



## Child Safety Framework



Registered  
NDIS  
Provider



Victorian Labour Hire Authority  
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## Contents

<b>Overview .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Scope .....	3
Responsibility to protect .....	3
Resocialsponsibility to disclose .....	3
Relevant Legislation underpinning this framework .....	4
<b>Leadership, Governance and Culture .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Child safety and wellbeing is embedded into organisational leadership, governance & culture. ....	5
Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse. ....	5
Roles and Responsibilities .....	7
<b>Stakeholder Engagement .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children. ....	10
<b>Safe and Supported Staff .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Recruitment & Selection Practices .....	10
<b>Identifying, responding, and reporting of risk, concerns, and incidents .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Mandatory reporting .....	11
Responding to a child disclosing (or suspected) incident/s of abuse .....	13
Reporting Allegations .....	13
Good Faith Reporting .....	13
When and what to report .....	13
How and who to report to .....	14
Maintaining records .....	14
National Redress Scheme .....	14
Warning Signs of Child Abuse .....	14
<b>Document Control .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>ONCALL Documents Listed in Framework .....</b>	<b>16</b>

## Overview

ONCALL supports these National Child Safety Principles and State Child Safety Standards. This framework is designed to:

- drive cultural change and embed a focus on child safety by placing children's rights at the forefront of ONCALL's culture
- avoid scope for doubt and indecision, which can lead to inaction and tolerance of poor behaviour
- provide a foundation upon which ONCALL's policies and practices can be built
- enable staff to feel empowered to act in the best interests of children when they have safety concerns
- give parents and other stakeholders comfort and confidence in the kind of culture, environment and experience they can expect for children receiving support from ONCALL
- benefit ONCALL as we gain valuable information about how children experience support through ONCALL.

## Scope

This framework applies to all ONCALL staff and representatives.

For the purpose of this framework, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 years, and the term child abuse encompasses:

- sexual abuse (including but not limited grooming with the intent to sexually abuse a child)
- sexual acts in the presence of a child
- physical abuse or violence towards a young person or in the presence of a young person
- serious psychological or emotional abuse (including but not limited to exposure to family violence)
- serious neglect.

## Responsibility to protect

Protecting children is everyone's responsibility: parents, communities, governments, and business all have a role to play. This includes ONCALL and its representatives. We all have a role to play in making a child's ongoing safety and wellbeing a priority.

When a person forms a reasonable belief that a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, they are morally bound to take action to protect the safety and wellbeing of that child or young person.

In addition to moral obligations, ONCALL staff who has the power to remove a substantial risk that a child will become the victim of a sexual offence by a person associated with ONCALL, must act to remove, or reduce that risk. Failure to do so is a criminal offence.

ONCALL owes a legal duty to take all reasonable care to prevent the abuse of a child by a person associated with ONCALL while the person is under the care, supervision, or authority of ONCALL.

## Responsibility to disclose

Reporting child sexual abuse and child exploitation is the responsibility of all ONCALL staff and representatives.

All adults in Victoria, who have any reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by another adult (over 18) against a child under the age of 16, or perpetrated by a child against another

child, must report that belief to a police officer as soon as practicable unless there is a reasonable excuse, or an exemption applies. It is a criminal offence to fail to do so.

### Reasonable Excuse

You have an excuse for not reporting to police if:

- you reasonably fear for your safety or the safety of another person, except the person you believe committed, or was involved in, the sexual offence, and
- your failure to report is a reasonable response in the circumstances.

This excuse helps to protect children, their families, and others from harm where reporting information might risk people's safety. The fear must be reasonable from the perspective of that person in those circumstances. This recognises that this person is best placed to judge whether their safety, or the safety of another person, is endangered.

You also have an excuse for not reporting to police if:

- you believe on reasonable grounds that another person has already disclosed the information to police, and
- you have no further information to add.

This excuse means that people do not need to report the same information to different agencies.

