

## Child Protection Notification & Reporting Procedures

### NSWIS procedures for the notification of child abuse allegations

Any staff member who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child participating in a NSWIS program has been sexually assaulted or abused in any way, either during or prior to the program, **must report the matter immediately.**

1. Staff **must** report all incidents/allegations of child abuse and sexual assault involving children to their manager immediately.
2. Managers must:
  - Obtain full details of the allegation using the child protection notification form.
  - Advise the CEO and HR of the allegation and provide them with the completed notification form.
  - Contact the DoCS Helpline (Ph: 133 627) or the nearest branch of the Department of Community Services of the allegation.
  - Collect clear and accurate reports from all parties involved in the incident – use the Allegations against an Employee and Investigation Process Recording Sheets.
  - Document everything that you do!
  - Note: To ensure natural justice, the person against whom a complaint has been made should be provided with an opportunity to put forward their version of events if at all possible.
3. The Manager must ensure that the CEO is made aware of the allegation immediately and informed of any actions taken to date.

If a child involved in a NSWIS program discloses to a NSWIS employee that they have been abused by someone external to NSWIS, it is important to **report the matter immediately.**

- Obtain full details of the allegation using the child protection notification form.
- Advise the CEO and HR of the allegation and provide them with the completed notification form.
- Contact the DoCS Helpline or the nearest branch of the Department of Community Services of the allegation.
- Document everything that you do!

If it is apparent that an employee of the NSWIS is responsible for the abuse/assault, the Manager is required to notify Human Resources. In this situation, Human Resources must then notify the Ombudsman and the Commission for Children and Young People.

## Child Protection Notification & Reporting Procedures

<p><b>Reporting suspected child abuse allegations against employees of the NSWIS</b></p>	<p>In the event that an employee of the NSWIS has reasonable grounds to suspect another employee of NSWIS of being involved in child abuse or improper conduct of a sexual nature, it is imperative that the situation be handled with extreme sensitivity and discretion.</p> <p>Should staff not wish to notify their immediate Manager for whatever reason staff have the option of notifying either the CEO or Human Resources directly.</p> <p><b>No matter how minor the incident may appear all suspected allegations of child abuse or child sexual assault must be reported.</b></p>
<p><b>What types of allegations should be reported?</b></p>	<p>Any allegation/conviction of child abuse, sexual assault or any allegation of misconduct that involves children must be reported through the appropriate channels.</p> <p>Minor allegations may reveal more serious misconduct or a pattern of behaviour which requires further investigation. For this reason, it is mandatory that all allegations involving child abuse/sexual assault are reported and appropriate action taken, regardless of how minor or trivial the actions may seem.</p>
<p><b>What happens after a notification is made?</b></p>	<p>Once a notification of suspected child abuse/sexual assault has been made, steps are taken to investigate the allegation.</p> <p>If external agencies such as the Department of Community Services, NSW Police or the NSW Ombudsman are investigating child abuse allegations involving NSWIS employees, NSWIS will continue to conduct its own investigation into the allegations and submit a final report to the CEO and Human Resources.</p>

# Child Protection Notification & Reporting Procedures

---

## Confidentiality

### Confidentiality during the reporting and notification process

- The identity of the reporting person, whether a member of NSWIS or a member of the public, is not to be revealed to any person or officer of NSWIS, without that person's knowledge and consent. In the majority of situations, the identity of the reporting person should only be known by the essential parties to the process.
- The Children (Care and Protection) Act 1987 makes provision for safeguarding the identity of a person making a notification of suspected abuse or neglect. It provides that notification shall not be held to be a breach of professional ethics, or a departure from accepted professional standards and states that no liability for defamation will be incurred for notifying.
- With the exception of Children's Court proceedings, the notification is not admissible in evidence and no one can be compelled to produce it or give evidence as to its contents.
- No agency may disclose the identity of a notifier to the parent of the child involved.

### Confidentiality aspects of the employment screening process

Due to the confidential nature of information arising from criminal record checks, an applicant's convictions must not be disclosed to anyone other than Human Resources, the CEO and the relevant Manager if necessary.

The Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 does however give provision for the Police or the Commission for Children and Young People to disclose, for the purposes of employment screening, information relating to relevant criminal records.

Information relating to criminal charges and spent convictions may be disclosed to approved employers or employer-related bodies on whose behalf the Commission has undertaken employment screening.

It is essential that the applicant's right to confidentiality during the employment screening process is not breached. In this regard, all staff should be aware of the procedures to be followed, as outlined in the NSWIS Child Protection Policy.

---