.

Advertisement:

- Include a statement about the parish's commitment to Safe Communities in the parish bulletin and advertisement for the position for example:
 - The Archdiocese of Hobart is committed to providing safe environments for all persons, but in particular children and vulnerable adults, or
 - The Catholic Community in Tasmania plays a significant role in promoting environments that nurture the wellbeing of all persons, but in particular children and vulnerable adults. It is committed to providing safe places and programs for them.
- Include a statement about security screening:
 - *The Archdiocese requires the preferred applicant to undertake a National Police Criminal History Record Check and Registration to Work with Vulnerable People.*

Interview questions:

Reminder, interviews are not one-way, the candidate is also assessing the organisation and its workers.

- Include relevant general questions when interviewing the applicant, for example:
 - Working for the Church can be different to the commercial environment. Do you see any issues in working for the Church?
 - What aspects of your experience do you think is particularly relevant to this role?
 - Why do you want to leave your current (last) job?
 - Can you tell us about any experiences working with children and vulnerable adults?
 - Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is an important part of our work. Can you give some examples of how you would contribute to making the organisation a safer environment for children and vulnerable adults?
 - Do you have any questions for us?

6.2 Pre-employment screening

Priests and pastoral leaders are responsible for ensuring all possible steps are taken to screen new personnel. Refer to table 7 for the identified requirements.

Table 7: Pre-engagement screening for new appointees

Note: Reference checks *are only* required if the individual is under consideration for an appointment. A current position holder does not require a referee check.

Role	Police Check	Registration to Work with Vulnerable People	Reference Check
Priest	YES ⁶	YES	Appointment by bishop is considered a referee check. ⁷
Deacon	YES	YES	Appointment by bishop is considered a referee check.
Sacristan	YES	YES	References required for new appointees.
Extraordinary Minister of Communion to the sick⁸	YES	YES	References required for new appointees.
Parish Secretary	YES	YES	References required for new appointees.
Adult Altar Server ⁹	YES	YES	References required for new appointees.
Altar Server Trainer ¹⁰	YES	YES	References required for new appointees.
Children’s Liturgy of the Word	YES	YES	YES
Sacramental Team Coordinator and members of the team	YES	YES	YES
Youth worker – General	YES	YES	YES
Schools and Colleges - General Ministry	YES	YES	YES
Home visits – General Ministry	YES	YES	YES

⁶ A priest from another country must have satisfactory International Police Checks as part of visa requirements.

⁷ A priest from another diocese must have Australian Catholic Ministry Register (ACMR), Good Character clearance.

⁸ An Extraordinary Minister of Communion to the Sick who *only* takes communion to a family member may, at the discretion of the Parish Priest be exempt from the requirement to obtain a NPRC or WWVPC. This decision must be made by the Parish Priest and *must* be registered with the Safe Communities Officer.

⁹ Police Checks, Registration to Work with Vulnerable People or Reference Checks are NOT Required for Altar Server under 18 years of age.

¹⁰ Altar Server Trainers under 18 years of age do not require Police Checks, Registration to Work with Vulnerable People or Reference Checks.

Role	Police Check	Registration to Work with Vulnerable People	Reference Check
Aged Care residential sites	YES	YES	Reference checks required if the individual is under consideration for an appointment.
Cleaning and/or flowers	YES	Required if Church and grounds are next to school/college/childcare site during operational hours	N/A
Gardening and maintenance	YES	Required if Church and grounds are next to school/college/childcare site during operational hours	N/A
Refreshments after Mass and other events	N/A	N/A	N/A
Parish Office Volunteer (no financial duties e.g. just newsletter)	YES	Required if Church is adjacent to a school and if the students assist in the office.	N/A
Finance Council Member	YES	N/A	N/A
Pastoral Council Member	YES	YES	N/A
Driver transport Ministry	YES	YES	YES

Please contact the Safe Communities Officer for advice on other roles and functions.

All Church personnel must comply with external organisation legislative, regulatory and standard obligations, for example the Aged Care Act. Reference Check

Where required, obtain a minimum of two references. Include specific questions about the person's history of working with children and vulnerable adults. For example:

- What is your relationship with the applicant?
- How do you know them?
- Have you worked with the applicant before?
- Why did this person leave the organisation?
- Would you employ/work with them again?
- How would you describe the applicant's behaviour and interaction with children and vulnerable adults?

Ensure that questions and responses from the references are documented. If you require assistance, please use the Archdiocese of Hobart Reference Check Template.

6.2.1 Police Check

Volunteers:

1. The Archdiocese of Hobart is eligible to access the concession rate of \$5 for all volunteers and each Parish has been provided with a Tasmanian Police National Police Certificate Application Form.
2. The form is pre-populated with the relevant information and it has been signed by an Authorised Officer of the Parish.
3. To access the \$5 fee, complete Section 5 of the application form in 2 areas. Please fill out and state the role of the volunteer, and date the form.
4. To submit the check, volunteers can either post their application to Tas Police (as per details on the last page of the application form) or submit it at a local Police Station along with their 100 points of identification (certified or original).
5. The parish can choose to reimburse the volunteer on presentation of a receipt.
6. The Police check will be returned directly to the Parish.
7. Please ensure that all checks are kept up to date and renewals are completed before the three year expiry date.
8. In the event of any concerning reports stated in the police check, please contact the Safe Communities Office for support.

Employees:

1. Human Resources will email the employee a copy of the Tasmanian Police National Police Certificate Application Form when a contract request is received or upon the request of a Parish.
2. To submit the check, employees can post their application to Tas Police (as per details on the last page of the application form) or submit it at a local Police Station along with their 100 points of identification (certified or original).
3. Employees are required to pay for the check and request a receipt
4. Employees are to return a copy of the receipt to Human Resources for reimbursement.
5. Police checks will be directly sent to Human Resources.
6. In the event of any adverse findings Human Resources will be in contact with the candidate.
7. Police checks are to be performed every three years or more often if required.

