



Procedure for Handling Disclosures, Suspicions of Harm or Complaints

<p>Policy</p>	<p>All church workers and safety officers will receive training in identifying risks of harm and handling disclosures or suspicions of harm as soon as possible.</p> <p>All church workers and safety officers will report disclosed or suspected harm immediately to their Rector. The relevant Dean must be informed if the Rector is implicated in any way.</p> <p>All church workers and safety officers will report concerns and complaints as per the ANZ Diocese of ROCOR procedures in the Inappropriate Behaviour policy</p>
<p>Who must comply with this policy?</p>	<p>The following people must comply with this policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees and volunteers Church workers Child Safety Contact Officers
<p>Definitions of Harm</p>	<p>Harm as defined under the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> as <i>any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. For harm to be significant, the detrimental effect on the child's wellbeing must be substantial or serious, more than transitory and must be demonstrable in the child's presentation, functioning or behaviour</i>".</p> <p>Harm may be categorised in the following types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical abuse, for example, beating, shaking, burning, biting, causing bruise or fractures by inappropriate discipline, giving children alcohol, drugs or inappropriate medication • emotional or psychological abuse, for example, constant yelling, insults, swearing, criticism, bullying, not giving children positive support and encouragement • neglect, for example, not giving children sufficient food, clothing, enough sleep, hygiene, medical care, leaving children alone or children missing school, and • sexual abuse or exploitation, for example, sexual jokes or touching, exposing children to sexual acts or pornography or having sexual intercourse with a child or young person under 16 years of age (even if the child appears to have consented).
<p>Disclosure of Harm</p>	<p>A disclosure of harm occurs when someone, including a child, tells you about harm that has happened or is likely to happen. Disclosures of harm may start with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I think I saw..." • "Somebody told me that..." • "Just think you should know..." • "I'm not sure what I want you to do, but..."
<p>Suspicion of harm</p>	<p>You can suspect harm if you are concerned by significant changes in behaviour or the presence of new unexplained and suspicious injuries.</p>
<p>Procedures to minimise harm to children and young people</p>	<p>ANZ Diocese of ROCOR works to minimise harm to children and young people by acting in a manner that supports their interests and wellbeing, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making sure that children know that it is their right to feel safe at all times • teaching them about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in general • letting them know who is and who is not a church worker in the organisation • allowing them to be a part of decision-making processes • making sure they are safe by monitoring their activities and ensuring their environment meets all safety requirements • taking anything a child or young person says seriously and following up their concerns • letting them know there is no secret too awful, no story too terrible, that they can't share with someone they trust • encouraging them to tell safety officers of any suspicious activities or people, and • listening to children and young people and letting them know that safety officers are available for them if they have any concerns.

What complaints are reported?

All complaints should be reported including

- Disclosure of harm
- Inappropriate behaviour around children and young persons
- Suspicion of abuse or harm to a child or young person

To whom should the complaint be reported?

A child, young person or any church member can make a complaint or raise a concern directly to the Child Safety Contact Person (list name and mobile number) or the Rector.

Child Safety Contact Person will take the following actions

- Listens to the person making the complaint
- Documents the disclosure or complaint using the 'Complaint/Incident Record Form concerning Young Persons'
- Reports immediately to the Parish Priest (list name and mobile number)
- Reports as per Inappropriate Behaviour policy
- Reports the to the relevant authorities if it is an allegation child abuse

Procedures for receiving a disclosure of harm

When receiving a disclosure of harm the Child Safety Contact Person will,

- remain calm and find a private place to talk
- give your complete attention and do not rush
- don't promise that you'll keep a secret. Tell the person they have done the right thing in telling you but that you'll need to tell someone who can help keep them safe
- only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter; probing questions could cause distress, confusion and interfere with any later enquiries, and
- do not attempt to conduct your own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved.
- advise the rector immediately of the disclosure

Reporting guidelines for disclosures or suspicions of harm

The Child Safety Contact Person will take the following actions immediately following a disclosure or suspicion of harm.

Inform the Rector (if the allegation is against the Rector call the Dean in your state).

Documenting a suspicion of harm:

If you or others have concerns about the safety of a child, record your concerns using the 'Complaint/Incident Record Form concerning Young Persons' in a non-judgmental and accurate manner as soon as possible. If a parent explains a noticeable mark on a child, record your own observations as well as accurate details of the conversation. If you see unsafe or harmful actions towards a child in your care, intervene immediately, provided it is safe to do so. If it is unsafe, call the police for assistance.

Documenting a disclosure of harm:

Complete a 'Complaint/Incident Record Form concerning Young Persons' or record the details as soon as possible so that they are accurately captured. Include:

- time, date and place of the disclosure
- 'word for word' what happened and what was said, including anything you said and any actions that have been taken, and
- date of report and signature.

If you need to take notes as the person is telling you, explain that you are taking a record in case any later enquiry occurs.

Reporting the disclosure or suspicion of harm to authorities:

ANZ Diocese will not conduct its own enquiries in relation to the disclosure or suspicion of harm or try to come to an agreement between the parties involved. The person who receives a disclosure or suspects harm is to contact the relevant authority to ensure information provided is comprehensive and accurate.

Report the matter to:

Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) on
Police Service (*provide local contact details*) on

Reporting Obligations

Mandatory reporting TBA

Reporting and Complaints

If someone makes or considers making a report about a child related concern that arises in the course of the Parish's activities:

- Report to Rector, or Dean in his absence.

In the event of a complaint or concern regarding the behavior of someone connected with the Parish:

- Contact Rector, or priest in his absence, who will advise on appropriate action in accordance with Inappropriate Behavior guidelines and procedures for disclosing harm.
- If criminal activity is suspected, ensure the police have been contacted.
- File complaints and reports of investigations in a secure central file.
- Liaise with Diocesan Council as necessary.

Keeping the Church/Parish informed

Receive from the Diocese up to date information about Child-Safe Child-Friendly policy including:

- *Child-Safe Child-Friendly Code of Conduct*
- Inappropriate Behavior Policy
- Guidelines for recording and dealing with incidents.

Provide annually a short report to the Church/Parish Council detailing:

- The names of those who have completed Child-Safe Child-Friendly paperwork, training and Working With Children Check ,
- Any significant changes to legislation and Diocesan policies and the location of all policies and paperwork connected with a Child-Safe Child-Friendly Church/Parish.
- Activities that were run on church property
- Incidents that were identified

Confidentiality

Disclosure of personal and or sensitive data and information should be on a need to know basis with the full knowledge of the rector or equivalent.

Authorisation

Church Rector

St Seraphim ROCOR

Date 21/08/2016