



SAFEGUARDING AND MINISTERIAL INTEGRITY OFFICE

March 2021 Quarterly Newsletter

The month of March is recognised as the month of St Joseph, with his Solemnity occurring on 19 March 2021. As Pope Francis has declared this the year of St Joseph, let us pray to him for his fatherly intercession for all Children and Young People.



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Welcome to the Safeguarding Office's Quarterly Newsletter!

The Safeguarding Office is looking forward to the year ahead and is excited to release new Safeguarding Training packages for 2021. We are hoping to resume face-to-face training but in the interim our training will be offered via Zoom which we hope will offer a safe balance that accommodates the need for your health and safety as well as the need for your training requirements.

In this newsletter, we would like to draw your attention to changes affecting Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL) and the ACBCs release of the new National Response Protocol (NRP). This will be discussed in further detail below.

It has also been twelve months since Mandatory Reporting requirements have been expanded to include clergy, deacons, religious brothers and religious sisters, as well as volunteers and paid employees in our Agencies and Parishes. In addition to this, it was also in March last year that the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian Reportable Conduct Scheme commenced under the *Children's Guardian Act 2019*. A brief overview of these changes will be discussed in this newsletter to help keep you up-to-date.

Your Safeguarding Team



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National Response Protocol

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) has released the new National Response Protocol which came into effect on 1 February 2021. The National Response Protocol provides a national framework for Catholic entities to be able to respond in a consistent manner to people who bring forward concerns or allegations of child sexual abuse.

The Safeguarding Office welcomes the new National Response Protocol as it will provide a trauma-informed response within the Catholic Church in Australia to survivors of abuse, as well as furthering the promotion of a culture of preventing harm to children and adults at risk.

The National Response Protocol does not override existing statutory requirements but sits alongside and complements the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Policy and Protocols as it provides high-level principles for Catholic entities to follow. This not only provides a process of transparency but also drives continual improvement.

To view the National Response Protocol, please click the following link:

www.catholic.org.au/nationalresponseprotocol

The Safeguarding Office is very positive about the future of safeguarding in the Church and its accompaniment of survivors. We are all on a journey together to help make our Archdiocese a safer place for Children, Young People and Adults at Risk, and through the National Response Protocol, we can help to achieve this for the whole nation.

Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL)

Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL) is owned by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC), Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) and the Association of Ministerial Public Juridic Persons (AMPJP) and was established to oversee safeguarding at a national level across Australia. ACSL has the responsibility of implementing and overseeing the National Response Protocol which will ensure consistency in responses to people who bring forward concerns or allegations of child sexual abuse. As a result, Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL), is no longer the body which has oversight for the Catholic Safeguarding Standards, as this now falls under the scope of ACSL.

Working With Children Check (WWCC) Renewal

A friendly reminder that for those of you that obtained your WWCC in 2016, your WWCC will be due for renewal this year. The Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG), will send you a notification provided they have your up-to-date details on file. Please follow this [link](#) to the OCG website for further information.

Commitment Statement

The emotional, physical and spiritual safety, well-being and dignity of children is an integral part of the teachings and values of the Catholic Church. The Archdiocese is wholly committed to ensuring the safety, well-being and dignity of all children, and acknowledges its important legal, moral and spiritual responsibility to create a safe and nurturing environment for those children.

Online Safeguarding Training

The Safeguarding Office takes the safety and well-being of all clergy and training participants very seriously and is regularly monitoring the situation regarding Covid. We hope to get back to face-to-face safeguarding training however, in the interim, training packages will be presented online using Zoom which we hope will ensure the safety and well-being of all our clergy and training participants.

We kindly ask that all Parish Priests, Administrators and Agency Heads ensure that their employees and volunteers in their Parishes or Agencies are up-to-date with their Safeguarding Training requirements.

If you are unsure whether your employees have completed the appropriate training or to register for training please email safeguardingtraining@sydneycatholic.org or contact Anna Sammut on 9390 5811. You will be sent a confirmation email which will contain a link and password for you to join the training session.

