

Notification Procedures for Allegations of Child Abuse

R A T I O N A L E

Leichhardt Saints acknowledges that issues regarding child abuse and the reporting of allegations of child abuse is highly sensitive, and should be dealt with in a confidential manner.

Leichhardt Saints has developed these notification procedures to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout the process and that consistent procedures for reporting are encouraged.

Leichhardt Saints will be proactive in its role to protect children and encourage an open environment that allows employees, volunteers and members to be aware of their rights and responsibilities within the Organisation.

C H I L D P R O T E C T I O N O F F I C E R

To deal appropriately with these issues and to ensure that the confidentiality of all parties involved is maintained, one person within Leichhardt Saints will be designated as the Child Protection Officer.

The Child Protection Officer is responsible for reporting any allegations of child abuse that occur in Leichhardt Saints to the local branch of the Department of Community Services (DoCS), and the NSW Police Service. If the Child Protection Officer is not available then the most senior person within Leichhardt Saints should be notified.

Child Protection Officer:

Name: Eileen Leather

Position: Senior Vice President

Mobile: 041-247-4427

Fax: 9550-2306

W H A T S H O U L D B E R E P O R T E D ?

Some incidents may seem minor, however, they may in fact reveal more serious concerns of misconduct or a pattern of behaviour that requires further scrutiny. All people associated with Leichhardt Saints should be aware of the indicators for child abuse and sexual abuse so that they may make an informed decision on what to report.

If you have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child participating in any organised activities conducted by Leichhardt Saints is at risk report the matter to the Child Protection Officer.

If an incident of child abuse occurs in Leichhardt Saints it is not the responsibility of persons within Leichhardt Saints to take it upon themselves to determine whether the allegation is true or false. This responsibility belongs with the NSW Department of Community Service and the Judiciary.

Depending on the nature of the allegations and the extent of the situation, the NSW Department of Community Service will determine the manner in which the matter will be investigated. This may involve the NSW Police Service.

All matters regarding allegations of child abuse are to be treated as confidential. The person designated as the Child Protection Officer is the contact person for any incident involving allegations of child abuse. This is essential for confidentiality. Confidentiality protects all individuals involved:

- the alleged victim
- the alleged offender, and
- the person making the notification.

Under the **Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998** Leichhardt Saints is required to:

1. notify the Commission for Children and Young People of the name and other identifying details of any employee or volunteer against whom relevant disciplinary proceedings have been completed by Leichhardt Saints irrespective of the findings (except where the allegation has been proven to be vexatious, mischievous or false)
2. provide details of child abuse allegations/ convictions against employees and volunteers to the Commission
3. notify the Commission of any applicants for child-related employment, rejected as a result of risks identified through employment screening processes
4. ensure that records of all information required to be submitted to the Commission for Children and Young People are retained by Leichhardt Saints.

Under the **Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998** Leichhardt Saints

1. **will not** commence employing (or allowing to volunteer) a person in a child-related position without first requiring them to disclose whether or not they are a 'prohibited person'
2. **will not** commence employing, or continue to employ, or allow to volunteer in child-related employment, a person that has been identified as a 'prohibited person'.