6.2.2 Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Check

1. Instruct the person to complete the online form at http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/working_with_children/application. Contact the Department of Justice for assistance 1300 654 499.
2. Attend a Service Tasmania shop with their receipt.
3. Once the card is received, verify it online at <https://wwcforms.justice.tas.gov.au/RegistrationSearch.aspx> under organisation, check the box 'Archdiocese of Hobart'.
4. Send (email) a copy of the card to Human Resources, hadmin@aohtas.org.au to ensure the details are correct and the registration is verified online.
5. If a person already has a Working with Vulnerable People Card either as an employee or volunteer they can add the Archdiocese of Hobart to their list of organisations at <https://wwcforms.justice.tas.gov.au/RegistrationSearch.aspx>

If an application is refused (Negative Notice), the individual and the organisation will be notified. The organisation will also be told why the registration was refused.

Note: the purpose of registering a card with specific organisations means that in the event of a report to the Police, organisations will be alerted to their status i.e. it is a 'flag system'. Cards are to be renewed every three years.

6.3 Induction

Priests and pastoral leaders are responsible for ensuring that the engagement and induction is recorded for all Church personnel. Refer to **Appendix D** to see how you can record this.

This form includes a Safe Communities section, which requires the new person to have undergone training associated with this Manual.

This training is organised by the Safe Communities Officer.

6.4 Training

All Church Workers require mandatory training in Safe Communities. Table 7 outlines the mandatory training required and its frequency.

Table 8: Safe Communities Training

	Topic	Audience	Frequency	Training type	Provider	Contact
Archdiocese of Hobart	Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults	All	Annual refresher (and can be added at induction)	Online – Learning Manager FREE	Safe Communities Office	Safe Communities Office (03) 6208 6222 safecommunities@aohtas.org.au
	Safe Communities	All	Every two years	Workshops FREE	Safe Communities Office	Safe Communities Office (03) 6208 6222 safecommunities@aohtas.org.au
	Integrity in Ministry	Clergy & Religious		Workshops FREE	Director of Professional Standards	Director of Professional Standards 1800 356 613
External Providers	Elder Abuse	Interest groups	On request	Workshops FEE	Advocacy Tasmania	Advocacy Tasmania 1800 005 131
	Child Safe & Mandatory	Interest groups	On request	Workshops FEE	National Association for	NAPCAN (02) 8073 3300

	Reporter training				Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN)	contact@napcan.org.au
	Sexual Abuse – children, young people and adults	Interest groups	On request	Workshops FEE	Sexual Abuse Support Services (SASS)	SASS (03) 6231 1811

6.5 Supervision

The parish priest must supervise parish personnel. Regular supervision provides people with the opportunity to report concerns they may have about themselves or others.

6.6 Employee Assistance Programme

All Church employees and their families can access the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Free and confidential counselling is provided for up to three sessions. To access, contact Human Resources and your unique EAP number will be provided.

6.7 Personnel records

Each worker, paid or a voluntary, must have a 'personnel file'. All personnel records must be kept securely and are only to be accessible by authorised persons, usually just the parish priest and pastoral leaders.

Personnel files contain the following:

- Recruitment records
- Employment contract (if applicable)
- Position description
- Emergency contact(s)
- Induction/Orientation records e.g. Engagement and Induction Form for volunteers
- Validated copy of, *current* Registration to Work with Vulnerable People.

7. Culture

7.1 Establish a culture of openness

The first essential step towards reporting is to establish a culture of openness. Leadership is instrumental in influencing this culture. In a culture of openness, everyone feels confident and comfortable reporting a concern or asking a question about the safety of children and vulnerable adults.

Strategies that help to create such a culture include:

- Leaders lead by example and establish honest, two-way communication between themselves and others. Leaders should take the time to listen to others and encourage the expression of different points of view
- Insist on and model behaviours that all interactions between staff, volunteers, parents/carers and children are respectful
- Talk openly and honestly (where appropriate), about any past issues, alongside steps that have been taken to ensure those issues do not occur again
- Treat personal information confidentially and respect individuals' privacy.

7.2 Equity and diversity

Identify and understand any barriers that may prevent children and vulnerable adults from disclosing abuse for example, language cognitive capabilities and their communication needs.

Take action to minimise barriers to disclosure. Clearly display Safe Communities signage, newsletters and contact details. Try to use Plain English in communications.

Use translation services such as Translation and Interpreting Services (TIS) to help individuals and communities.

Establish members of your community who can assist with translating or interpreting in specific languages.

7.3 Empowering children and vulnerable adults

Children are powerless. They trust and depend on adults. They are taught to obey adults. Young children cannot assess adults' motives. And children will tolerate the most painful abuse to maintain emotionally rewarding relationships. Sexual abuse by adults is confusing, so children are naturally vulnerable to abuse. One of the ways to mitigate risk and prevent abuse is to develop the strength and protective factors of children and vulnerable adults.

A recent study involving Tasmanian children and young adults found that 'many children are not well prepared, empowered or educated to adequately report abuse' (www.childcomm.tas.gov.au). It is for us to educate children so that they will report abuse if they experience or see it.

7.3.1 Empowering reporting

The prevention of abuse lies squarely with adults, and not children or vulnerable adults. It is also important to bear in mind that, without detracting from the rights and interests of young people and vulnerable adults, the Catholic Church also values the role of the family in creating Safe Communities. This means for example, where appropriate, the parents should be recognised as the key educators of their children and supported to fulfil their parental responsibilities in providing an environment for their children where they can flourish. Involving parents in decisions about their children is essential.

7.4 Behavioural standards

Church personnel working with children and vulnerable adults must follow the behavioural standards set out in the following documents:

- Integrity in Ministry (if the person is a priest, deacon or religious)
- Integrity in the Service of the Church
- Professional Boundaries Policy
- Safe Communities Policy
- Safe Activities Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy.

7.5 Safe Communities Statement of Commitment

All Parish Priests and Religious leaders are required to sign and publically display the Safe Communities Commitment. Refer to **Appendix G** for a copy of this.

This will help demonstrate to all, that the leaders of our organisation are role models and lead the way with this commitment.

7.5.1 Effective communication

Communicating the parish's commitment to building a Safe Community with parishioners will reassure them.

This Manual is to be made easily available to all those who contact the parish, whether they are personnel or not.

