



Sisters of Saint Joseph
of the Sacred Heart

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Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	v.2.4	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
	Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10		
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029

Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure

Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart

Mission Statement

The Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart continue God's mission by immersing themselves in the midst of life to empower others and bring hope.

Complaints Handling Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart (**SOSJ**) take all allegations of abuse and safety complaints seriously.
- 1.2 SOSJ has a zero tolerance for abuse. It will be guided by its Adult and Child Safeguarding Commitment Statement and broader values and strategic vision.
- 1.3 SOSJ respects and upholds the rights of all First Nations, Māori, Pasifika, and Native Peruvian people in the lands on which we minister, work, and reside.
- 1.4 Members of the Congregation who are in lands other than Australia, are required to abide by the local Church and civil law requirements.
- 1.5 This document sets out SOSJ's policy for managing safety complaints and the procedure that Workplace Participants and SOSJ must follow in relation to reporting and responding to safety complaints.
- 1.6 SOSJ is committed to creating an open and transparent environment that encourages people to raise concerns and complaints. Complaints and the investigation of such, assists SOSJ in addressing issues and supports the continuous improvement of our ministries, services and culture.

2. Scope

- 2.1 Everyone is responsible for creating and maintaining a safe culture.
- 2.2 This policy applies to every person in relationship with SOSJ including Congregational Leadership, Sisters in nominated roles, lay employees, clergy in nominated roles, (some) contractors, and formal volunteers (**Workplace Participants**). This policy also applies to Sisters, Josephite Affiliates, persons in formation, Stewardship Commission members and Safeguarding Committee members. It should be read in conjunction

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with SOSJ's Adult and Child Safeguarding Policy and the Adult and Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

- 2.3 A 'complaint' includes any allegation, suspicion, concern, disclosure, or report:
- (a) regarding the alleged abuse of an adult at risk or child.
 - (b) of a breach of SOSJ's Adult and Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct or other Safeguarding policy or procedure;
 - (c) that any person included at 2.2 of this policy, has engaged in abuse of, or inappropriate behaviour towards, an adult at risk or child (regardless of whether the adult at risk or child is associated with SOSJ);
 - (d) about, or relating to, abuse of an adult at risk or child, in an institutional context;
 - (e) regarding abuse between two or more children;
 - (f) of historical allegations of child abuse; and
- 2.4 A complaint can be made by anyone – including a child, adult survivor, parent, trusted adult, independent support person, community member or any person included at 2.2 of this policy, or an anonymous person (complainant).

3. Principles

- 3.1 SOSJ takes all safety complaints seriously and will respond to each complaint in accordance with this policy and the relevant procedure.
- 3.2 Any person who in good faith, raises a complaint or discloses an allegation of abuse will not be disadvantaged or prejudiced and will be protected from victimisation. Reports will be dealt with in a timely and confidential manner.
- 3.3 SOSJ and persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will be guided by the following principles:
- (a) the safety of all will be the upmost priority when responding to any safety complaints;
 - (b) it is difficult for all individuals, particularly adults at risk and children, to disclose abuse and an appropriate response to any disclosure is critical for the recovery process of a survivor;
 - (c) it is important that SOSJ and all persons listed at 2.2 of this policy reduce barriers that are in place for individuals who disclose, such as by publicising information on how to raise concerns, providing different pathways and allowing different methods of raising concerns;

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- (d) SOSJ will support any person listed at 2.2 of this policy who makes a complaint or report regarding suspected abuse, and state that they do not need SOSJ's consent to make an external report;
- (e) in responding to complaints, persons listed at 2.2 of this policy and SOSJ, will pay particular attention to the needs of First Nations peoples, children who are unable to live at home, adults at risk who reside in residential / care facilities, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people with diverse needs;
- (f) when responding to complaints, SOSJ acknowledges that power imbalances may exist between a complainant and a respondent, and will also be mindful of any conflicts of interests that may exist; and
- (g) SOSJ will investigate any complaints in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

4. Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1 In relation to responding to safety complaints, the relevant roles and responsibilities are set out below.

Role	Key Responsibilities
Workplace Participants, Sisters, Josephite Affiliates, persons in formation, Stewardship Commission members and Safeguarding Committee members	• Comply with obligations under this policy and procedure. • Immediately report child safety complaints and concerns to the state-based child protection legislative agency. • Report safety complaints and concerns for adults at risk, to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and/or NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission and/or state based relevant jurisdiction. • Comply with reporting obligations to regulatory authorities. • Report child safety complaints and concerns to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or Professional Standards Officer. • Immediately report child safety complaints and concerns regarding the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or Professional Standards Officer, directly to the Congregational Leader. • Complete risk assessments as required. • Sisters and clergy are also obliged to follow the canonical reporting processes and procedures for complaints involving the alleged sexual abuse committed by a Sister, clergy, or other religious. • Be cognisant of red flags and indicators of abuse. • Maintain confidentiality of the complainant, child, adult at risk, and all individuals involved.

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	• Raise any perceived or actual conflicts of interest. • Cooperate with all directions from SOSJ and internal and external investigations.
Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Professional Standards Officer	• Offer assistance and support to persons listed at 2.2 of this policy, when making a report to external authorities in compliance with procedures. • Escalate complaints to the Congregational Leader as needed. • Advise the Safeguarding Committee of non-identifying details of complaints. • Provide recommendations to the Congregational Leader in relation to reports under Reportable Conduct Schemes in relevant States and Territories. • Manage any historical allegations or claims. • Manage any internal investigation and engage an external investigator if required. • Provide and / or arrange support and pastoral care to any persons listed at 2.2 of this policy, implicated in a safety complaint. • Ensure compliance with confidentiality and privacy obligations. • Co-ordinate training and education to persons listed at 2.2 of this policy, regarding their obligations under this policy and the procedures. • Complete and / or support people listed at 2.2 of this policy, to complete risk assessments when a safety complaint or concern is raised. • Provide and / or arrange support and care to adults at risk and / or children involved, and any relevant witnesses. • Be mindful of and raise any conflict-of-interest concerns. • Co-ordinate and co-operate with any external regulatory body involved. • Ensure this policy and its procedures are publicly available in a variety of formats including in a format appropriate for children.
Safeguarding Committee	• Review risk assessments as requested. • Ensure proper records are kept in accordance with this policy. • Review the investigation process, management and outcomes of complaints as required.
Regional Leader, Leader or Manager	• Oversee any disciplinary action against workplace participants as needed and in consultation with the Manager, People and Culture. • Provide and / or arrange support and pastoral care to any person implicated in a safety complaint. • Ensure compliance with confidentiality and privacy obligations.

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Assistant Congregational Leader	• Manages any complaints made against the Congregational Leader. • Follows civil and canonical requirements and processes in relation to complaints made against the Congregational Leader.
Congregational Leader	• Manage any complaints made against the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or Professional Standards Officer. • Comply with reporting requirements under relevant Reportable Conduct Schemes as the head of the entity. • Manage any internal investigation and engaging an external investigator if required, if the complaint or allegations relates to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and/or Professional Standards Officer. • Ensure compliance with confidentiality and privacy obligations. • Provide reports to the Congregation as needed. • Approve this policy and procedures.

