



This protocol outlines for Parish Priests and Parish workers the types of reportable crimes which must be reported to Police, and how to report these crimes.

PROTOCOL: REPORTABLE CRIMES AND THE POLICE

Key obligation

Under the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW/ACT), it is an offence to conceal a 'serious indictable offence', and any such offences must be reported to the Australian Federal Police (AFP)(ACT) or NSW Police. This protocol refers to those offences as reportable crimes. While all crimes are able to be reported to the police, these particular crimes must be reported.

1. What is a reportable crime?

- 1.1 A reportable crime is an offence that can be punishable by at least 5 years' imprisonment. Our Archdiocese requires all reportable crimes to be reported to either the AFP or NSW Police.
- 1.2 There are many types of reportable crimes. The types of reportable crimes likely to arise in a Parish context are:
 - a) Physical assault of a child or adult e.g. hitting, pushing, shoving, throwing objects, making threats of physical harm.
 - b) Sexual or indecent assault of a child or adult e.g. sexual intercourse (which is interpreted broadly), intended sexual assault, touching, threatening to touch, and/or kissing without consent. *Note: a child under the age of 16 cannot give consent.*
 - c) Grooming a child for sexual activity behaviour e.g. inappropriate gift giving, spending inappropriate 'special time' with a child, inappropriately allowing a child to overstep the rules, testing boundaries with a child, inappropriately extending a relationship outside work, or engaging in inappropriate personal communication with a child.
 - d) Any other sexual activity with a child e.g. any act of a sexual nature with or towards a child, including making a child commit an act of a sexual nature towards the offender.
 - e) Possessing, disseminating or producing child abuse material. This includes child pornography, as well as material that depicts a child as a victim of torture, cruelty or physical abuse
 - f) Stealing e.g. any act of stealing, regardless of the value of the property stolen.

2. Archdiocesan Protocol

- 2.1 The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn requires all Parish workers to immediately report all suspected reportable crimes against a child to the Parish Priest and/or the Institute for Professional Standards and Safeguarding (IPSS), who will then work with the Parish worker to make a report to the Australian Federal Police (ACT) or NSW Police.
- 2.2 Parish workers may choose to contact the Police directly by contacting their local police station or calling 131 444, or 000 in an emergency. If making a report directly to Police, Parish workers must also report all suspected reportable crimes to the Parish Priest and/or IPSS.
- 2.3 If any employee, volunteer or religious appointee has concerns about whether:
 - a) the information they have on an historical matter of abuse involving a child is reportable;
 - b) the suspected offence is a reportable crime;
 - c) they have the required knowledge or belief that the offence has been committed;
 - d) the information they have will be of material assistance to the AFP/NSW Police;they should immediately seek advice from their Parish Priest and/or IPSS.
- 2.4 No Parish Priest or Parish worker should attempt to undertake their own investigation before reporting the matter.