You must publicly display:

- The Parish Priest's Statement of Commitment (**Appendix G**)
- Respond to and Report Abuse signage (**Appendix F**)
- The 'Report Abuse Form' (**Appendix H**)

Display these documents on, for example:

- A notice board at the back of the church, in meeting/recreational rooms, offices
- The parish or pastoral website
- The parish or pastoral social media page
- Newsletters
- The parish mission/vision statement.

Any form of communication needs to be presented in a way that children and vulnerable adults can understand. This means using Plain English and age-appropriate material that takes into account the person's capabilities and cultural background and uses imagery to communicate the messages in a simple and clear way. Always include the names and phone numbers of people who can be contacted for more information, support or help to make a report.

Consider the demographic of the parish and decide whether you need to include translation into other languages.

Also share the Safe Communities Newsletter with your communities through email or hardcopy.

8. Safe Environment and Risk Management

A safe environment relates to both physical and online locations. Risk management is recognised as a key strategy in ensuring that there is a safe environment.

Risk management is essentially a way of thinking. It is both an exercise and a type of management to help stop an event from occurring or actually achieve its occurrence.

To prevent child or vulnerable adult abuse, it is necessary to conduct a risk assessment of parish and pastoral activities. What could cause the abuse to occur? What treatments need to be put in place to stop abuse?

Treatments include:

- Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) must be held in an open setting with children and vulnerable adults
- Not befriending children and vulnerable adults on social media
- Two adult rule
- Home visits processes for remote and isolated workers
- Displaying emergency and support contact details
- Pre-engagement and continuous screening of staff and volunteers
- Parent/Carer consent form
- Image/Video/Audio consent form
- Persons of Concern – Covenant of Care enacted and monitored
- Professional boundaries upheld and monitored.

For specific events such as pilgrimage, youth event we recommend an *Activity Risk Assessment*. Contact the Safe Communities Officer for the template and they are available to provide assistance in conducting the assessment.

The physical environment's safety can be assessed through site visits by the Archdiocesan Work, Health and Safety Officer.

All non-parish or affiliated groups are required to have necessary insurance and their own safeguarding policies with regard to children and vulnerable adults. This must be clarified in the facilities terms of use.

8.1.1 Risk management strategies

Parishes must undertake risk assessments of all activities that involve children and vulnerable adults. In assessing any activity, it is important to consider how, why and when harm might occur. Assessing potential risks is critical to minimise and manage the risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

All Church personnel must be familiar with the *Safe Activities Policy*. This guides parishes and pastoral communities on how to mitigate potential risks when planning activities for children and vulnerable adults.

8.1.2 Work, Health and Safety

The physical environment's safety can be assessed through site visits by the Archdiocesan Work, Health and Safety Officer. It is also the responsibility of the Parish Priest to complete their own inspections.

Incidents such as injury/illness and hazards must be reported using our online or manual form. Records are centrally retained by the Human Resources department.

9. Records Management

The creation of accurate records and the practice of good record keeping have an important role in identifying, preventing and responding to child and vulnerable adult abuse.

Records are also important in alleviating the impact for survivors of abuse. No records or inadequate practice has led to delays or failures to identify or respond to risks and incidents and contributed to the distress and trauma for survivors of abuse.

Children and vulnerable adults' rights to safety and wellbeing should be prioritised over other concerns.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse's final report, *Volume 8, Recordkeeping and Information Sharing*, recommended that all institutions implement the five following principles for records and record keeping:

1. Creating and keeping full and accurate records relevant to child safety and wellbeing, including child sexual abuse, is in the best interests of children and should be an integral part of institutional leadership, governance and culture.
2. Full and accurate records should be created about all incidents, responses and decisions affecting child safety and wellbeing, including child sexual abuse.
3. Records relevant to child safety and wellbeing, including child sexual abuse, should be maintained appropriately.
4. Records relevant to child safety and wellbeing, including child sexual abuse, should only be disposed of in accordance with law or policy.
5. Individuals' existing rights to access, amend or annotate records about themselves should be recognised to the fullest extent.

The above principles apply at the Archdiocese for children and vulnerable adults.

At a minimum parish and pastoral sites must have:

- A secure area for personnel records e.g. lockable filing cabinet
- Restricted access to personnel electronic records to authorised people
- Transfer of management procedures that include record management
- Retain employment records for at least seven years
- All complaints must be documented and kept securely and only accessible by authorised persons both electronically and hard copies.

Training records will be kept by Safe Communities and the Human Resources department.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Abuse	<p>Refer to the separate definition entries: physical, emotional or psychological, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, economic abuse (e.g. for financial gain) and grooming.</p> <p>In Tasmania, <i>The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997</i>, Section 3 (1) interprets ‘Abuse or neglect’ as:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">sexual abuse; or</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">physical or emotional injury or other abuse, or neglect, to the extent that –</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">i) The injured, abused or neglected person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, physical or psychological harm detrimental to the person’s wellbeing; or</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">ii) The injured, abused or neglected person’s physical or psychological development is in jeopardy.</p> <p>This also applies to unborn children when born, who may be likely to suffer abuse or neglect or is likely to require medical treatment or other intervention before the birth of the child.</p>
Child	A person under the age of 18.
Church Personnel	Includes any cleric, member of a religious institute or other persons who are employed by the Church body, or appointed by a Church body to voluntary positions in which they work with children or vulnerable adults, or engage in other forms of pastoral care.
Contractor	A contractor is a person who receives payment for work, but is not an employee.
Covenant of Care	A Covenant of Concern may be developed to manage a situation relating to a Person of Concern. A Covenant of Concern sets out to ensure the safety of all and the responsibilities of the parish and the individual.
Dignity of Risk	Self-determination and the right to take reasonable risks. It should not be impeded by overly cautious care givers.
Economic or Financial Abuse	Such as theft, fraud or exploitation, pressure in connection with property, inheritance, misuse of property, possessions or benefits.
Emotional or Psychological Abuse	Such as threats of harm or abandonment, deprived of social and other contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, isolation, coercion, harassment, rejection and being prevented from receiving services or support.
Grooming	May include the provision of or attention paid to a child or vulnerable adult, including: exposing the child or vulnerable adult to sexualised talk or pornography, providing drugs, alcohol, money or mobile phones, or manipulating the child or vulnerable adult through threats or the misuse of authority ¹¹ .