5. Responding and reporting

5.1 This section sets out the process persons listed at 2.2 of this policy and SOSJ will follow when a safety complaint is received.

Step One – First Response

5.2 When a person listed at 2.2 of this policy becomes aware of a complaint through a disclosure, the person must be mindful of their first response. They should:

- (a) Let the complainant use their own words to explain what has occurred;
- (b) Reassure them that you take what they are saying seriously, it is not their fault, and that they are doing the right thing;
- (c) Do not leave them in a distressed state. If they seem at ease in your company stay with them, otherwise get support from the Congregational Safeguarding Co-ordinator;
- (d) Keep a clear written record of the conversation (either during if possible or immediately after);
- (e) Offer the adult or child complainant support or pastoral care as appropriate;
- (f) If the complainant is the child survivor:
 - (i) Try to separate them from other children discreetly and listen to them carefully;

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- (ii) If you believe that the child is at immediate risk of harm, do all within your legal power to ensure the child's immediate safety, such as calling 000. Explain to the child that this information may need to be shared with others, such as with their parent / care giver (if safe to do so), specific people in your organisation, or to regulatory authorities; and
- (iii) Do not make promises to the child such as promising not to tell anyone about the incident, except that you will do your best to keep them safe.
- (g) If the complainant is an adult at risk:
 - (i) Try to separate them from other people discreetly and listen to them carefully;
 - (ii) If you believe that the adult at risk is at immediate risk of harm, do all within your legal power to ensure their immediate safety, such as calling 000. Discuss with the adult at risk that this information may need to be shared with others, such as with their care giver (if safe to do so), specific people in your organisation, or to regulatory authorities; and
 - (iii) Do not make promises to the adult at risk such as promising not to tell anyone about the incident, except that you will do your best to keep them safe.
 - (iv) Empower the adult at risk in decision making.
- (h) Refer to and comply with this policy and the relevant state-based procedure below.

Step Two – Assess your reporting obligations

- 5.3 SOSJ requires Workplace Participants and other persons listed within the scope of this policy, to report information pertaining to alleged child abuse, to the relevant state based statutory child protection service, regardless of whether they are listed as a mandatory reporter.
- 5.4 Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy are encouraged to seek support from the Congregational Safeguarding Co-ordinator but are not required to do so before making a report to the regulatory authority.
- 5.5 Reportable Conduct Scheme legislation exists within Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia. Each of these States and Territory is governed by their own Reportable Conduct legislation. A reportable allegation is an allegation that a person listed at 2.2 has engaged in

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conduct towards a child that may be reportable, either within the context of their role and/or position with SOSJ, or within their personal life. The Congregational Leader must adhere to prescriptive time frames in which a Reportable Conduct allegation must be reported, and these time frames are different for the various States and Territories.

- 5.6 Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy are encouraged to seek support from the Congregational Safeguarding Co-ordinator as soon as possible, in determining if a Reportable Conduct report is required.

Step Three – Report

- 5.7 As soon as possible after the disclosure, record the information using the complainant or survivor's words.
- 5.8 If the complaint relates to alleged abuse of a child, by a person listed at 2.2 of this policy, this must immediately be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator who will then escalate this to the Congregational Leader with a recommendation regarding whether a report needs to be made under any State or Territory Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- 5.9 The Safeguarding Co-ordinator, and the Congregational Leader are to be conscious of and comply with the prescribed timeframes under the relevant State and Territory Reportable Conduct Schemes.
- 5.10 If the complaint relates to alleged abuse by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or Professional Standards Officer, the Workplace Participant must immediately report this to the Congregational Leader.
- 5.11 Sisters and clergy are also obliged to follow the canonical reporting processes and procedures for complaints involving the alleged sexual abuse committed by a Sister, clergy, or other religious.
- 5.12 If the matter is a historical allegation (including under the National Redress Scheme) or involves a claim of compensation, or contacts the Professional Standards Officer directly, the Professional Standards Officer will respond to the matter promptly, ensuring all parties are regularly updated with the progress of the matter.
- 5.13 Safety concerns for an adult in an aged care facility, respite and day care service or support services delivered in the home, may be reported to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.
- 5.14 Safety concerns that relate to the provision of a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) service, may be reported to the NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission.
- 5.15 Safety concerns that relate to the abuse, neglect or exploitation of an adult with disability or an older person living in their home (conduct by a person's family, other

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informal supports, or persons known to them from the community, or any other person), may be reported to the relevant State / Territory-based Ageing and Disability Commission.

Step Four – Risk assessment

- 5.16 The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will complete or support a risk assessment to identify and minimise any risk to adults at risk and/or children, the respondent, and the proper investigation of the complaint. This will include considering and mitigating any conflicts of interest.
- 5.17 The risk assessment should be updated throughout the response and investigation process.
- 5.18 If the complaint or disclosure relates to the abuse of an adult at risk or child and involves allegations against a person listed at 2.2 of this policy, and there is a risk that the person may come into contact with adults at risk or children, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator must immediately notify the Workplace Participant's Leader or Manager, and / or Regional Leader or Congregational Leader.
- 5.19 The Leader or Manager, or Regional Leader, or Congregational Leader, must then remove the accused person from active duty, which could entail standing down (with pay, where applicable), re-assignment to other duties that do not have direct contact with adults at risk and/or children, or to work under increased supervision while the matter is being investigated. This decision will be made in consultation with the Manager, People and Culture, and consider the advice of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator / Professional Standards Officer, and the Safeguarding Committee as required with the safety of adults at risk and children as the guiding factor.
- 5.20 Complaints against Workplace Participants will be managed with reference to the Managing Underperformance and Disciplinary Policy.

Step Five – Investigations

- 5.21 All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy and SOSJ will cooperate with any investigation by a regulatory authority. No internal investigation or interview will commence until clearance has been provided by the relevant state regulator and / or police.
- 5.22 Once clearance has been provided, SOSJ may investigate allegations relating to an incident of abuse in accordance with its obligations and to the extent reasonably practicable. In some circumstances, it may be necessary for SOSJ to conduct an investigation in addition to any investigation conducted by authorities (e.g. under state Reportable Conduct Schemes).
- 5.23 All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy must co-operate fully with any internal investigation by SOSJ.