For Safeguarding training dates for Clergy, Parish and Agency Staff, Safeguarding Support Officers and Youth Ministers, please visit the Safeguarding website by clicking [here](#).

2021 Training Sessions

Below are listed the safeguarding training dates for 2021. For further information please view the full training session information on the Safeguarding website by clicking [here](#).

Clergy Level 1: Introduction to Safeguarding within the Archdiocese of Sydney

Friday, 27 August 2021
10:30 am - 3:00 pm via Zoom

Clergy Level 2: Building Safe Communities

Thursday, 25 March 2021
10:30 am - 3:00 pm via Zoom

Clergy Level 3: Beyond the Royal Commission: National Principles and Standards

Friday, 19 March 2021
10:30 am - 3:00 pm via Zoom

SSO Spreading the Safeguarding Message:

Wednesday, 19 May 2021
3:30 pm - 6:00 pm via Zoom

Level 1: Introduction to Safeguarding within the Archdiocese of Sydney: for Parish and Agency Staff

Wednesday, 5 May 2021
10:00 am - 1:15 pm

2021 Youth Ministry Training

Saturday, 7 August 2021
10:00 am - 2:00 pm via Zoom

Safeguarding Online Induction Training for Parish Staff, Agency Staff, Volunteers and Youth Ministry Leaders: available for all parish staff, agency staff, volunteers and Youth Ministry Leaders of the Archdiocese who have not yet attended a Safeguarding Induction Training session. To register for the online training please click [here](#).

Safeguarding Online Refresher Training: is available for all Parish and Agency staff of the Archdiocese who completed the Level 1 Safeguarding Training for Parish and Agency staff three years ago. To register, please click [here](#).

The Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first inhabitants of the nation and the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work.

Mandatory Reporting and the Reportable Conduct Scheme

It has been twelve months since the amendments to Mandatory Reporting and the commencement of the Reportable Conduct Scheme under the *Children's Guardian Act 2019* came into effect. To refresh and remind you about your reporting obligations, we have provided a brief summary below. For further information please review the Fact Sheets listed below or visit our [website](#).

Mandatory Reporting

Since March 2020, all clergy, deacons, religious brothers and religious sisters have been legally required to make a report to the Department of Communities and Justice when they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm. It also means that volunteers and paid employees in Agencies and Parishes of the Archdiocese who provide activities to children such as Children's Liturgy, Youth Ministry groups, and Sacramental programs are also legally required to make a report when they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm. A reporter has a duty to report, as soon as practicable, the name or a description of the child and the grounds for suspecting that the child is at risk of significant harm.

For further information regarding Mandatory Reporting, Risk of Significant Harm and how to make a report, please click on the document below:

[Fact Sheet: Mandatory Reporting](#)

[Fact Sheet: When is a Child at Risk of Significant Harm?](#)

[Guidance Document: When is a Child at Risk of Significant Harm?](#)

[Protocol: Reporting a Child who is at Risk of Significant Harm to the Department of Communities and Justice](#)

Reportable Conduct Scheme

From 1 March 2020, the Children's Guardian Reportable Conduct Scheme commenced under the *Children's Guardian Act 2019*. The scheme provides a framework for the oversight of how organisations respond to reportable allegations and reportable convictions. Religious bodies are required to notify the Office of the Children's Guardian about reportable allegations and convictions against employees that arise in the course of their work both in and outside the organisation.

For further information on the Reportable Conduct Scheme, please view our Fact Sheets listed below which are located on our website:

[Fact Sheet: Reportable Conduct Scheme](#)

[Fact Sheet: What Conduct Must be Reported to the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian?](#)

[Guidance Document: What Conduct Must be Reported to the Office of the Children's Guardian?](#)

[Protocol: Reporting Inappropriate Employee Conduct to the Office of the Children's Guardian](#)

We request that all Priests of our Parishes display the Safeguarding notice below in all future parish bulletins.

A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney:

Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office at **(02) 9390 5810** or [**safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org**](mailto:safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org).

You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.