



## Child Protection Mandatory Reporting Policy

### 1. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all Homes North employees:

- Understand and act to protect children and young people in the communities in which Homes North operate
- Understand their reporting responsibilities as a Mandatory Reporters where children are at risk of harm.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Homes North employees.

### 3. Policy

Homes North is committed to the welfare of children and young people, and to identifying and responding early to protect children and young people from harm.

Homes North will:

- whenever there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of, or experiencing harm, immediately report via the online Mandatory Reporter Guide.
- collaborate with government and non-government agencies, to work in partnership with the child, or young person and their family to ensure their safety, welfare and wellbeing is addressed.
- share information with relevant agencies in accordance with Chapter 16A of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* in order to prevent harm.
- ensure that employees are trained in their role as a mandatory reporter, and resourced to implement this policy.

### 4. Employees duty as a Mandatory Reporter

Under the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, Homes North employees are classified as mandatory reporters. This means that if during the course of their work they have a reasonable suspicion that a child (aged 0-15) or unborn child is at risk of significant harm, they are legally required to report these concerns to the Department of

Family and Community Services. This includes the children of a tenant, their guests and applicants for housing.

Employees must:

- a) Register, as a Homes North employee, as a user of the Mandatory Reporter Guide tool.
- b) Use the [Mandatory Reporter Guide](#) tool.
- c) Follow the flowchart at Appendix A, including recording information in the HN Housing System (EMS Basix).
- d) Provide their manager with a copy of the decision report within 24 hours.

## 5. Exchange of Information

Chapter 16A of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* allows government agencies and non-government organisation who are prescribed bodies to exchange information that relates to a child's or young person's safety, welfare or wellbeing, whether or not the child or young person is known to Community Services and whether or not the child or young person consents to the information exchange.

## 6. Third Party Reports of Child Abuse or Neglect

Where a third party, such as a neighbour or contractor, contacts Homes North to report suspected child abuse or neglect they will be advised to contact the Child Protection Helpline on 132 111 or the Police if the concern is immediate.

## 7. Employee Welfare

During the process of our work, Homes North employees may be exposed to traumatic situations. Homes North understand that the resilience of employees can be tested, particularly in cases involving children. For this reason, Homes North provides and encourages employees to access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Please contact the EAP on 1300 361 008, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## APPENDIX

- What is Mandatory Reporting?
- How to create an e-Report in the Reporter Community
- Guide To Selecting A Decision Tree
- Responding to and Reporting Risk of Abuse and Neglect
- Process For Completing Mandatory Reporter Guide

## Compliance Obligations

- [Children and Young Persons \(Care & Protection\) Act 1998](#)
- [Residential Tenancy Act 2010 \(provisions for child protection\)](#)
- [Crimes \(Domestic and Personal Violence\) Act 2007](#)
- [Mandatory Reporter Guide](#)

- [Privacy Act 1988](#)
- [Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 \(NSW\)](#)

### Policy information

Policy number: 3.1.1\2      Version: V2

Date approved: January 2019