

RECORD KEEPING & STORAGE & ACCESS PROTOCOL

for

**THE PROTOCOL STANDARDS FOR CHILD CARE, SAFETY &
PROTECTION REPORTING WITHIN EDMUND RICE MINISTRIES
[AUSTRALIA]**

Introduction

This document indicates the protocol requirements for child protection records created during the implementation of the *Protocol Standards for Child Care, Safety & Protection Reporting Within Edmund Rice Ministries [Australia]* [abbreviated as PSCP]. The document pertains to how child protection records created during application of the PSCP are to be understood, stored and accessed within the Province.

The protocol is divided into four parts; these are:

- **Record Coverage**
- **Record Medium**
- **Record keeping principles**
 - Privacy Act 1988 – Privacy Amendment [Enhancing Privacy Protection] Act 2012
- **Record keeping implementation protocol**
 - Characteristics of information
 - Designation of ‘record’ status
 - Storage of documents
 - Access to records
 - Security of documents

Appendices

Access to Documents Matrix

Parent/Guardian Handbook – information relating to Child Protection Notifications

Oceania Province Privacy Policy

Protocol Standards for Child Care, Safety & Protection Reporting Within Edmund Rice Ministries [Australia] – forms:

1. Notification contact record form Notification Report
2. Additional reports
3. Tabulation of Notifications
4. Tabulation of Notifications

Record Coverage

The PSCP requires documentation to be created when a child care, safety and protection concern and/or allegation is made to the Children's Services Standards Coordinator [CSSC] or when not available the Local Child Protection Expert [LCPE] or the Regional Coordinator. This is known as a Notification.

The documentation required created for each individual Notification is:

5. **Notification contact record form** – completed by the first point of contact
6. **Notification Report** – completed by the CSSC
7. **Additional reports** – as requested by the CSSC, as provided by other services
8. **Tabulation of Notifications** [overview non personal identification] – compiled by the CSSC
9. **Tabulation of Notifications** [Specific – personal identification] – compiled by the CSSC

Record Format

Records for the PSCP are kept in four formats; these are:

- Handwritten
- Electronic
- Visual – photographs, video recordings
- Table data

All formats are considered 'records' of the PSCP.

The Record Keeping & Storage & Access Protocol applies to all the outlined formats for recording of information under the PSCP.

Record Keeping Principles

The Protocol seeks to meet the Privacy Principles outlined in the Privacy Act 1988 – Privacy Amendment [Enhancing Privacy Protection] Act 2012

- *Australian Privacy Principle 1* — open and transparent management of personal information.
 - In the Parents'/Guardians' Handbook given to each parent/guardian at the time of commencement of service the child protection protocol is outlined. This contains information on what information may need to be recorded, where records are maintained and the records access policy.
- *Australian Privacy Principle 2* — anonymity and pseudonym
 - Due to the nature of Edmund Rice Ministries when child protection concerns arise the informer is known to the volunteer or staff member. However where an individual may wish to remain

anonymous as there is no requirement to disclose.

Australian Privacy Principle 3 — collection of solicited personal

- *Australian Privacy Principle 4* — dealing with unsolicited personal information
 - Under the PSCP only sufficient personal information is collected which is necessary to assess whether there is reasonable suspicion there may be a child care, safety & protection concern or allegation relating to a child, as required of the organization under relevant State & Territory legislation, who is either:
 - Directly in receipt of an Edmund Rice Ministry service
 - Not known to an Edmund Rice Ministry service but where a Ministry has been made aware of concerns/allegations relating to a child
- *Australian Privacy Principle 5* — notification of the collection of personal information
 - Unless there is an assessed risk, parents'/guardians are informed by the Senior Manager of the Notification and the consequent record which will be held.
 - Parents/guardians are informed in the Parents/Guardians' Handbook:
 - A record will be kept of the Notification
 - The organization may seek further information from the referring agency
 - Parents/Guardians can seek permission to obtain a copy of the record
 - Where a child protection allegation is referred to the State child protection authority, the organization cannot inform parents/guardians without the approval of the State child protection department
- *Australian Privacy Principle 6* — use or disclosure of personal information
 - Where there is no assessed risk to the child intake consent is given by the parent/guardian to share information about the child where this information enables the service functions of an Edmund Rice Ministry to be enacted
- *Australian Privacy Principle 7* — direct marketing
 - Edmund Rice ministries do not disclose sensitive child protection information about a child or their family unless:
 - Information is required from the referral organization to undertake a child care, safety & protection concern/allegation assessment
 - The information assessment leads to a reasonable suspicion is child may be being maltreated and complies with State & Territory mandatory reporting requirements
 - Only visual-non-sensitive [pictorial image] information about a child or their family is utilized for marketing purposes for which parent/guardian consent is obtained