¹¹ Definition of grooming based on the Victorian *Child Protection Manual* <http://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/> (retrieved 1 September 2017)

Term	Definition
Mandatory Reporter (or Prescribed Persons)	Is any person who is prescribed as such under Section 14 of the <i>Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997</i> (TAS).
Mandatory Reporting	Describes the legislative requirement imposed on Mandatory Reporters to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to Child Safety Services.
Neglect	Neglect means the serious and repeated failure to provide a child or vulnerable adult in their care with the basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical and dental care, school attendance or adequate supervision, to the extent that the child or vulnerable adult's growth, development, health, or safety is likely to be jeopardised. Serious neglect can also occur if an adult fails to adequately ensure the safety of a child or vulnerable adult when exposed to extremely dangerous or life threatening situations. Determining what constitutes serious neglect should take into account cultural considerations.
Notifier	Person who contacts Child Safety Services to report a concern.
Pastoral care	Means the work involved or the situation which exists when a person has responsibility for the wellbeing of another or for a faith community. It includes the provision of spiritual advice and support, education, counselling, medical care, and assistance in times of need.
Physical Abuse	Occurs when a child or vulnerable adult suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm from a non-accidental injury or injuries inflicted by another person. Physical abuse can be inflicted in many ways, including excessive discipline, beating, shaking, burning, attempted strangulation, hitting a person around the head or neck, or use of weapons (such as belts, sticks and paddles).
Person of Concern	A 'Person of Concern' is someone who has been convicted or has pending charges relating to sexual offences and wishes to be involved in the life of the Church. (See Covenant of Care)
Professional Standards	Refers to professional standards among clergy and religious. Respective state and territory Directors of Professional Standards handle matters of child abuse in their jurisdictions.
Registration to Work with Vulnerable People (RWVP)	Tasmanian legislated screening to work or volunteer with children and other vulnerable adults. Can also be referred to as Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) or Working with Children Check (WWCC).
Regulated Activity	Any activity or service which involves Children or Vulnerable People as defined in the <i>Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2014</i> (TAS)
Safe	Safe environment/community refers to the absence of physical hazards (e.g. slippery surface), unsafe relationships (or the absence of safe relationships/neglect), or anything that may cause physical, psychological, sexual harm to a child or vulnerable adult. "Psychological safety means children... know they can speak to people if they feel unsafe or are unhappy and that something will be done to address their concerns" ¹²
Sexual Abuse	Occurs when a person involves a child or vulnerable adult in sexual activity (not limited to sexual assault or indecent assault), or deliberately puts the child or vulnerable adult in the presence of sexual behaviours that are

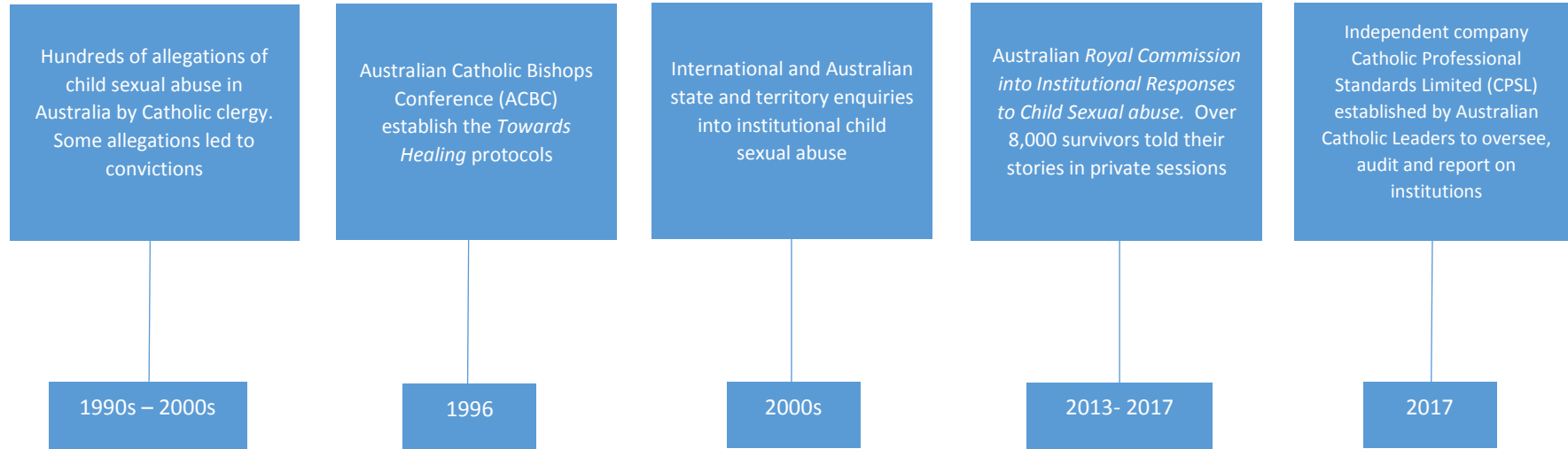
¹² Tasmanian Commissioner for Children, 2015, *Strengthening Child Safe Organisations*, p. 18

Term	Definition
	exploitative or inappropriate to his/her age and development. Considering the child or vulnerable adult to have consented to the activity is irrelevant. Sexual abuse can involve a range of contact and non-contact behaviour, including kissing, fondling, masturbation, penetration, voyeurism and exhibitionism. It can also include exposure to or exploitation through pornography or prostitution, as well as grooming behaviour.
Tasmanian Organisation of Catholics	Tasmanian Organisations of Catholic operating in the Archdiocese of Hobart, not part of the Trust (see Trust Agency).
Towards Healing	<i>Towards Healing</i> is the primary document of the Australian Catholic Church responding to reports of sexual, emotional and physical abuse. Principles and Procedures in responding to complaints of abuse against personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia.
Trust Agency	An Agency which is operating under the Roman Catholic Church Trust Corporation of the Archdiocese of Hobart.
Trust Agency Worker	A person who satisfies the definition of worker in this glossary, but additionally is employed by, volunteers or is involved in the work of the Roman Catholic Church Trust Corporation of the Archdiocese of Hobart.
Vulnerable Adult	Means a person who has recently suffered bereavement, marriage breakdown or other adversity that puts them in particular need of pastoral support, or a person with an intellectual disability, mental illness or other physical, mental or intellectual impairment that makes it difficult for that person to protect themselves from abuse or exploitation ¹³ .
'Worker' or 'workers'	Includes any person who is employed or in the service of the Church: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church Personnel • Priest or member of a religious order • Employee • Volunteer • Contractor, Sub-Contractor or Consultant • Employee of an Employment Agency or Labour Hire Company • Apprentice or trainee • Work experience student.

