



ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF CANBERRA & GOULBURN

POLICY FOR RESPONDING TO ABUSE

A. SCOPE:

This policy applies to information, concerns or disclosures in relation to current and /or historical abuse, whether about a child or adult.

B. INTERACTIONS:

This policy interacts with: the Professional Standards Ordinance; Protocol for Responding to Grievances; Guidelines for Reporting (Current) Child Abuse; Guidelines for Responding to Adult Disclosures of Abuse; Safe Communities of Faith Policy and the Towards Restoration Protocol and it sits within the Office of the Professional Standards Director and the Safe Communities Directorate.

This policy also interacts with NSW and ACT legislative documents, including but not limited to the: Work Health and Safety Act 2011; NSW Crimes Act 1900; Protocol for Reporting to the NSW Police Force 2014; Children & Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998; NSW Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT) and the Anglican National Register Canon 2007.

C. OUR COMMITMENT:

Our commitment is to provide a policy for church leaders and the Diocese to respond in a pastorally appropriate way to information, concerns or disclosures of abuse occurring within the church, whilst fulfilling the requirements of government statutory bodies and diocesan policy documents.

D. OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES:

In implementing this policy we apply the overarching principles of:

- Our primary concern is for the care and welfare of those who have **suffered abuse in the church**¹ and we will strive to provide **appropriate support**² for them.
- In dealing with current concerns or disclosures of child abuse we will fulfil our legislative requirements in reporting to statutory bodies.
- In dealing with adult disclosures, we will support those who have suffered abuse to report criminal abuse to the police, or where this is not possible, we will report the disclosures to police in accordance with legislative requirements.
- Where concerns or disclosures involve church workers, we will enact the Professional Standards Ordinance or the Protocol for Addressing Grievances as appropriate.

E. REVIEW:

This policy was approved by Bishop-in-Council on 16 October 2015 and is to be reviewed and adjusted as required periodically by the PSRG.

¹ **Abuse in the church** means that whilst being a member of a church in this Diocese or attending a church event or ministry program in this Diocese or engaging with Diocesan personnel within the context of their professional or vocational role, the person has suffered physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

² **Appropriate support** is determined in consultation with the person who has suffered abuse and may include, but is not limited to: provision of a pastoral support person, professional counselling, support with police, and/or diocesan process and a care and assistance package.