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- 5.24 SOSJ will make every effort to keep any investigation confidential; however, from time-to-time other people may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation (e.g. to provide witness statements). SOSJ will ensure that any conflicts of interest are considered and managed.
- 5.25 An investigation conducted by SOSJ will be conducted in accordance with procedural fairness to protect the integrity of the investigation and the interests of all the participants involved in the investigation. Any person listed at 2.2 of this policy who is implicated in a complaint will be given an opportunity to respond.
- 5.26 In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for SOSJ to engage a person (or persons) from outside SOSJ to conduct an independent investigation or provide advice in relation to allegations, such as a legal representative.
- 5.27 Following any internal investigation, findings and recommendations should be made. SOSJ will assess whether the allegation is substantiated on the balance of probabilities and if any substantiated allegations amount to a breach of its Adult and Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct or any other policy or procedure. The complainant will be notified of the outcome.
- 5.28 Where a complaint related to the sexual abuse of an adult or child against a SOSJ Sister is substantiated, they will be removed from ministry. Where a complaint related to an adult or child sexual abuse against an individual participating in formation is substantiated, the formation process will be discontinued. Complaints of this nature will be referred to the local civil authority and relevant child protection agency.
- 5.29 If a Sister is convicted of an offence relating to sexual abuse, the Sister will be permanently removed from ministry and will not be permitted to hold themselves out as being a person with religious authority. Where an individual participating in formation is convicted on an offence relating to sexual abuse, the formation process will be discontinued. Convictions of this nature may also be referred to the relevant dicastery.
- 5.30 Following any investigation, an updated risk assessment should be undertaken to ensure risks to adults at risk and/or children are managed.
- 5.31 SOSJ has full discretion to put in place safety management plans or take disciplinary action (including increased supervision, disciplinary action, dismissal or summary dismissal) where it forms a reasonable belief that it is not safe for a person listed at 2.2 of this policy, to interact with adults at risk and/or children, in accordance with its duty of care.

Step 6 – Support and communication with complainant

- 5.32 As part of SOSJ's duty of care and commitment to pastoral care, SOSJ will provide support to adults at risk and children who are impacted by abuse. This may include:

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- (a) referring the person to support and pastoral care where appropriate;
- (b) arranging a support person for the adult at risk or child; and
- (c) liaising with appropriate professionals.

5.33 SOSJ will also offer adult complainants pastoral care, a personal meeting or a direct personal response, or support as required.

5.34 SOSJ will ensure that complaints are responded to promptly and procedural fairness is applied. SOSJ will provide complainants with updates regarding its response to the complaint as appropriate.

Step 7 – Monitoring, support and communication with respondents (if respondent is a person listed at 2.2 of this policy)

5.35 As part of SOSJ's duty of care and commitment to pastoral care, SOSJ will provide support to respondents who have been identified within the context of a complaint or allegation. This may include:

- a) monitoring and supporting the wellbeing of the respondent;
- b) arranging a support person for the respondent;
- c) referring the respondent to counselling and / or pastoral care where appropriate;
- d) ensuring the respondent has a safe place to stay and consideration given to other practical and financial needs; and / or
- e) ensuring access to Spiritual Direction.

5.36 SOSJ will ensure that all complaints are responded to promptly and procedural fairness is applied.

5.37 SOSJ will ensure that the respondent is informed of the allegation with sufficient detail.

5.38 SOSJ will remain in regular contact with the respondent and ensure that the respondent is kept informed of the progress of the investigation as appropriate.

5.39 SOSJ will inform the respondent in writing of the outcomes of the investigations and also inform the respondent of their right to a review.

Step 8 - Evaluation

5.40 The Congregation will be notified as needed and policies and procedures may need to be reviewed.

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- 5.41 A final risk assessment should be undertaken to ensure risks to adults at risk and children are managed.

6. Privacy and record keeping

- 6.1 All abuse complaints, incidents, allegations, disclosures, concerns and referrals must be carefully recorded. This confidential information must be stored, protected and retained for fifty (50) years.
- 6.2 At all times, the confidentiality of all individuals involved, particularly adults at risk and children, must be maintained and information regarding the complaint should only be shared on a need-to-know basis. Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy and SOSJ must comply with its Information Sharing and Record Keeping Policy.

7. Breach of this Policy

- 7.1 Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including up to termination of engagement or employment.

8. Review

- 8.1 A review of this policy shall be conducted every three (3) years or earlier if required, such as due to changes in legislation.
- 8.2 The Congregational Leader or her delegate is responsible for ensuring that this policy and its procedures are reviewed and updated as needed.

9. Related policies, procedures, documents, annexures and legislation

- 9.1 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following related documents:
- (a) Reporting Procedure and listed legislation contained within
 - (b) Annexure 1 Safety Reporting Form
 - (c) Child and Adult Safeguarding Commitment Statement
 - (d) Adult and Child Safeguarding Policy
 - (e) Adult and Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct
 - (f) Safeguarding Risk Management Policy and Framework
 - (g) Safeguarding Information Sharing and Record Keeping Policy
 - (h) Managing Underperformance and Disciplinary Policy
 - (i) Disclosure and Related Protections Policy

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- (g) Safeguarding Information Sharing and Record Keeping Policy
- (h) Managing Underperformance and Disciplinary Policy
- (i) Disclosure and Related Protections Policy
- (j) Vos Estis Lux Mundi
- (k) Integrity in the Service of the Church 2013
- (l) Integrity in Ministry 2010
- (m) National Catholic Safeguarding Standards Edition 2, 2022
- (n) Universal Guidelines Framework 2024
- (o) Engaging sensitively with survivors of abuse – A guide for faith organisations – NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian 2020

9.2 Relevant legislation is listed in the procedures below.

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Signature:

M. M. Cavanagh

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Reporting Procedures

This section sets out the relevant state-based reporting procedures. Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy must comply with their reporting obligations which apply to them personally and should refer to the relevant state's procedure.

These procedures must be read in conjunction with the Complaints Handling Policy.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY REPORTING FLOWCHART

Step 1: Is the adult at risk or child in immediate danger?

Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will stay with the adult at risk or child (if within their presence) and take all reasonable steps to ensure the person's safety.

Any person that believes an adult at risk or child is at immediate risk of abuse should telephone 000.



Step 2: Is there a requirement to report?

Mandatory reporters must make a report to Children, Youth and Families if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person has experienced or is experiencing sexual abuse or non-accidental physical injury, and the belief is formed in the course of that person's work (*Children and Young People Amendment Bill 2024 (No.2)*).

Mandatory reporters include ministers of religion, doctors, dentists, nurses, midwives, psychologists, teachers, police officers, school counsellors, public advocate and childcare centre workers that care for a child.

Any person that obtains information that leads them to reasonably believe that a sexual offence has been committed against a child **must** give that information to a police officer as soon as practicable after forming the belief (*Crimes Act 1900 (ACT)*).

Any person that is aware that there is a substantiation risk that a sexual offence will be committed against a child or young person in SOSJ's care, supervision or control by a person associated with SOSJ **must not** intentionally or negligently fail to reduce or remove the risk. Making a report to Children, Youth and Families or the police is one such way of reducing or removing the risk (*Crimes Act 1900(ACT)*).

Any person that believes or suspects that a child or young person is being abused or neglected or is at risk of abuse or neglect may report the belief or suspicion and reasons to Children, Youth and Families and / or police (*Children and Young People Amendment Bill 2024 (No.2)*).

SOSJ requires Workplace Participants and other persons listed within the scope of this policy, to report information pertaining to alleged child abuse, to the relevant state based statutory child protection service, regardless of whether they are listed as a mandatory reporter.

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Any person that believes or suspects that **an adult at risk** is being abused or neglected may report the belief or suspicion and reasons to: Police and / or the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (*Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018, Compilation No.9 2024*) and / or the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (*National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*), and/or the ACT Human Rights Commission.