¹³ Derived from, National Committee for Professional Standards, *Towards Healing*, 2016

Appendix B

Timeline – Australian Roman Catholic Church Institutional Child Sexual Abuse



Appendix C

<u>SAFE COMMUNITIES: PROTECTING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULT POLICY</u>		Document #	Level: Tier 1
		Prepared By: CO	Date Prepared: 27 July 2017
Effective Date: 25 August 2017	Revision # 1	Reviewed By: Business Manager	Date Reviewed: August 2017
Compliance: Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth) Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (TAS) Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 (TAS) Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (TAS) Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (TAS)		Approved By: Archbishop of Hobart	Date Approved: 24 August 2017

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm while participating in activities or receiving care and services provided by the Catholic Church in Tasmania. This is to be achieved principally by ensuring workers and volunteers are appropriately screened, trained and supervised when working with children and vulnerable people, and through the nurturing of organisational cultures that are inherently committed to safety.

Scope of Application

This policy applies to all members of the Archdiocese of Hobart and its associated agencies including: Archbishop's Office, Parishes, Church Office, CatholicCare Tasmania, Centacare Evolve Housing, Catholic Education Tasmania and the Catholic Development Fund.

Policy

The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. This belief is also the foundation of all the principles of the Church's social teaching. Catholic organisations operating in Tasmania are united by a recognition of the inherent value of the human person from conception to natural death. The Catholic community in Tasmania plays a significant role in promoting environments that nurture the wellbeing of all persons but in particular children and vulnerable adults, and is committed to providing safe and supportive places and programs for them.

Screening strategies will include:

- Working with Vulnerable People checks
- National Police Criminal History Checks
- Work History and reference checks
- Right to work in Australia checks
- Statutory Declarations (as required).

This policy specifically commits all these organisations to ensuring:

- A shared culture of safety for children and vulnerable adults
- Systems and processes are in place which provide a safe environment for all in their care
- The effective implementation of safe strategies and practices to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm

- Disclosures and/or concerns of abuse are reported, monitored, and responded to throughout Tasmania in a timely manner and in accordance with legislation.

Related Documents

- Professional Boundaries Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Safe Communities Framework
- Whistleblower Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy

Changes to this policy

The Archdiocese will review this policy from time to time and updates are available on the website.

Appendix D

Parish and Pastoral Checklist

A Safe Communities Self-Assessment checklist has been developed to assist Archdiocese of Hobart Agencies and Tasmanian Organisations of Catholics to continuously improve their child and vulnerable adult safety procedures. This self-assessment tool is based on the recommended ten child safe elements set out by the Royal Commission. This framework extends these elements to include vulnerable adults.

To be completed annually by the Parish Priest or Pastoral Leader and returned to the Safe Communities Officer, safecommunities@aohtas.org.au. If completed manually, scan and email or post to Safe Communities, GPO Box 62, Hobart, Tas 7001.

Details of Parish or Pastoral Organisation

Name of Parish/Pastoral Organisation:	
Name of Person completing the form:	
Date completed:	

Important Communications Material

	Self-Assessment Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1.1	Is the Safe Communities Commitment (Parish) is on display/available at the appropriate venues?				
1.2	Do you use your website, social media or other channels to communicate Safe Communities?				
1.3	Are Safe Communities Abuse Reporting Brochures available?				
1.4	Are Safe Communities messages linked to Parish/Pastoral newsletter				
1.5	Do you hold events to communicate and discuss Safe Communities?				

Please describe any additional support you require from our Safe Communities Unit.

--

Policies and Procedures

	Self-Assessment Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
2.1	Are copies of the Safe Communities- Protecting Children Vulnerable People Policy available?				
2.2	Do you have access to the Safe Communities Framework document?				
2.3	Do you have access to the Safe Communities Parish and Pastoral Manual?				

	Self-Assessment Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
2.4	Is the <i>Safe Communities - Code of Behaviour</i> for the protection of children and vulnerable adults signed by workers and volunteers?				
2.5	Can the parish access Archdiocesan policies ?				

Leadership

	Self-Assessment Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
3.1	Is 'Safe Communities' an agenda item for your Finance and/or Pastoral Council or leadership group?				

Personnel Practices and Training

These questions apply to clergy/ church employee/ volunteers involved with children and vulnerable adults (including cyber contact).

	Self-Assessment Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
4.1	Have clergy/ church employee/ volunteers undergone a <i>National Police Criminal Check</i> ? (Refer to the Screening Guidance, page 22)				
4.2	Have clergy/ church employee/ volunteers provided a <i>Working with Vulnerable Persons Card</i> for their positions? (Refer to the Screening Guidance, pages 20-21)				
4.3	Have clergy/ church employee/ volunteers provided required <i>references</i> for their positions? (Refer to the Screening Guidance, pages 5-6)				
4.4	Have clergy/ church employee/ volunteers completed an Induction? Refer to the <i>Engagement and Induction Checklist</i> on Domus)				
4.5	Have clergy/ church employee/ volunteers been advised of relevant policies?				
4.6	Attended training or completed online training?				

	Self-Assessment Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
4.7	Is there sufficient oversight of clergy/ church employee/ volunteers when they have face to face and online contact with children and vulnerable adults?				