## Relevant Legislation underpinning this framework

### Commonwealth Legislation

- Criminal Code Act 1995
- Crimes Act 1914

### Victorian Legislation

- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
- Crimes Act 1958
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Family Violence Protection Act 2008
- The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Worker Screening Act 2020
- Working with Children Act 2005
- Wrongs Act 1958

### International Treaties

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989

## Leadership, Governance and Culture

### National Principles:

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.
9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

### Victorian Standards

2. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture
10. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved
11. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

## **Child safety and wellbeing is embedded into organisational leadership, governance & culture.**

ONCALL is committed to building on existing systems and establishing new ways to embed and improve on a culture of child safety as well as ensuring that this Framework is implemented to demonstrate zero tolerance of child abuse.

ONCALL will continue to:

- Review existing policies and practices such as this Framework, the Code of Conduct, our employment checks procedure, recruitment and selection practices and compliance requirements within relevant staff and stakeholders.
- Review risk management plans, compliance training and clauses within contractor agreements.
- Review reporting mechanisms via our incident reporting system.
- Review responsibilities for staff, coordinators, managers and executive managers, and executive directors.
- Require ONCALL staff to report any criminal charge or allegation against them.
- Seek feedback from relevant stakeholders, such as young people and their advocates, in order to inform document development; and
- Review communications and key messages to ensure consistency with this Framework
- Review this framework and referenced policies following a serious breach of policy or related procedures.

*Refer Child and Youth Protection Policy, [Client Incident Management Policy](#), [Freedom from Abuse and Neglect Policy](#), [ONCALL Code of Conduct](#)*

### **Code of Conduct**

ONCALL has established a Code of Conduct (Child Safe Standards) which details clear expectations for appropriate behaviour when in the company of children, including online conduct.

ONCALL staff are expected to comply with the Code of Conduct.

Breaches of either the Code of Conduct or relevant procedures will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Action Policy.

Failure to comply may be deemed serious misconduct warranting dismissal, exclusion or termination of contract or association with ONCALL.

*Refer [ONCALL Code of Conduct](#)*

### **ONCALL's Commitment to the safety of children, young people, and adults with disability**

ONCALL's guiding principles, including the Child Safety Framework, the Safeguarding Framework, and the ONCALL Code of Conduct (which includes the Child Safe Code of Conduct), will underpin the actions and decisions of ONCALL staff. ONCALL staff and representatives are expected to support and demonstrate these principles in the way we treat each other and in the way we conduct ourselves.

### ONCALL is committed to:

- The safety of children, young people, and adults with disability and ensuring our actions and decisions relating to children, young people and adults with disability support these guiding principles. We want children, young people, and adults with disability to be safe, happy, and empowered – it is our moral and legal responsibility.
- Ensuring all necessary steps are taken to realise the rights of children, young people, and adults with disability.
- Actively safeguarding all children, young people, and adults with disability that we interact with from harm.
- Ensuring ONCALL staff and representatives support the prevention and early intervention of abuse and exploitation of children, young people, and adults with disability by setting boundaries for personal interactions with children, young people, and adults with disability, identifying risks early, and implementing measures to remove and reduce these risks as ONCALL has zero tolerance for abuse and exploitation of children, young people, and adults with disability.
- Encouraging reports of suspected abuse of children, young people, and adults with disability, including from children and peers themselves, and treating these reports seriously and consistently with our procedures.
- Providing a culturally safe environment for children, young people and adults with disabilities who are First Nations People; who are from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background; and/or those who identify as LGBTQTI+.
- Communicating the Child Safety Framework, the Safeguarding Framework, and the ONCALL Code of Conduct (which includes the Child Safe Code of Conduct) publicly.
- Communicating ONCALL's safety frameworks in multiple formats to assist in understanding by children, young people and adults with disability. ONCALL is committed to quality and continuous improvement.
- Implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and will work to meet and exceed the requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the NDIS Practice Standards.
- Ensuring that ONCALL staff and the families, carers and guardians of any children, young people, and adults with disability who engage with ONCALL are aware of the Framework and its key provisions.

### Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.

ONCALL will manage risk through communications, monitoring activities and conducting risk assessments.

#### ONCALL is committed to:

- Evaluating and understanding risk environments
- Evaluating how risk processes encompass safeguarding, and having a continuous improvement approach to said processes
- Involving children and young people in consultation and identification of risk
- Identifying, assessing, and taking steps to minimise child abuse and child exploitation in all areas of support delivered
- Conducting periodic reviews to ensure that policies, procedures, and this Framework are adapted to meet child safety risks.