- Australian Privacy Principle 8 — cross-border disclosure of personal information
 - No cross-border disclosure of information about a child or their family occurs
- *Australian Privacy Principle 10* — quality of personal information
 - Edmund Rice Ministries seek to ensure information obtained only relates to the purposes of assessing a child protection concern or allegation. It seeks to ensure this information is accurate and up-to-date by up dating records and obtaining referral forms from referring agencies
- *Australian Privacy Principle 11* — security of personal information
 - Security of information obtained in relation to a child protection concerns maintained through:
 - Designation the staff members who are responsible for:
 - Recording the information
 - Where records are held
 - Access to records
- *Australian Privacy Principle 12* — access to personal information
 - Where there are no child care, safety and protection risks in provision of information parents/guardians are informed in the Handbook they may request records of the child protection notification
- *Australian Privacy Principle 13* — correction of personal information
 - Where record access is agreed upon and a parent/guardian makes reasonable representation the information is incorrect or misleading corrections will be undertaken of the information
 - Where corrections are undertaken any third party who had access to the information will be provided
 - Where Edmund Rice Ministry determines the corrections requested are unreasonable a written notice will be given to a parent/guardian outlining the reasons why the corrections are assessed as unreasonable within 30 days. A mechanism for complaint will also be indicated.
- **Record keeping implementation protocol**

The record keeping implementation protocol covers five areas.

1. **Characteristics of information** – how information is to be presented
2. **Designation of ‘record’ status** - when information recorded is designated as a ‘record’ of the Notification
3. **Storage of documents** – where ‘records’ of the PSCP are to be kept
4. **Security of documents** – the security arrangements of the held records and the type of record format
5. **Access to records** – procedures through which records are accessed.

Characteristics of information

Information is required to be collected at different stages of the PSCP. Not all information is required to be kept as a 'record' of the notification. However, information, whether it becomes part of the 'record' of the notification or not, must display the outlined characteristics:

- Written information
 - Information is written in a professional manner:
 - Does not denigrate or suggest denigration of a child or their family
 - Grammatically correct written English language
 - Information relates only to Notification concerns
 - Does not contain personal opinions in relation to a child or their family
 - Does not contain information not related to the Notification concern or allegation
- Visual information
 - Does not denigrate or suggest denigration of a child or their family
 - Does not display the child or family in an insensitive or ridiculed manner
 - Contains information only relevant to the Notification.

Designation of 'record' status of information held

During the Notification process information is collected as part of the service responsibilities of Ministries outlined in the *Protocol Standards for Child Care, Safety & Protection Reporting Within Edmund Rice Ministries [Australia]*. The relevant information is collected and recorded under the PSCP. Information, which is recorded in the outlined documents, is considered the 'record' of the Notification and is subject to the record protocol. All information, which is held in the outlined documents are considered the 'record' of the Notification:

1. **Notification contact record form**
2. **Notification Report**
3. **Additional reports**
4. **Tabulation of Notifications**
5. **Tabulation of Notifications.**

The protocol for the implementation of Area 1: Characteristics of information and Area 2: Designation of 'record' status of information held is outlined in step format.

Step 1: Notification Contact Record Form – this form is to be completed by the first-point-of-contact notification person [person who first observed, overheard, spoke to the child or the adult]. The form is to be handwritten and signed

Record format

- The original of the form is to be provided to the Children’s Services Standards Coordinator.
- A scanned copy of the form is to be held in the Children’s Services Standards Coordinator electronic file.
- A copy of this form is to be held in Ministry records.

Record location:

- Children’s Services Standards Coordinator – Child Protection files:
 - Hard copy
 - Electronic copy – [with other electronic records of the Notification]
- Local Ministry files

Record Access

- The form is only to be accessed by permission of the Children’s Services Standards Coordinator.

A statutory body as part of the Mandatory Notification Requirements may make a request for the Notification contact record form. It is envisaged the report would be made available to the statutory authority.

Step 2: Notification Report – this form is to be completed electronically by the Children’s Services Standards Coordinator upon completion of the Notification service process. The Form is to be signed by the Children’s Services Standards Coordinator. The form is to be approved and signed by the Regional Coordinator of the Notification Ministry.

Record format

- Children’s Services Standards Coordinator holds an electronic copy of the report
- Regional Coordinator holds an electronic copy of the report in a secure site
- Board Chairs are to have access to an electronic copy of the Notification Report held by the Regional Coordinator
- Notification Reports, where the Notifications have proceeded to Statutory Notification, are to be electronically provided to the Oceania Leadership Team and held in a secure electronic site
- Director of Province Mission holds an electronic report

Record location:

- Children’s Services Standards Coordinator’s Computer
- Director of Province Mission’s Computer
- Regional Coordinator Computer

- One Oceania Leadership Team Member's computer

Record Access

The form is only to be accessed by:

- Children's Services Standards Coordinator
- Director of Province Mission
- Regional Coordinator
- Oceania Leadership Team [statutory cases]
- Chair of the Incorporated Board

All other persons must apply in writing for permission to access the Notification Report to the Children's Services Standards Coordinator to enable a record of Notification Report access to be maintained.

