

Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure

Policy Type	Governance Procedure	Version:	1.0
Responsible Officer	Manager Information Systems & Governance	Date Approved:	16/09/2026
Review Officer:	Director Corporate & Community Services	Review Due:	16/08/2028
Author:	Senior Advisor Governance & Compliance	Commencement:	16/09/2026

1. PURPOSE

This procedure outlines how Council workers identify, report and respond to concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children. It supports Council's obligations under the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld) (the Act). This procedure should be read in conjunction with Council's *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*.

2. SCOPE

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure (the Procedure) applies to all Workers (see Definitions).

3. PROCEDURE STATEMENT

Council adopts a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is committed to maintaining a child safe culture.

This means that workers are responsible for:

- recognising concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child
- reporting concerns immediately
- complying with Council's *Child Safe Code of Conduct* (the Code)
- placing the safety and wellbeing of the child first.

3.1 TYPES OF HARM AND ABUSE¹

Psychological abuse

Includes bullying, threatening and abusive language, intimidation, shaming and name calling, ignoring and isolating a child, and exposure to domestic and family violence.

Physical abuse

Includes physical punishment such as pushing, shoving, punching, slapping and kicking, resulting in injury, burns, choking or bruising.

Sexual abuse

Includes the sexual touching of a child, grooming, and production, distribution or possession of child abuse material (often known as photography).

Grooming

The process where a person manipulates a child or group of children, and sometimes those looking after them, including parents, carers, teachers and leaders. They do this to establish a position of trust so they can then later sexually abuse the child.

¹ See also *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld) s 9.

Misconduct

Inappropriate behaviour that may not be as severe as abuse, although could indicate that abuse is occurring and would often be in breach of an organisation's *Child Safe Code of Conduct*, including showing a child something inappropriate on a phone, having inappropriate conversations with a child or an adult inappropriately sitting with a child on their lap.

Lack of appropriate care

Includes not providing adequate and proper supervision, nourishment, clothing, shelter, education or medical care.

4. REPORTING

4.1 WHAT TO REPORT

Report immediately if you become aware of:

- Criminal conduct involving a child
- A child at immediate risk of harm
- A disclosure of abuse
- Suspected abuse or neglect
- A breach of the Code
- Reportable conduct involving a Council worker

4.2 WHO CAN REPORT

All persons have the right to make a genuine complaint. This includes children and Council workers. Reporting abuse is mandatory and encouraged, it is never obstructed or prevented.

4.3 WHO TO REPORT TO

Situation	Report to
Child in immediate danger	Triple Zero (000)
Criminal offence	Queensland Police Service - 131 444
Child at risk of significant harm	• Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (DFSDSCS) Regional Intake Service - 1300 684 062 or 1800 177 135 (after hours) • Mareeba Child Safety Service Centre (Hub) 228 Byrnes Street, Mareeba, Qld 4880 or PO Box 151, Atherton Qld 4883. Phone (07) 4095 9600 • Foster carer hotline (07) 4095 9610
Breach of the Code	Governance & Compliance
Reportable conduct	Governance & Compliance

4.4 HOW TO REPORT – FIRST RESPONSE ACTIONS AND PROCESS

When receiving a disclosure or concern:

- ensure the child is safe
- remain calm and listen
- reassure the child they have done the right thing
- do not investigate or ask leading questions
- explain what will happen next
- record the facts
- report immediately through the appropriate process.

4.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

Council will adhere with obligations set out under the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) and the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld). Information will only be shared where authorised or required by law.

4.6 RECORD KEEPING

All reports must be recorded using Council's Child Safe Reporting Form and stored securely in accordance with Council's Records Management Policy.

5. REPORTABLE CONDUCT

Council will comply with all obligations under Part 3 of the Act, including notification, investigation and reporting requirements for reportable allegations and reportable convictions involving Council workers to the Queensland Family and Child Commission (the Commission).

Requirement	Timeframe
Initial Notification	Within 3 business days
Interim or final report	Within 30 business days
Investigation	Commence as soon as practicable
Final report	Following completion of investigation

5.1 TYPES OF REPORTABLE CONDUCT

The following types of reportable conduct are defined by the Commission:²

- A child sexual offence
- Sexual misconduct committed in relation to, or in the presence of, a child
- Ill-treatment of a child
- Significant neglect of a child
- Physical violence committed in relation to, or in the presence of, a child
- Behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child

² Queensland Family and Child Commission, Reportable Conduct Scheme (Web page, 01 July 2026)
< <https://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/childsafe/reportable-conduct-scheme> >.