## Risk Consideration

ONCALL has considered four key types of risks, among others, as recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

### Situational Risk

ONCALL is committed to reducing situational risk by continued assessment of the young person's environment, recognizing patterns of risk across service settings, preventing situations that pose untenable risk, and promoting safe daily/routine activities. ONCALL promotes active decision making for children and young people in its care and gives priority to prevention strategies.

### Vulnerability Risk

ONCALL understands that all children/young people are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, and this risk can scale up where the child/young person would be considered part of a further minority group (for example, a young person with a disability or a young person who is from an Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander background). To address this risk, ONCALL links young people in our care with appropriate external organisations, such as Victorian Indigenous Youth Programs (VACCA, Yarn Safe).

### Propensity Risk

ONCALL aims to address propensity risk by having consistent screening processes for staff, including enforcing minimum training requirements. ONCALL also builds on this minimum requirement by requiring supervision of staff every two months.

*Refer Staff Supervision Procedure and Staff Recruitment Procedure*

### Other Institutional Risk

ONCALL aims to reduce and eliminate other institutional risk by promoting our commitment to child safety. ONCALL aims to have a dynamic approach to prevention, being able to identify different risks in each setting and tailoring solutions to meet each child/site's needs.

## Breach of Framework

Where any ONCALL staff member or representative is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty, or responsibility within this Framework, including obligations under the Social Media Policy, ONCALL may act, in accordance with this policy/procedure.

*Refer Disciplinary Action Policy*

## Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the governing body, management, staff, and volunteers [and contractors] must sign and act in accordance with ONCALL's Code of Conduct as part of their induction into the organisation. The Code of Conduct commits staff to keeping children safe within the organisation and act in their best interests.

ONCALL position descriptions will include child safety responsibilities for the role.

### All Staff and Volunteers

Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to act in accordance with the Code of Conduct and be aware of and comply with their obligations relating to reporting concerns, allegations, and incidents of child abuse, including internal and external reporting.

*Refer [Client Incident Management Policy](#) and [ONCALL Code of Conduct](#)*

All ONCALL staff are responsible for:

- Complying with the Code of Conduct and Child Safety Framework
- Being familiar with the content of this Child Safe Framework and their legal obligations with respect to reporting of child abuse/exploitation.
- Complying with all screening and background checks, including working with children checks that apply to the activities of a position.
- Contributing to an environment where children are respected and are encouraged to discuss their concerns and rights.
- Reporting suspicions of child abuse, child exploitation or inappropriate behaviour towards children irrespective of whether the source of the suspected conduct is from within or outside ONCALL, an adult, or a child, or from within or outside the child's family or social network.
- Assisting in an investigation of concerns or allegations.
- Risk assess child related activities.
- Advising ONCALL if they are under investigation, charged with or convicted of an offence in Australia or any other jurisdiction (including internationally), including child related offences.

## Board

The governing body has ultimate responsibility for implementing policies and procedures that are appropriate for the size and type of services provided, and for ensuring that all staff and volunteers abide by these to prevent and respond to child abuse. They must also be aware of their legal liability for failure to disclose abuse or failure to reasonably protect based on known risks.

## Coordinators and Managers

Management should be aware of all mandatory and voluntary reporting obligations which apply in the jurisdiction in which ONCALL operates and ensure that all staff and volunteers are made aware of the obligations that apply to them. Management is also responsible for being aware of and managing any risks to children, and to facilitate internal and/or external reporting by any members of staff/volunteers.

Coordinators and Managers are responsible for:

- Complying with the Code of Conduct and Child Safety Framework
- Ensure individuals are aware of and adhere to the Code of Conduct and this Framework.
- Promoting the Code of Conduct and this Framework to ONCALL staff.
- Monitoring ONCALL staff to ensure appropriate behaviour and compliance with the Code of Conduct and coach individuals on managing risks.
- Providing support and advice to ONCALL staff in reporting allegations as well as report any allegations they are aware of.