Step 3: Reporting

Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy may notify the Safeguarding Co-ordinator of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form (Annexure 1) to [ChildSafeGuarding@sosj.org.au].

If a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or Professional Standards Officer is implicated, the person must immediately notify the Congregational Leader of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form directly to the Congregational Leader.

If the matter involves an allegation against a person listed at 2.2 of this policy, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will report the matter to the Congregational Leader with a recommendation regarding whether the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies (*Ombudsman Act 1989*)

Sisters and clergy are also obliged to follow the canonical reporting processes and procedures for complaints involving the alleged sexual abuse committed by a Sister, clergy, or other religious.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator must complete or support the completion of a risk assessment when a safety complaint or concern is reported.

If deemed necessary, any person listed at 2.2 of this policy alleged to have committed an offence may be stood down while the investigation is conducted.



Step 4: How to make a report

To make a report **concerning a child**, please call Children, Youth and Families on 1300 556 729.

AND/OR

Ring the police on 000.

Request that if an interview is to take place at a SOSJ, the visiting police officer/CYPS representative is in plain clothes.

AND

If the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, the Congregational Leader will make a report to the ACT Ombudsman within 30 days of being made aware of the allegation of reportable conduct by filling out a notification form and emailing to act@ombudsman.gov.au.

To make a report **concerning an adult at risk**, please call the police on 000

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AND/OR

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822

AND/OR

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission on 1800 035 544

AND/OR

ACT Human Rights Commission on 1800 822 272

AND/OR

National Elder Abuse Phone Line on 1800 353 374



Step 5: Co-operate with regulatory authorities

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy and SOSJ will cooperate with any investigation by the police/the Children, Youth and Families/ACT Ombudsman/Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission/ NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Support will be provided to the adult/s at risk or child(ren) or as appropriate. All correspondence from regulatory authorities should be directed to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

SOSJ will not interview the adult at risk or child further or otherwise investigate until the above listed regulatory authorities have provided it with permission to do so.



Step 6: Investigation

Once clearance has been provided to SOSJ by relevant regulatory authorities, SOSJ may conduct its own internal investigation. SOSJ will be required to conduct an internal investigation if the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies.

If an internal investigation is conducted, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer (or Congregational Leader if the allegations relate to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer) will appoint a relevant person to manage the internal investigation. If required, an external investigator will be appointed. The investigation will be undertaken in accordance with procedural fairness and natural justice.

Following any internal investigation, findings and recommendations should be made and findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required (e.g. the ACT Ombudsman if the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies).

Following any investigation, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will conduct or support an updated risk assessment, to ensure risks to adults at risk and / or children are managed.

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NEW SOUTH WALES REPORTING FLOWCHART

Step 1: Is the adult at risk or child in immediate danger?

Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will stay with the adult at risk or child (if within their presence) and take all reasonable steps to ensure the person's safety.

Any person that believes an adult at risk or child is at immediate risk of abuse should telephone 000.



Step 2: Is there a requirement to report?

Mandatory Reporters that have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm and those grounds arise from their work with SOSJ **must** make a report to the Department of Communities and Justice. Mandatory reporters include an employee or a manager who are involved in the provision of health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services or law enforcement, wholly or partly, to children (*Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*).

Any person that knows, believes or reasonably ought to know that child has been abused, **must** make a report to the police as soon as practicable (*Crimes Act 1900*).

Any person that knows that another person listed at 2.2 poses a serious risk of abusing a child **must not** negligently fail to reduce or remove the risk. Reporting to the police or the Department of Communities and Justice is one way to reduce or remove the risk (*Crimes Act 1900*).

Any person that has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm, **may** disclose that information to the Department of Communities and Justice (*Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*).

SOSJ requires Workplace Participants and other persons listed within the scope of this policy, to report information pertaining to alleged child abuse, to the relevant state based statutory child protection service, regardless of whether they are listed as a mandatory reporter.

Any person that believes or suspects that **an adult at risk** is being abused or neglected may report the belief or suspicion and reasons to: Police and / or the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (*Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018, Compilation No.9 2024*) and / or the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (*National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*) and/or the NSW Ageing and Disability Commission.



Step 3: Reporting

Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy may notify the Safeguarding Co-ordinator of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form (Annexure 1) to [ChildSafeGuarding@sosj.org.au].

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	V.2.4	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
	Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10		
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



If a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or Professional Standards Officer is implicated, the person must immediately notify the Congregational Leader of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form directly to the Congregational Leader.

If the matter involves an allegation against a person listed at 2.2 of this policy, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will report the matter to the Congregational Leader with a recommendation regarding whether the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies (*Children's Guardian Act 2019*).

Sisters and clergy are also obliged to follow the canonical reporting processes and procedures for complaints involving the alleged sexual abuse committed by a Sister, clergy, or other religious.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator must complete or support the completion of a risk assessment when a safety complaint or concern is reported.

If deemed necessary, any person listed at 2.2 of this policy alleged to have committed an offence may be stood down while the investigation is conducted.



Step 4: How to make a report

To make a report **concerning a child**, please contact the Child Protection Helpline on 132 111.

AND/OR

Ring the police on 000.

Request that if an interview is to take place at SOSJ, the visiting police officer / Department of Communities and Justice representative is in plain clothes.

AND

If the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, the Congregational Leader will make a report to the Office of the Children's Guardian within seven business days after becoming aware of the reportable allegation.

To make a report **concerning an adult at risk**, please call the police on 000

AND/OR

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822

AND/OR

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission on 1800 035 544

AND/OR

NSW Ageing and Disability Commission on 1800 628 221

AND/OR

National Elder Abuse Phone Line on **1800 353 374**

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	V.2.4	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
	Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10		
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



Step 5: Co-operate with regulatory authorities

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy and SOSJ will cooperate with any investigation by the police/Department of Communities and Justice/Office of the Children's Guardian/Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission/NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Support will be provided to the child(ren) or adult/s at risk as appropriate. All correspondence from regulatory authorities should be directed to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

SOSJ will not interview the adult at risk or child further or otherwise investigate until the relevant above listed regulatory authorities have provided it with permission to do so.



Step 6: Investigation

Once clearance has been provided to SOSJ by relevant regulatory authorities, SOSJ may conduct its own internal investigation. If the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, SOSJ must conduct an internal investigation.

If an internal investigation is conducted, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer (or Congregational Leader if the allegations relate to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer) will appoint a relevant person to manage the internal investigation. If required, an external investigator will be appointed. The investigation will be undertaken in accordance with procedural fairness and natural justice.

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy must cooperate fully with any internal investigation.

Following any internal investigation, findings and recommendations should be made. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required (e.g. if the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, SOSJ will provide an interim or final report to the Office of the Children's Guardian within 30 calendar days of making the report).

Following any investigation, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will conduct or support an updated risk assessment to ensure risks to adults at risk and / or children are managed.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	V.2.4	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
	Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10		
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



NORTHERN TERRITORY REPORTING FLOWCHART

Step 1: Is the adult at risk or child in immediate danger?

Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will stay with the adult at risk or child (if within their presence) and take all reasonable steps to ensure the person's safety.

Any person that believes an adult at risk or child is at immediate risk of abuse should telephone 000.



Step 2: Is there a requirement to report?

Any person must make a report to the Department of Children & Families – Child Protection Services or the police if the person believes on reasonable grounds that:

- (a) A child under 18 years old has suffered or is likely to suffer harm or exploitation;
- (b) A child under 14 years old has been or is likely to be a victim of a sexual offence occurring in the context of a special care relationship; or
- (c) A child under 18 has been or is likely to be a victim of a sexual offence occurring in the context of a special care relationships.

(*Care and Protection of Children Act 2007*).

Any person that believes on reasonable grounds that another person has caused, or is likely to cause, harm to someone else (the victim) with whom the other person is in a domestic relationship and / or the life or safety of another person is under serious or imminent threat because domestic violence has been, is being or is about to be committed **must** report their concerns to the police (*Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007*). SOSJ requires Workplace Participants and other persons listed within the scope of this policy, to report information pertaining to alleged child abuse, to the relevant state based statutory child protection service.

Any person that believes or suspects that **an adult at risk** is being abused or neglected may report the belief or suspicion and reasons to: Police and / or the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (*Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018, Compilation No.9 2024*) and / or the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (*National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*) and/or the National Centre on Elder Abuse.



Step 3: Reporting

Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy may notify the Safeguarding Co-ordinator of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form (Annexure 1) to [ChildSafeGuarding@sosj.org.au].

If a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or Professional Standards Officer is implicated, the person must immediately notify the Congregational Leader of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form directly to the Congregational Leader.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	V.2.4	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
	Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10		
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



Sisters and clergy are also obliged to follow the canonical reporting processes and procedures for complaints involving the alleged sexual abuse committed by a Sister, clergy, or other religious.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator must complete or support a risk assessment when a safety complaint or concern is reported.

If deemed necessary, any person listed at 2.2 of this policy alleged to have committed an offence may be stood down while the investigation is conducted.



Step 4: How to make a report

To make a report **concerning a child**, please call the Department of Children & Families – Child Protection Services on 1800 700 250.

AND/OR

Ring the police on 000.

Request that if an interview is to take place at a SOSJ, the visiting police officer/Child Protection Services representative is in plain clothes.

To make a report **concerning an adult at risk**, please call the police on 000

AND/OR

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822

AND/OR

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission on 1800 035 544

AND/OR

National Elder Abuse Phone Line on **1800 353 374**



Step 5: Co-operate with regulatory authorities

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will cooperate with any investigation by the police/Child Protection Services/ Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission/ NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Support will be provided to the child(ren) or adult/s at risk as appropriate. All correspondence from regulatory authorities should be directed to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

SOSJ will not interview the adult at risk or child further or otherwise investigate until the relevant above listed regulatory authorities have provided it with permission to do so.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	V.2.4	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
	Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10		
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



Step 6: Investigation

Once clearance has been provided to SOSJ by relevant regulatory authorities, SOSJ may conduct its own internal investigation.

If an internal investigation is conducted, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer (or Congregational Leader if the allegations relate to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer) will appoint a relevant person to manage the internal investigation. If required, an external investigator will be appointed. The investigation will be undertaken in accordance with procedural fairness and natural justice.

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy must cooperate fully with any internal investigation. Following any internal investigation, findings and recommendations should be made. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required.

Following any investigation, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will conduct or support an updated risk assessment to ensure risks to adults at risk and / or children are managed.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	V.2.4 Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



QUEENSLAND REPORTING FLOWCHART

Step 1: Is the adult at risk or child in immediate danger?

Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will stay with the adult at risk or child (if within their presence) and take all reasonable steps to ensure the person's safety.

Any person that believes an adult at risk or child is at immediate risk of abuse should telephone 000.



Step 2: Is there a requirement to report?

Mandatory Reporters must make a report to the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (**Department**) if they form a reasonable suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse and the child's parents are able or unwilling to protect the child from the harm (*Child Protection Act 1999*).

Any person that knows, believes or reasonably ought to know that child has been sexually abused, **must** make a report to the police as soon as practicable (*Criminal Code Act 1899(QLD)*).

Any person that knows that another person listed at 2.2, poses a serious risk of sexually abusing a child **must not** negligently fail to reduce or remove the risk. Reporting to the police or the Department is one way to reduce or remove the risk (*Criminal Code Act 1899 (QLD)*).

Any person that reasonably suspects a child may be in need of protection or an unborn child may be need in protection after he or she is born **may** disclose that information to the Department.

Any person that forms a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or neglect), **may** disclose that information to the police.

SOSJ requires Workplace Participants and other persons listed within the scope of this policy, to report information pertaining to alleged child abuse, to the relevant state based statutory child protection service, regardless of whether they are listed as a mandatory reporter.

Any person that believes or suspects that **an adult at risk** is being abused or neglected may report the belief or suspicion and reasons to: Police and / or the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (*Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018, Compilation No.9 2024*) and / or the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (*National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*) and/or the QLD Elder Abuse Prevention Unit.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	V.2.4 Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



Step 3: Reporting

Person's listed at 2.2 of this policy may notify the Safeguarding Co-ordinator of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form (Annexure 1) to [ChildSafeGuarding@sosj.org.au].

If a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or Professional Standards Officer is implicated, the person must immediately notify the Congregational Leader of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form directly to the Congregational Leader.

If the matter involves an allegation against a person listed at 2.2 of this policy, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will report the matter to the Congregational Leader with a recommendation regarding whether the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies (Child Safe Organisations Act 2024).

Sisters and clergy are also obliged to follow the canonical reporting processes and procedures for complaints involving the alleged sexual abuse committed by a Sister, clergy, or other religious.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator must complete or support a risk assessment when a safety complaint or concern is reported.

If deemed necessary, any persons listed at 2.2 of this policy alleged to have committed an offence may be stood down while the investigation is conducted.



Step 4: How to make a report

To make a report **concerning a child**, please call the Department's Child Safety Enquiries Unit on 1800 811 810 or the Afterhours service on 1800 177 135

AND/OR

Ring the police on 000.

Request that if an interview is to take place at SOSJ, the visiting police officer/Department representative is in plain clothes.

AND

If the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, the Congregational Leader will make a report to the Queensland Family and Child Commission within three business days after becoming aware of the reportable allegation.

To make a report **concerning an adult at risk**, please call the police on 000

AND/OR

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822

AND/OR

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission on 1800 035 544

AND/OR

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
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Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



National Elder Abuse Phone Line on **1800 353 374**

AND/OR

QLD Elder Abuse Prevention Unit on 1300 651 192



Step 5: Co-operate with regulatory authorities

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will cooperate with any investigation by the police/the Department/ Queensland Family and Child Commission /Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission/ NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Support will be provided to the adult/s at risk or child(ren) as appropriate. All correspondence from regulatory authorities should be directed to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

SOSJ will not interview the adult at risk or child further or otherwise investigate until the relevant above listed regulatory authorities have provided it with permission to do so.