5.2 REPORTABLE CONDUCT – HANDLING

Council is a reporting entity under the Act³ and Council must also report Reportable Conduct (see definitions).

The Act prescribes specific actions to be undertaken relevant to reportable conduct and the following will apply upon Council becoming aware of:

- a) a reportable allegation as defined about a worker of Council;
 - b) a reportable conviction as defined of a worker of Council.
1. Council will formally notify the Commission of the allegation or conviction **no later than 3 business days after becoming aware of the allegation or conviction.**⁴
 2. Council will give the Commission an interim written report or final report about the allegation or conviction **prior to but no later than 30 business days after becoming aware of the allegation or conviction.**⁵
 3. As soon as practicable after any action taken under points 1 above, Council will commence conduct of an investigation into the reportable allegation or reportable conviction. Where appropriate, and having regard to the context of the matter at hand, Council will engage an independent external investigator to undertake the investigation.

Note: in circumstances where Council is not reasonably able to investigate the reportable allegation or reportable conviction, Council must notify the Commission and such notification must include reasons why Council cannot reasonably investigate the matter.⁶

4. As soon as practicable after an action taken at point 3 above, Council will provide written notice to the person the subject of the reportable allegation or reportable conviction that meets the requirements prescribed under subsections 36(3)-(4) of the Act.
5. As soon as practicable after completion of an action taken at point 3 above, Council will provide to the Commission, a final report meeting the prescribed requirements outlined at under subsection 37(2) of the Act.

Note: an action taken under point 5 above may be subject to exemption provisions outlined at subsection 37(3) and section 39 of the Act under instruction from the Commission.

6. FURTHER DEFINITIONS

Child/children means a **person** or persons under the age of 18 years.

Child Safety refers to the preservation and protection of children's safety, wellbeing and cultural safety in its broadest sense.

Reportable allegation means:

- (1) A reportable allegation is an allegation or other information that leads a person to form a reasonable belief that a worker of a reporting entity has committed—
 - (a) reportable conduct; or

³ See *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld) s 29(b)(i). See also sch 2(9)(c).

⁴ Ibid s 34(2).

⁵ Ibid s 34(3).

⁶ Ibid s 36(2).

- (b) misconduct that may involve reportable conduct.
- (2) For subsection (1), it is irrelevant whether or not the conduct or misconduct is alleged to have occurred in the course of the worker performing work for the reporting entity.⁷

Reportable conduct

The following conduct is reportable conduct-

- (1) a child sexual offence;
- (2) sexual misconduct committed in relation to, or in the presence of, a child;
- (3) ill-treatment of a child;
- (4) significant neglect of a child;
- (5) physical violence committed in relation to, or in the presence of, a child;
- (6) behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child.⁸

Note: Reportable conduct may be one act or a series of acts or incidents. It does not need to have occurred in the course of the worker's employment, for example, it may occur while the worker is off duty or out of hours.

Reportable conviction

- (1) A reportable conviction, of a worker of a reporting entity, is a conviction for an offence committed by the worker against a law of a State or the Commonwealth that may involve reportable conduct.
- (2) For subsection (1), a conviction includes the following—
 - (a) a finding of guilt, and the acceptance of a plea of guilty, by a court, whether or not a conviction is recorded;
 - (b) a spent conviction, or a conviction that has become spent under a law of another State or the Commonwealth.⁹

Universal Principle means making Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children feel welcome, safe, valued, included and respected.¹⁰

Worker means:

- an employee of the entity
- a volunteer
- a contractor, subcontractor or consultant
- an individual supplied by a provider of labour hire services
- an executive officer of the entity, or another person concerned with the entity's management
- a trainee or person undertaking work experience.

Note: Worker for reporting requirements under Part 3 of the Act includes a former worker of the entity, if—

- (a) **for a reportable allegation**—the alleged conduct the subject of the allegation was engaged in during the period when the worker was performing work for the entity; or
- (b) **for a reportable conviction**—the worker was convicted during a period when the worker was performing work for the entity.¹¹

⁷ Ibid 27.

⁸ Ibid s 26.

⁹ Ibid s 28.

¹⁰ Ibid s 11(2).

¹¹ Ibid s 32.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES

Child Safe Code of Conduct (MSC)

Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (MSC)

Enterprise Risk Management Framework (MSC)

Guidelines for Implementing the Child Safe Standards in Queensland (September 2025) – Queensland Government

8. REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Manager Information Systems & Governance to monitor the adequacy of this procedure and implement and approve appropriate changes. This procedure will be formally reviewed every two (2) years and after any critical incident or as required by Council.