A statutory body as part of the Mandatory Notification Requirements may make requests for the Notification Report. It is envisaged the report would be made available to the statutory authority

Step 3: Requested Reports – there may be requests to complete reports by other organizations involved in the Notification. This is most likely to be the statutory authority, however other non-government agencies may also request reports from Ministries. These reports are to be completed by or in partnership with the Children's Services Standards Coordinator and are not to be transferred to the requesting agency until approved by the Children's Services Standards Coordinator.

Record format

- Children's Services Standards Coordinator holds an electronic copy of the report
- Director of Province Mission holds an electronic copy of the report

Record location:

- Children's Services Standards Coordinator's computer
- Director of Province Mission's computer

Record Access

- The report is only to be accessed by:
 - Children's Services Standards Coordinator
 - Director of Province Mission

All other persons must apply in writing for permission to access the Notification Report to the Children's Services Standards Coordinator to enable a record of Notification Report access to be maintained.

A statutory body as part of the Mandatory Notification Requirements may make a request for other reports to be made available. It is envisaged the report would be made available to the statutory authority.

Step 4: Tabulation of Notifications [overview non personal identification] – compiled by the Children’s Services Standards Coordinator. This document provides a cumulative data compilation of annual Notifications to date. The data is provided in spreadsheet format and does not contain personal identifying information. Each child is given a Record Number in the table. It is acknowledged however, individuals who have access to the Notification Report would be able to identify a child from the information. However, this information would already be available through the Protocol to the individual.

Record format

- Children’s Services Standards Coordinator holds an electronic copy of the report
- Director of Province Mission holds an electronic copy of the report
- Regional Coordinators hold an electronic copy of the report
- State-based electronic sub-reports are made available to:
 - Ministry Executive Officers/Programme Coordinators
 - Incorporated Board Chair & Board Member in the Chair Report

Record location:

- Children’s Services Standards Coordinator’s computer
- Director of Province Mission’s computer
- Regional Coordinators’ computer
- Ministry Executive Officers’/Programme Coordinators’ computers
- Chair of the Board’s Computer

Record Access

- The report is only to be accessed by:
 - Children’s Services Standards Coordinator
 - Director of Province Mission
 - Regional Coordinators
 - Ministry Executive Officers/Programme Coordinators
 - Board Chair

Personnel with access to the Tabulation Report are expected to only make available the Report when professionally appropriate in relation to the work of the Province Mission or Ministry

Step 5: Tabulation of Notifications [Specific – personal identification] – compiled by the Children’s Services Standards Coordinator. This document is an extension of the **Tabulation of Notifications** [overview non personal identification] and provides the identifying names of the children for each record number.

Record format

- Children's Services Standards Coordinator holds an electronic copy of the Tabulation
- Director of Province Mission holds an electronic copy of the Tabulation

Record location:

- Children's Services Standards Coordinator's computer
- Director of Province Mission's computer

Record Access

- The report is only to be accessed by:
 - Children's Services Standards Coordinator
 - Director of Province Mission

Access to the Tabulation Report [Identifying] is only permitted with permission of the Children's Services Standards Coordinator or the Director of Province Mission. A record of access to the Tabulation Report is to be maintained by the Children's Services Standards Coordinator or the Director of Province Mission

Storage of documents – storage of documents can occur in two platforms i.e; printed hard copy and electronic copy. It is envisaged most documents will be kept in electronic copy.

- **Printed/Handwritten Copy** – all documents pertaining to a Notification must be kept together and each printed/hand written copy relating to a specific Notification is kept in a separate file – which is clearly coded with a file number. A record tabulation is kept of the files. The files are kept in the Oceania Province office location of the Children's Services Standards Coordinator.
- **Electronic Copy** – all documents pertaining to a Notification must be kept together in one file. Sub files are required for each individual Notification. Electronic communication relating to a Notification should be copied into a Notification correspondence file and this file located within the file the Notification pertains to

Security of documents – the security arrangements for printed/handwritten and electronic records are important in ensuring the privacy of the material. The security of the documents relate to two factors:

- *Access* – to those roles designated under the Protocol or approved by those roles indicated in the Protocol whereby access to the information facilitates the provision of service [Principle of Conditional Confidentiality].
- *Gateway Access* – a secure barrier system in place which prevents access without permission:

- *Printed/Handwritten Reports* – at the place of location are kept in a secure locked filing cabinet with the designated person under the Protocol holding the key
- *Electronic Access* – a secure file site is created on the computer of each designated person, which requires an entry password code to access the specific file.

Appendix

Access to Documents Matrix

Role	Notification Contact Record Form	Notification Report	Requested Reports	Tabulation of Notifications [Non personal identification]	Tabulation of Notifications [Personal identification]
Children's Services Standards Coordinator	*	*	*	*	*
Director of Province Mission		*	*	*	*
Regional Coordinators		*(Region Only)		*	
Oceania Province Leadership Team		*(Statutory Notifications Only)		*	
Programme Coordinator/ Executive Officer	*			*(Region Only)	
Board Chair		*(Region Only)			