Step 6: Investigation

Once clearance has been provided to SOSJ by relevant regulatory authorities, SOSJ may conduct its own internal investigation. If the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, SOSJ must conduct an internal investigation.

If an internal investigation is conducted, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer (or Congregational Leader if the allegations relate to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer) will appoint a relevant person to manage the internal investigation. If required, an external investigator will be appointed. The investigation will be undertaken in accordance with procedural fairness and natural justice.

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy must cooperate fully with any internal investigation.

Following any internal investigation, findings and recommendations should be made. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required (e.g. if the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, SOSJ will provide an interim or final report to the Queensland Family and Child Commission within 30 business days of making the initial report).

Following any investigation, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will conduct or support an updated risk assessment to ensure risks to adults at risk and / or children are managed.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
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Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



SOUTH AUSTRALIAN REPORTING FLOWCHART

Step 1: Is the adult at risk or child in immediate danger?

Person's listed at 2.2 of this policy will stay with the adult at risk or child (if within their presence) and take all reasonable steps to ensure the person's safety.

Any person that believes an adult at risk or child is at immediate risk of abuse should telephone 000.



Step 2: Is there a requirement to report?

All person's listed at 2.2 of this policy must make a report to the Department for Child Protection (**Department**) via the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is, or may be, at risk and that suspicion is formed during the course of their engagement with SOSJ (*Children and Young Person (Safety and Support) Act 2025*).

Person's listed at 2.2 of this policy, are guilty of an offence if they fail to report to police that they know or suspect that another person listed at 2.2 has, is or is likely to sexually abuse a child. (*Statutes Amendment (Child Sexual Abuse) Act 2021, amendment 1.7.22*).

Any person that suspects on reasonable grounds that a child or young person may be at risk **may** make a report to the Department or the police.

Any person that believes or suspects that **an adult at risk** is being abused or neglected may report the belief or suspicion and reasons to: Police and / or the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (*Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018, Compilation No.9 2024*) and / or the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (*National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*) and/or the Adult Safeguarding Unit – SA Health



Step 3: Reporting

Person's listed at 2.2 of this policy may notify the Safeguarding Co-ordinator of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form (Annexure 1) to [ChildSafeGuarding@sosj.org.au].

If a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or Professional Standards Officer is implicated, the person must immediately notify the Congregational Leader of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form directly to the Congregational Leader.

Sisters and clergy are also obliged to follow the canonical reporting processes and procedures for complaints involving the alleged sexual abuse committed by a Sister, clergy, or other religious.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator must complete or support a risk assessment when a safety complaint or concern is reported.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	V.2.4	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
	Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10		
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



If deemed necessary, any person listed at 2.2 of this policy alleged to have committed an offence may be stood down while the investigation is conducted.



Step 4: How to make a report

To make a report **concerning a child**, please call the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 or if the concern is not serious, via the online reporting system eCARL.

AND/OR

Ring the police on 000.

Request that if an interview is to take place at SOSJ, the visiting police officer/Department representative is in plain clothes.

To make a report **concerning an adult at risk**, please call the police on 000

AND/OR

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822

AND/OR

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission on 1800 035 544

AND/OR

National Elder Abuse Phone Line on **1800 353 374**

AND/OR

Adult Safeguarding Unit – SA Health on 1800 372 310



Step 5: Co-operate with regulatory authorities

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will cooperate with any investigation by the police/the Department/Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission/NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Support will be provided to the child(ren) or adult/s at risk as appropriate. All correspondence from regulatory authorities should be directed to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

SOSJ will not interview the adult at risk or child further or otherwise investigate until the relevant above listed regulatory authorities have provided it with permission to do so.



Step 6: Investigation

Once clearance has been provided to SOSJ by relevant regulatory authorities, SOSJ may conduct its own internal investigation.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	V.2.4	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
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Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



If an internal investigation is conducted, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer (or Congregational Leader if the allegations relate to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer) will appoint a relevant person to manage the internal investigation. If required, an external investigator will be appointed. The investigation will be undertaken in accordance with procedural fairness and natural justice.

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy must cooperate fully with any internal investigation. Following any internal investigation, findings and recommendations should be made. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required.

Following any investigation, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will conduct or support an updated risk assessment to ensure risks to adults at risk and/ or children are managed.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	V.2.4 Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



TASMANIA REPORTING FLOWCHART

Step 1: Is the adult at risk or child in immediate danger?

Person's listed at 2.2 of this policy will stay with the adult at risk or child (if within their presence) and take all reasonable steps to ensure the person's safety.

Any person that believes an adult at risk or child is at immediate risk of abuse should telephone 000.



Step 2: Is there a requirement to report?

Mandatory reporters must make a report to the Department for Education, Children and Young People Strong Families, Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line (**Department**) if in the course of carrying out their duties they believe or suspect on reasonable grounds, or know that a child has been or is likely to suffer being abused or neglected or there is a reasonable likelihood of a child being killed, abused or neglected by a person with whom the child resides (*Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997*).

All adults that have information that leads the person to form a reasonable belief that an abuse offence has been committed against another person who was a child at the time of the alleged abuse **must** not fail without reasonable excuse to disclose that information to a police officer as soon as practicable (*Criminal Code Act 1924*).

Any person may inform the Department that they believe or suspect on reasonable grounds or knows that a child has been or is being abused or neglected or there is a reasonable likelihood of a child being killed, abused or neglected.

SOSJ requires Workplace Participants and other persons listed within the scope of this policy, to report information pertaining to alleged child abuse, to the relevant state based statutory child protection service, regardless of whether they are listed as a mandatory reporter.

Any person that believes or suspects that **an adult at risk** is being abused or neglected may report the belief or suspicion and reasons to: Police and / or the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (*Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018, Compilation No.9 2024*) and / or the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (*National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*) and/or *Elder Abuse Tasmania*.



Step 3: Reporting

Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy may notify the Safeguarding Co-ordinator of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form (Annexure 1) to [ChildSafeGuarding@sosj.org.au].

If a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or Professional Standards Officer is implicated, the person must immediately notify the Congregational Leader of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form directly to the Congregational Leader.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	V.2.4	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
	Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10		
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



If the matter involves an allegation against a person listed at 2.2 of this policy, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will report the matter to the Congregational Leader with a recommendation regarding whether the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies (*Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*).

Sisters and clergy are also obliged to follow the canonical reporting processes and procedures for complaints involving the alleged sexual abuse committed by a Sister, clergy, or other religious.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator must complete or support a risk assessment when a safety complaint or concern is reported.

If deemed necessary, any person listed at 2.2 of this policy alleged to have committed an offence may be stood down while the investigation is conducted.



Step 4: How to make a report

To make a report **concerning a child**, please call the Department's Strong Families, Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line on 1800 000 123.

AND/OR

Ring the police on 000.

Request that if an interview is to take place at SOSJ, the visiting police officer/Department representative is in plain clothes.

AND

If the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, the Congregational Leader will make a report to the Office of the Independent Regulator within three business days after becoming aware of the reportable allegation.

