

Goulburn Mission- Sacramental Program

Responding to a Complaint – Procedure



Our Commitment

The Goulburn Mission is committed to handling complaints in a consistent, compassionate and professional manner. We prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable persons, ensuring their voices are heard and taken seriously.

All complaints are treated with dignity, accountability and procedural fairness. Clear and accessible information is available to parishioners, staff, volunteers and visitors on how to raise concerns.

Initial Assessment

Once a complaint is received, an initial assessment and risk evaluation will be conducted. Where required, matters will be referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Office or relevant statutory authorities.

Complaint Categories

Level 1: Complaints that involve alleged conduct by an employee towards a child that is:

- Possible criminal conduct, or
- Reportable Conduct, or
- Reportable Incident or conduct that would fall within the definition of Reportable Conduct or a Reportable Incident but for the Respondent not being an employee of the Diocese, or
- Alleged inappropriate behaviour of an employee towards a child

Level 2: Complaints that do not involve a child and:

- Involve possible breaches of Integrity in Our Common Mission, or
- Possible breaches of the Code of Conduct by either Cleric or Worker and
- Are not a Level 1 Complaint

Level 3: Complaints that do not involve a child or Cleric and:

- Involve possible breaches of Diocesan Policy other than the Code of Conduct and are not a Level 1 Complaint or a Level 2 Complaint

Level 4: All other complaints that do not involve a child and:

- Is not a Level 1 Complaint, a Level 2 Complaint or a Level 3 Complaint
- Managing Unreasonable Complainants Protocol: All other complaints that do not involve a child and
- The process to follow in responding to Unreasonable Complainant Conduct



Response Process

Depending on the risk assessment, complaints may involve referral to Police, external investigation, internal inquiry, mediation, pastoral response or other appropriate action.

Confidentiality

All complaints are handled in strict confidence. Secure records are maintained and information is shared only where required to ensure safety, legal compliance and procedural fairness.

Police Involvement

If a complaint involves possible criminal conduct, the Mission has a legal obligation to report the matter to Police or relevant authorities. Support will be offered throughout this process.

Pastoral and Counselling Support

Pastoral care and counselling support can be arranged where appropriate, in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Office.

Decision and Reporting of Outcomes

The receipt and resolution of all complaints within the Goulburn Mission will be managed consistently and transparently in accordance with applicable Mission and Diocesan processes. Comprehensive records will be maintained to document the information obtained, actions undertaken, and the rationale for decisions made, proportionate to the level of risk identified.

- **Third-Party Complaints:** Where a complaint is lodged by a third party (e.g., a solicitor or parent/carer), the Goulburn Mission may be required to communicate directly with the affected individual to clarify or confirm the details of the complaint.
- **Informing Parties:** All relevant parties will be appropriately informed and provided with details relevant to the process undertaken and, where permissible, the outcome of the matter, in accordance with privacy, confidentiality and procedural fairness requirements.

CONTACT NUMBERS FOR REPORTING CONCERNS				
NSW and ACT Police Emergency ☎ 000 Assistance line ☎ 131 444	NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Child Protection Helpline ☎ 132 111	ACT Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) Child Concern Report Line ☎ 1300 556 729 ☎ 1300 556 728 (mandated reporters)	IPSS (Institute for Professional Standards and Safeguards) Maria Hicks ☎ (02) 6239 9806	Vicar General Archdiocese of Canberra Goulburn Fr Tony Percy ☎ (02) 6239 9801
EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER for the PARISH PRIEST Fr Michael Lim 0403631797			EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER for the PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Cassie Harris	
For further information please refer to the Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn Protocol: Reportable crimes and the Police. Anyone can report a crime to the NSW Police or Australian Federal Police.				



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Related Policies and Resources

Safeguarding Policy Complaints Handling Policy Allegations of Reportable

Child protection code of conduct - The Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn

[Headspace](#), mental health support for young people

[Lifeline](#), 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention 13 11 14

[1800RESPECT](#), national sexual assault domestic and family violence counselling service