Please describe any additional support you require from our Safe Communities Unit. Is there any other form of Safe Communities training which would enhance your parish environment?

Safe Environments and Activities

	Self-Assessment Questions	Yes	No	Comments
5.1	Is the Sacristy sign in/out book always completed?			
5.2	Are visiting clergy asked for Celebret/Letter of Permission?			
5.3	Are Activity Risk Assessments conducted for specific activities involving children and vulnerable adults?			
5.4	Are incidents and hazards reporting using the 'Incident Report Form' ?			

Complaints/concerns

	Self-Assessment Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
6.1	Have any Parish/Pastoral Community complaints/concerns arisen?				
6.2	Have all complaints or concerns related to Church Workers been reported to the Archbishop?				
6.3	Have any disciplinary procedures being invoked in the last 12 months? For example a <i>'Covenant of Care'</i> , concerning a Person of Concern.				

Records Management

	Self-Assessment Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
7.1	Are all physical personnel records securely stored i.e. lockable filing cabinet? (Refer to the Record Keeping Policy and Privacy Policy on Domus)				
7.2	Are all electronic personnel records securely stored and only accessible by authorised persons? (Refer to the Record Keeping Policy and Privacy Policy on Domus)				
7.3	Are other Safe Communities records such as 'Covenants of Care' securely stored and only accessible by authorised persons?				

Sign off by Parish Priest

Name: _____ **Signed:** _____

Chairperson Finance Council (or Pastoral Council)

Name: _____ **Signed:** _____

All information contained in this this form will be kept securely and only accessible by authorised persons.

Safe Communities Office use only:

- Has this form being processed and information collated for the *Archbishop Safe Communities Annual Report*?
- Have any follow-up actions occurred e.g. Parish/Pastoral visit, documents sent?
- Safe Communities or other documents amended

Appendix E

Engagement and Induction Checklist (New Staff)

The purpose of this checklist is to record essential details, perform pre-engagement checks and to ensure induction practices are performed to ensure a safe environment for all.

SECTION ONE: GENERAL	
Name:	
Religious Name (if applicable):	
Date of Birth:	
Phone:	
Address:	
Email:	
SECTION TWO: ROLE	
Clergy <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Paid staff <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Contractor <input type="checkbox"/> Student on placement <input type="checkbox"/>	
Role Description	_____
Brief outline of duties to be performed:	
Days and hours of duties (as required):	
Full driving licence required:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Start date:	
SECTION THREE: SCREENING	
Name of referee:	
Contact details:	
Notes:	
Name of referee:	
Contact details:	
Notes:	
Reference checks completed by:	_____ Date: _____
Working with Vulnerable People Check verified and copy of card returned to HR Department:	<input type="checkbox"/>
National Police Check Processed by HR Department:	<input type="checkbox"/>
SECTION FOUR: EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS	
Name:	_____ Phone: _____
Relationship:	_____
SECTION FIVE: MEDICAL DETAILS	
<i>If you have a medical condition(s) that you need people to be aware of, please note them (e.g. allergies, diabetes, asthma etc.). In the event of an emergency this will assist First Aid Officers.</i>	
SECTION SIX: INDUCTION CHECKLIST	

<p>Role Role and duties explained <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor introduced <input type="checkbox"/> 'Buddy' assigned (if necessary) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Site orientation Site orientation conducted <input type="checkbox"/> WHS Hazards noted <input type="checkbox"/> Toilets and washing <input type="checkbox"/> Introductions to other parish personnel <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Work, Health and Safety (WHS) Who to contact in an emergency <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Stations and Officers <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency evacuation procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Evacuation assembly points <input type="checkbox"/> Working in isolation <input type="checkbox"/> Manual handling <input type="checkbox"/> How to report an incident, injury or illness <input type="checkbox"/> Information provided on how to access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Contacts How and who, to contact if unwell <input type="checkbox"/> Who to contact if any issues <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Reimbursement of expenses Procedures explained <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Policies and procedures provided Integrity in the Service of Church <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity in Ministry (if clergy or religious) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Safe Communities Completed online (Learning Manager) training <input type="checkbox"/> Completed workshop training <input type="checkbox"/> Code of Behaviour – Signed <input type="checkbox"/> Report Abuse Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Activities Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Parish & Pastoral Manual <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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SECTION SEVEN: ASSETS ISSUED

House keys: Address: _____
Car keys: Vehicle: _____
Phone: _____
Computer:
Other:

Date induction completed on: _____

I agree that the matters on this list have been completed and understood. In circumstances, where I have not fully understood the information, I have asked questions.