To make a report **concerning an adult at risk**, please call the police on 000

AND/OR

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822

AND/OR

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission on 1800 035 544

AND/OR

National Elder Abuse Phone Line on **1800 353 374**

AND/OR

Elder Abuse Tasmania on 1800 441 169

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Version	V.2.4 Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
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Step 5: Co-operate with regulatory authorities

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will cooperate with any investigation by the police/the Department/Office of the Independent Regulator/Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission / NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Support will be provided to the child(ren) or adult/s at risk as appropriate. All correspondence from regulatory authorities should be directed to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

SOSJ will not interview the adult at risk or child further or otherwise investigate until the relevant above listed regulatory authorities have provided it with permission to do so.



Step 6: Investigation

Once clearance has been provided to SOSJ by relevant regulatory authorities, SOSJ may conduct its own internal investigation. If the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, SOSJ must conduct an internal investigation.

If an internal investigation is conducted, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer (or Congregational Leader if the allegations relate to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer) will appoint a relevant person to manage the internal investigation. If required, an external investigator will be appointed. The investigation will be undertaken in accordance with procedural fairness and natural justice.

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy must cooperate fully with any internal investigation. Following any internal investigation, findings and recommendations should be made. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required. (e.g. if the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, SOSJ will provide a detailed report to the Office of the Independent Regulator within 30 days of making the report).

Following any investigation, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will conduct or support an updated risk assessment to ensure risks to adults at risk and/ or children are managed.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
Version	V.2.4 Aligns with NCSS 1, 6, 9 & 10	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	2026
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



VICTORIA REPORTING FLOWCHART

Step 1: Is the adult at risk or child in immediate danger?

Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will stay with the adult at risk or child (if within their presence) and take all reasonable steps to ensure the person's safety.

Any person that believes an adult at risk or child is at immediate risk of abuse should telephone 000.



Step 2: Is there a requirement to report?

Mandatory reporters that form a belief on reasonable grounds that **a child** is in need of protection from child abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or neglect), **must** disclose that information to the police or the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing – Department of Families & Children (**DFFH**) or anyone **may** do so voluntarily (*Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*).

Mandatory reporters include registered medical practitioners, nurses, midwives, registered teachers and early childhood teachers, school principals, school counsellors, police officers, out of home care workers, early childhood workers, youth justice workers, registered psychologists and people in religious ministry.

Any person (aged 18 or over) that forms a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child (under the age of 16 years) by another person (aged 18 or older), **must** make a report to the police as soon as practicable (*Crimes Act 1958*).

Any person that knows that there is a substantial risk that a relevant child will become the victim of a sexual offence committed by another adult associated with SOSJ **must not** negligently fail to reduce or remove that risk. Reporting to the DFFH and / or police is one way to reduce or remove that risk (*Crimes Act 1958*).

Any person may disclose a reportable allegation to the Social Services Regulator (*Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*).

SOSJ requires Workplace Participants and other persons listed within the scope of this policy, to report information pertaining to alleged child abuse, to the relevant state based statutory child protection service, regardless of whether they are listed as a mandatory reporter.

Any person that believes or suspects that **an adult at risk** is being abused or neglected may report the belief or suspicion and reasons to: Police and / or the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (*Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018, Compilation No.9 2024*) and / or the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (*National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*) and/or *Seniors Rights Victoria*.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure		
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Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	2029



Step 3: Reporting

Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy may notify the Safeguarding Co-ordinator of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form (Annexure 1) to [ChildSafeGuarding@sosj.org.au].

If a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or Professional Standards Officer is implicated, the person must immediately notify the Congregational Leader of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form directly to the Congregational Leader.

If the matter involves an allegation against a person listed at 2.2 of this policy, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will report the matter to the Congregational Leader with a recommendation regarding whether the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies (*Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, amended 2017*).

Sisters and clergy are also obliged to follow the canonical reporting processes and procedures for complaints involving the alleged sexual abuse committed by a Sister, clergy, or other religious.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator must complete or support a risk assessment when a safety complaint or concern is reported.

If deemed necessary, any person listed at 2.2 of this policy alleged to have committed an offence may be stood down until an investigation can be completed.



Step 4: How to make a report

To make a report **concerning a child** during business hours – contact the appropriate local government area for DFFH:

- North Division intake: 1300 598 521
- South Division intake: 1300 555 526
- East Division intake: 1300 360 452
- West Division intake: 1300 360 462

For after hours, call 13 12 78. Ask for Child Protection.

AND/OR

Ring the police on 000.

Request that if an interview is to take place at a SOSJ, the visiting police officer/DFFH representative is in plain clothes.

AND

If the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, the Congregational Leader will provide written advice to the Social Services Regulator within 3 business days of forming a reasonable belief that reportable conduct has occurred.

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Request that if an interview is to take place at a SOSJ, the visiting police officer/DFFH/Regulator representative is in plain clothes.

To make a report **concerning an adult at risk**, please call the police on 000

AND/OR

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822

AND/OR

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission on 1800 035 544

AND/OR

National Elder Abuse Phone Line on **1800 353 374**

AND/OR

Seniors Rights Victoria on 1300 368 821



Step 5: Co-operate with regulatory authorities

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will cooperate with any investigation by the police/DFFH/Regulator/Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission/NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Support will be provided to the child(ren) or adult/s at risk as appropriate. All correspondence from regulatory authorities should be directed to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

SOSJ will not interview the adult at risk or child further or otherwise investigate until the relevant above listed regulatory authorities have provided it with permission to do so.



Step 6: Investigation

Once clearance has been provided to SOSJ by relevant regulatory authorities, SOSJ may conduct its own internal investigation. If the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, SOSJ must conduct an internal investigation.

If an internal investigation is conducted, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer (or Congregational Leader if the allegations relate to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer) will appoint a relevant person to manage the internal investigation. If required, an external investigator will be appointed. The investigation will be undertaken in accordance with procedural fairness and natural justice.

All persons listed at 2.2 must cooperate fully with any internal investigation.

Following any internal investigation, findings and recommendations should be made. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required (e.g., to the Regulator if the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies).

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Following any investigation, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will conduct or support an updated risk assessment to ensure risks to adults at risk and/ or children are managed.

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA REPORTING FLOWCHART

Step 1: Is the adult at risk or child in immediate danger?

Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will stay with the adult at risk or child (if within their presence) and take all reasonable steps to ensure the person's safety.

Any person that believes an adult at risk or child is at immediate risk of abuse should telephone 000.



Step 2: Is there a requirement to report?

Mandatory Reporters must make a report to the Department of Communities – Child Protection and Family Support (**the Department**) if in the course of their work, they believe on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is the subject of sexual abuse (*Children and Community Services Act 2024*).

Mandatory reporters include doctors, nurses and midwives, teachers, police officers and boarding supervisors.

Any person that has concerns about the wellbeing of a child may make a report to the Department.

SOSJ requires Workplace Participants and other persons listed within the scope of this policy, to report information pertaining to alleged child abuse, to the relevant state based statutory child protection service, regardless of whether they are listed as a mandatory reporter.

