

# Child Safe Mandatory Reporting Process

## **Who should report?**

All representatives, implementing partners, supporters, and/or associates must report any concerns they have for the safety or wellbeing of a child including child exploitation or abuse, the possession of child exploitation material, or policy noncompliance.

## **How do I report?**

The Child Safe Reporting Process must be followed.

Baptist World Aid Australia ("BWAA") will treat all concerns raised seriously and ensure that all parties will be treated fairly. BWAA will meet country, state or territory specific legislative requirements. Any person who intentionally makes a false allegation or malicious allegation will face disciplinary action.

BWAA must immediately notify the relevant authorities including ACFID and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Child Protection Compliance Section of any concerns relating to the abuse or exploitation of children in DFAT funded BWAA/BWAA funded activities. These reports must be immediately reported per the below process. The CSC representative will facilitate notification to DFAT in consultation with Director International programs and CEO.

Communities involved in BWAA activities and BWAA funded activities must be informed on how to raise a concern about their safety or wellbeing or that of another child.

## **What should I report?**

Any behavior that you suspect or/and report made to you\* about a BWAA representative, supporter, associate or implementing partner regarding;

- child exploitation and/or abuse
- possession of any child exploitation material
- breach of the Child Safe Policy or Child Safe Code of Conduct ("COC")
- criminal proceedings being undertaken in regard to child exploitation and abuse

\* Includes reports made by a child.

## **What if I am not sure if what I have seen is child exploitation and abuse?**

Contact your representative on the Child Safe Committee or BWAA's Child Safe Officer for advice and further information about what constitutes child exploitation and abuse or policy non-compliance. BWAA ask that you report any concerns rather than investigate them yourself.

### **When should I report?**

Immediately or as soon as it is practically possible.

### **Who do I report to?**

Your representative on the Child Safe Committee, BWAA's Child Safe Officer or Director of International Program.

### **What happened to the information I provide?**

All information provided will be treated in accordance with relevant Commonwealth legislation, including the Privacy Act 1988.

All information gathered is to be clearly documented, filed and maintained in a safe and secure repository either physically or electronically.

Information will only be shared with those persons who are directly involved in the investigation and decision making process and/or the provision of professional advice on the matter.

### **Guide to dealing with Children**

BWAA will show care and concern for the rights of the child at all times.

- Listen carefully to what the child says about his or her concern or allegation
- Reassure the child that you believe what he or she is telling you
- Ensure that the child understands and is reassured that he or she is not responsible for the abuse and it is not his or her fault that it has occurred
- Ensure that the child understands that a report will be made to those with the necessary authority to stop the abuse and that the child is assisting in that process by sharing about his or her experience
- Provide assurance to the child that it was right that they shared the information with you
- Organize appropriate professional support for the child including physical and/or mental medical support

When discussing abuse with the child during the first telling ensure that there is a clear understanding of the emotional distress the child may be experiencing. Ensure a caring and sensitive approach to the child and assure him or her of a willingness to listen and assist if there is a problem.

It is also important when handling a disclosure that you don't:

- panic or show other negative emotions e.g. anger
- make promises you cannot keep
- ask why
- ask closed or leading questions
- give an impression that you blame the child

- touch the child
- attempt to investigate or confront persons accused in the disclosure

## Process Steps

1	<p>Allegation made to BWAA representative or Implementing Partner regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exploitation or abuse</li> <li>• possession of exploitation or abuse material</li> <li>• breach of policy or COC</li> <li>• criminal proceedings</li> </ul>
2	<p>Immediately take necessary actions to protect the child/children from exploitation or abuse.</p>
3	<p>Investigating Officer, CP Officer, DIP and CEO will make up committee and make all decisions throughout the reporting process. A representative from the Implementing Partner organisation will be included if incident/s occurred during implementation of International Program.</p>
4	<p>CSC representative, CP Officer or DIP appointed by CEO as Investigating Officer. In the event the allegation has been made against the CEO, the Board Chairman will perform the duties assigned to the CEO in this process.</p>
5	<p>Investigating Officer to request completed Child Safe Report from those reporting allegation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date/s of incident/s</li> <li>• Name of organisation/s involved</li> <li>• Alleged offender's details including name, nationality and occupation or relationship to BWAA or Implementing Partner organisation</li> <li>• Details of alleged incident/s</li> <li>• Whether local law enforcement authorities or Australian Federal Police have been involved</li> <li>• If incident/s occurred in the course of a BWAA activity or BWAA funded activity, the name of the activity</li> <li>• Any other relevant information</li> </ul>
6	<p>CSC representative, CP Officer or DIP commence investigation. Undertake investigation together with Implementing Partner if incident/s occurred during implementation of International Program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When investigating take care to act in a fair and reasonable manner.</li> <li>• The nature and extent of the investigations will depend on the matter.</li> <li>• Keep an open mind and look for evidence.</li> <li>• Give all attendees advance warning and time to prepare for investigation/fact finding meetings.</li> <li>• Investigatory meetings should be conducted by the</li> </ul>

	<p>Investigating Officer and should be confined to establishing the facts of the case.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important that disciplinary action is not considered at an investigatory meeting. If it becomes apparent that formal disciplinary action may be needed then this should be dealt with at a formal meeting at which the employee will have right to be accompanied.</li> </ul>
<b>7</b>	Investigating Officer to meet with CEO, CP Officer and DIP at conclusion of investigation.
<b>8</b>	<p>Allegation will be found to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be unsubstantiated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Notify person/s who raised concerns</li> <li>ii. Provide ongoing monitoring and review</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Be substantiated but not require mandatory reporting to statutory and regulatory authorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Implement Disciplinary Procedure (up to and including termination of employment)</li> <li>ii. Terminate relationship with associate or supporter</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Be substantiated and require mandatory reporting to statutory and regulatory authorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Individual to be suspended from work (if applicable) until conviction determined by authorities</li> <li>ii. Disciplinary procedure implemented following conviction result (up to and including termination of employment)</li> <li>iii. Details of disciplinary procedures and/or conviction to be included in employee's file</li> <li>iv. Terminate relationship with associate or supporter</li> </ul> </li> </ul>