Name of person engaged: _____

Signature: _____

Office use only

Induction completed by: _____ Date: _____

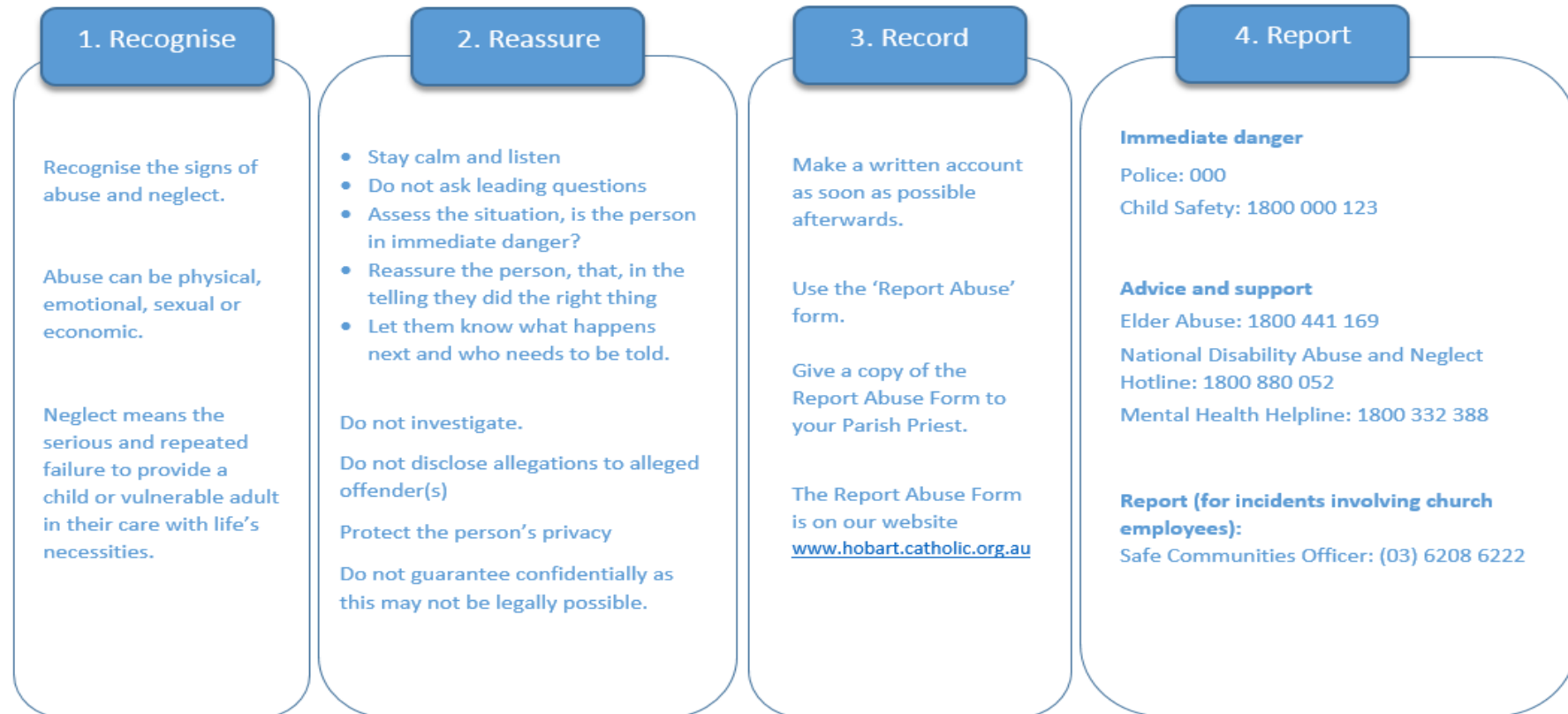
This form is to be securely filed and only accessible by those with rights to do so.

Contact information:
Archdiocese of Hobart Human Resources Department (HR and WHS Help and Support)
To process National Police Checks and Working with Vulnerable People Checks (03) 6208 6268
Archdiocese of Hobart Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC) & Safe Communities Unit
Risk Assessments and Safe Communities (03) 6208 6046

Respond to and Report Abuse Signage



Respond to and Report Abuse





Parish and Pastoral Safe Communities Commitment

I (full name).....

of (Parish/Pastoral Community).....

(position).....

declare that the Parish or Pastoral Community which I represent embraces and wholeheartedly supports the Safe Communities Policy and Framework by:

1. Observing the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards
2. implementing Archdiocesan child and vulnerable adult policies and procedures as detailed in the Parish and Pastoral Manual;

I have undertaken to conduct an annual 'Safe Communities – Parish and Pastoral Check' to ensure ongoing compliance with the Parish and Pastoral Manual.

Declared at (place).....

on (date).....

(Signature).....

REPORT OF SUSPECTED ABUSE FORM

Complete this form if:

- Reporting an allegation concerning Church Personnel; OR
- Reporting and/or recording a situation that may be relevant to authorities.

Note:

- This is a CONFIDENTIAL report.
- If you require assistance in completing this form, please contact the Safe Communities Officer on 6208 6222
- Emergency and Non-Emergency contact numbers are on the last page.
- DO NOT investigate the allegations yourself.

VICTIM DETAILS			
First Name:			
Last Name:			
Date of Birth:		Age:	
Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Not Specified		
Ethnicity:			
Language:	<input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Non Verbal <input type="checkbox"/> Other language (specify below)		
Address (if known)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Elderly (65+)	<input type="checkbox"/> Child (Under 18 years)	<input type="checkbox"/> Vulnerable Adult (Over 18 years)	<input type="checkbox"/> Person with a physical disability
			<input type="checkbox"/> Person with a developmental disability

SUSPECTED ABUSER

First Name:			
Last Name:			
Date of Birth:		Age:	
Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Not Specified
Ethnicity:			
Language:	<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Non Verbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Other language: _____
Address (if known)			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Guardian	<input type="checkbox"/> Health Practitioner	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain below)

REPORTING PARTY

First Name:			
Last Name:			
Date of Birth:		Age:	
Relationship to victim:			
How was abuse known:			
Signature		Date:	Click or tap to enter a date.

ABUSE INFORMATION

Date of Incident:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Place of Incident:	<input type="checkbox"/> Own home <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital <input type="checkbox"/> School <input type="checkbox"/> Another home <input type="checkbox"/> Child care <input type="checkbox"/> Aged care facility <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Type of Abuse:	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Grooming <input type="checkbox"/> Abandonment <input type="checkbox"/> Isolation <input type="checkbox"/> Neglect <input type="checkbox"/> Psychological/ Mental Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Abduction <input type="checkbox"/> Financial abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Self-Neglect:	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Care (e.g. personal hygiene, food, clothing, shelter) <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Care <input type="checkbox"/> Malnutrition/Dehydration (e.g. physical and mental health needs) <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Safety (e.g. risk of suicide, unsafe environment)
Outcome of Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> No Physical Injury <input type="checkbox"/> Minor Medical Care <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitalisation <input type="checkbox"/> Serious Bodily Harm <input type="checkbox"/> Death <input type="checkbox"/> Care Provider Required <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Issues <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown/Other: _____

Please provide reporters observations and statement. *(attach additional document, if required)*

If available, please provide the victim's observations and statement. *(attach additional document, if available)*

--

IS THE VICTIM STILL IN DANGER? DOES THE ALLEGED ABUSER STILL HAVE ACCESS TO THE VICTIM?

Yes¹⁴ No Unsure

Witnesses or other person(s) believed to have knowledge of the abuse¹⁵.