Any person that believes or suspects that **an adult at risk** is being abused or neglected may report the belief or suspicion and reasons to: Police and / or the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (*Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018, Compilation No.9 2024*) and / or the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (*National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*) and/or the WA Elder Abuse Helpline.



Step 3: Reporting

Persons listed at 2.2 of this policy may notify the Safeguarding Co-ordinator of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form (Annexure 1) to [ChildSafeGuarding@sosj.org.au].

If a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or Professional Standards Officer is implicated, the person must immediately notify the Congregational Leader of the complaint by submitting the Safety Reporting Form directly to the Congregational Leader.

If the matter involves an allegation of, or criminal conviction for, child abuse against a person listed at 2.2 of this policy, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will report the matter to the Congregational Leader with a recommendation regarding whether the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies (Western Australian Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct Act 2022)).

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Sisters and clergy are also obliged to follow the canonical reporting processes and procedures for complaints involving the alleged sexual abuse committed by a Sister, clergy, or other religious.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator must complete or support a risk assessment when a safety complaint or concern is reported.

If deemed necessary, any person listed at 2.2 of this policy alleged to have committed an offence may be stood down while the investigation is conducted.



Step 4: How to make a report

To make a report **concerning a child**, please call the Department on 1800 273 889 or lodge an online written report through the Mandatory Reporting Information System (MRWeb).

AND/OR

Ring the police on 000.

Request that if an interview is to take place at a SOSJ, the visiting police officer/Department representative is in plain clothes.

AND

If the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, the Congregational Leader will give written notice to the Ombudsman Western Australia office within 7 working days of forming a reasonable belief that reportable conduct has occurred.

Request that if an interview is to take place at a SOSJ, the visiting police officer/Department/Ombudsman representative is in plain clothes.

To make a report **concerning an adult at risk**, please call the police on 000

AND/OR

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822

AND/OR

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission on 1800 035 544

AND/OR

National Elder Abuse Phone Line on **1800 353 374**

AND/OR

WA Elder Abuse Helpline on [1300 724 679](tel:1300724679)

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Step 5: Co-operate with regulatory authorities

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy will cooperate with any investigation by the police/the Department/the Ombudsman/ Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission/NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Support will be provided to the child(ren) or adults at risk as appropriate. All correspondence from regulatory authorities should be directed to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

SOSJ will not interview the adult at risk or child further or otherwise investigate until the relevant above listed regulatory authorities have provided it with permission to do so.



Step 6: Investigation

Once clearance has been provided to SOSJ by relevant regulatory authorities, SOSJ may conduct its own internal investigation. If the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies, SOSJ must conduct an internal investigation.

If an internal investigation is conducted, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer (or Congregational Leader if the allegations relate to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Professional Standards Officer) will appoint a relevant person to manage the internal investigation. If required, an external investigator will be appointed. The investigation will be undertaken in accordance with procedural fairness and natural justice.

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy must cooperate fully with any internal investigation.

Following any internal investigation, findings and recommendations should be made. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required (e.g. to the Ombudsman if the Reportable Conduct Scheme applies).

Following any investigation, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will conduct or support an updated risk assessment to ensure risks to adults at risk and/ or children are managed.

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Annexure 1

Safety Reporting Form

Please click to access a digital [Safety Reporting Form](#).

A copy of the form is included overleaf.

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Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart Safety Reporting Form

If you believe an adult at risk or child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

SOSJ recognises that it may be difficult to bring forward a concern or complaint, however we encourage you to do so. Your concern or complaint will be taken seriously and managed with respect and integrity. If you would like support to raise your concern or complaint, please contact the Safeguarding and Professional Standards team on MOB: 0488 041 015

Send completed form to childsafeguarding@sosj.org.au. Additionally;

- Allegations of child abuse / harm must be reported to relevant state-based statutory child protection service (see contact details page 4).

All incident reports must be stored confidentially and securely.

Details of the adult at risk or child

Name:	
Date of birth (if known):	
Address (if known):	
Adult at risk / child contact number (if known and age appropriate):	
Resides with (if relevant & known):	

Details of the child's parents or adult at risk's legal guardian (if relevant)

Name:	
Address (if known):	
Contact number (if known):	

Details of person filling in this form

Name:	
Contact Details:	
Role	Indicate selection via X ☐ Self ☐ Workplace Participant ☐ Parent / carer / guardian ☐ Concerned member of the community ☐ Anonymous

Alleged incident details

Date of alleged incident:	
Time of alleged incident:	
Location of alleged incident:	
Date Identified (if different from date of incident)	

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Please describe the alleged incident

Overview: What do you understand to have occurred? Please provide as much detail as possible. If an adult at risk / child has made a disclosure, please include the words the person used to disclose the alleged incident.	
Who is the adult at risk / child allegedly at risk from? Identifying details if possible, including name and relationship to adult at risk / child and frequency of contact.	
Where did the alleged incident occur?	
Witnesses to the alleged incident?	
Other information:	

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Please categorise the incident

	Make Selection	Comments
Physical violence	☐	
Sexual offence	☐	
Sexual misconduct	☐	
Serious emotional or psychological abuse	☐	
Serious neglect	☐	
Grooming	☐	
Breach of SOSJ's Adult and Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct	☐	
Reportable Conduct	☐	
Other	☐	

Proposed corrective action and mitigation plan

Action	Responsible Person	Date (Completion)	Status

Does the adult at risk / child identify as a First Nations person?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

No ☐ Yes, Aboriginal ☐ Yes, Torres Strait Islander ☐

Is the adult at risk / child from a culturally or linguistically diverse background?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

No ☐ Yes, please provide details:

Does the adult at risk / child have a disability or require special support?

A disability can be any physical, sensory, neurological disability, acquired brain injury, intellectual disability, or developmental delay that affects a person's ability to undertake everyday activities.

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable).

No ☐ Yes, please provide details:

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Office use only

Date incident report received:		
Person managing incident:		
Incident ref. number:		
Has the incident been reported?	Date Notified	Comments
Regulated state-based agency		
Police (Event number if known)		
Another third party (please specify):		

National

Contact

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	1800 951 822
NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission	1800 035 544
<i>For State-based Adults at Risk Reporting please see the relevant State information in Reporting Procedures section</i>	

State

Contact

Australian Capital Territory	Children, Youth and Families on 1300 556 729
New South Wales	Child Protection Helpline on 132 111
Northern Territory	Department of Children & Families – Child Protection Services on 1800 700 250
Queensland	Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety Enquiries Unit on 1800 811 810 or After Hours on 1800 177 135
South Australia	Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78
Tasmania	Department's Advice and Referral Line on 1800 000 123
Victoria	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing - Department of Families & Children
North Division intake	1300 598 521
South Division intake	1300 555 526
East Division intake	1300 360 452
West Division intake	1300 360 462
For after hours	call 13 12 78. Ask for Child Protection
Western Australia	Department of Communities – Child Protection and Family Support on 1800 273 889 or lodge an online written report through the Mandatory Reporting Information System (MRWeb)

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