First Name:			
Last Name:			
Address:			
Phone:		Mobile:	
Relationship to victim:			

Details of Family member or person responsible for the person's care

First Name:			
Last Name:			
Address:			
Phone:		Mobile:	
Relationship to victim:			

¹⁴ Contact the Police if the person is in danger of further abuse.

¹⁵ This include family, significant others, neighbours, medical providers, other agencies.

REPORT MADE TO:

<input type="checkbox"/> Police <input type="checkbox"/> Archbishop of Hobart ¹⁶	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Safety Services <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Director of Professional Standards Informed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No.
Date that written report was sent to the Director of Professional Standards:	Click or tap to enter a date.

Contact Numbers

Contact	Emergency	Non-Emergency
Police	000	131 444
Child Safety Services (DHHS)	000	1800 000 123
Director of Professional Standards		1800 356 613
Elder Abuse		1800 441 169
National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline		1800 880 052
Mental Health Helpline		1800 332 388

RECEIVING AGENCY USE ONLY

Name of receiving officer:			
Position:			
Date Received:		Format Received:	Choose an item.
Signature:			
Report entered on Complaints Register	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Date entered:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Location of File.			

¹⁶ If this involves Church Personnel.

Appendix I

Relevant legislation, policies and literature

Commonwealth Legislation

- Privacy Act 1988
- Aged Care Act 1997
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Tasmanian Legislation

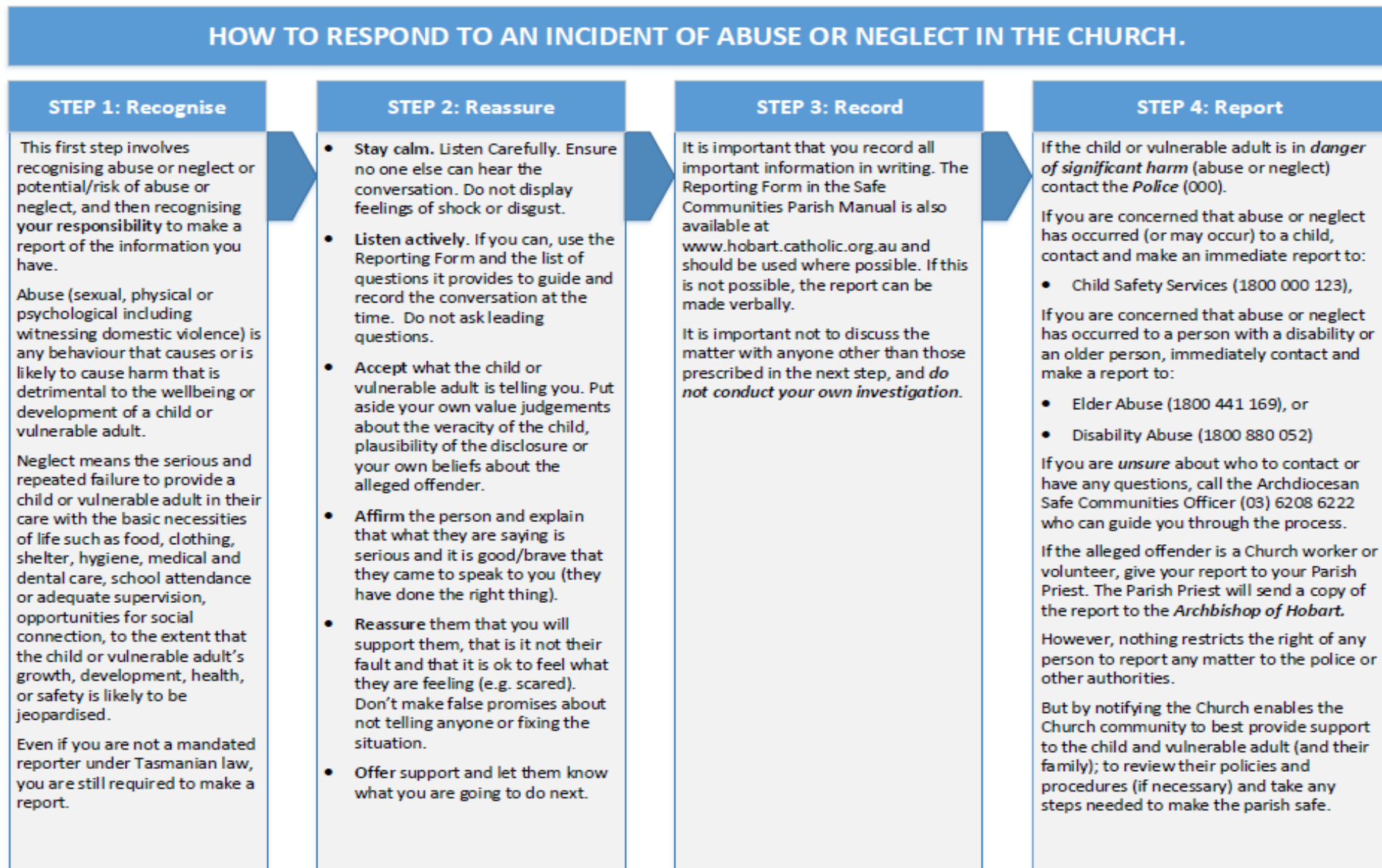
- Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997
- Family Violence Act TAS 2004
- Family Law Act 1975
- Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1998
- Criminal Code Act 1924
- Disabilities Services Act 1992

Policies

- Code of Behaviour – Children and Vulnerable Adults SIGNED - *To be developed*
- Report Abuse Policy – *To be developed*
- Children and Young Persons Protection Policy
- Pre-engagement screening
- Prescribed Person Status
- Professional Boundaries Policy
- Safe Activities Policy – *Developed. Ensure consistency with WHS items*
- Safe Communities- Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Working with Vulnerable People Policy
- Workplace Behaviour policy

Other Church documents:

- National Committee for Professional Standards. (2011). Integrity in the Service of the Church
- National Committee for Professional Standards. (2010). Integrity in Ministry
- National Committee for Professional Standards. (2016). Towards Healing





For information and assistance, please contact the Safe Communities Officer.

Phone 03 6208 6222

Email: safecommunities@aohtas.org.au