Executive Managers and Executive Directors are responsible for:

- Complying with the Code of Conduct and Child Safety Framework
- Supporting and complying with the Framework in their operational area.
- Reporting to the Board periodically as requested on the topic of Child Safety Standards.
- Ensuring child protection measures are implemented. They may delegate their responsibilities to managers and supervisors.
- Incorporating risk planning and monitoring of this requirement, and continuous improvement analysis.
- Providing support and advice to staff in reporting allegations as well as report any allegations they are aware of.
- Promote a child safe environment at ONCALL and in other dealings when ONCALL is present or involved.



- Ensure processes are in place so that the parents, guardians, and carers of children who come into contact with ONCALL are aware of this Framework.

## People and Culture

People and Culture are responsible for:

- Complying with the Code of Conduct and Child Safety Framework
- Providing advice and assistance with regards to recommendation for appropriate action arising from a reporting process.
- Implementation of recruitment related matters including compliance training.
- Providing support and advice to individuals in reporting allegations as well as report any allegations they are aware of.

## Child Safety Champions

Child Safety Champions are responsible for

- Complying with the Code of Conduct and Child Safety Framework
- Acting as a support to staff on all matters of child safety
- Being a resource and providing information to assist to determine if an incident is reportable and provide information regarding the process and procedure
- Providing clear information on what responses and actions will be taken, including reporting obligations
- Ensuring all complaints, allegations and suspicions of child safety are appropriately referred to the Police and/or Government Agency, and notifying relevant staff
- Providing referrals for support for any informant and any other impacted staff members, volunteers, or contractors as required
- Communicating and promoting of our Child Safety Framework
- Training and inducting all staff on child safety to ensure staff understand child safety policy and procedures, particularly new staff
- Supporting the development of ONCALL's child safety culture
- Being the point of contact for all child safety matters.

## Stakeholder Engagement

National Principles

2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

Victorian Standards

1. Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued
3. Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
4. Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
5. Equity is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

## Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

As part of ONCALL's commitment to the Child Safe Standards, ONCALL believes that children should be empowered and that their voices should be heard, and their rights promoted. By feeling safe and empowered, children will feel confident enough to report their concerns regarding their safety and welfare and that they are taken seriously.

Where a child raises concerns, they will be encouraged to talk to ONCALL.

ONCALL will continue to monitor and develop practices, procedures, and guidelines to ensure that the ONCALL has the welfare of children as a key concern.

Child safety posters are displayed throughout our sites and head office in order to promote a proactive response to child safety.

ONCALL values the feedback of children and young people and displays information about making complaints throughout our sites. Opportunities for children and young people to be involved in policy and program development will be provided through consultation with ChildWise.

Refer [First Nations Diversity Policy](#), [Participation, Empowerment, and Advocacy Policy](#), [Diversity Policy](#), [Working with Families Policy](#); [Charter for Children in Out-of-Home Care](#), [CREATE brochure](#), [Zero Tolerance to Abuse: My Important Numbers](#), [Valid – Staying Safe Poster](#)

## Safe and Supported Staff

### National Principles

5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

### Victorian Standards

6. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
8. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training

ONCALL is committed to following fair and equitable recruitment standards in the selection of staff that include the safety and wellbeing of children as a key consideration.

## Recruitment & Selection Practices

ONCALL is committed to taking all reasonable steps to engage suitably qualified individuals to work with children in the delivery of support.

When recruiting and selecting staff involved in child related work, ONCALL will make all reasonable efforts to:

- confirm the applicant's Working with Children Check (and National Police Check status where appropriate) and qualification (as relevant).
- obtain proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications.
- obtain references that address the applicant's suitability for the job and working with children.
- inform applicants of ONCALL's requirement for disclosure of any active investigation, charge or conviction of a criminal conviction or other relevant finding.

- ensure that positions of medium or high interactive nature with children have clauses included in the position descriptions in respect of this Framework.
- Review all reports from mandatory employment check organisations such as Police Check, Working with Children Check (VIC) and NDIS Worker Screening Check and respond appropriately to concerns
- incorporate renewing employment checks in ONCALL's employment checks procedure; and
- regularly assess organisational child safety training needs, through questionnaires or as part of a regular performance review process.

## Privacy

ONCALL acknowledges that criminal history and other information considered during background checking is personal information. The privacy of this information will be respected in accordance with our [Privacy Policy](#).

## Training

Training and education are important to ensure individuals working with children at ONCALL understand that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

ONCALL aims for staff to feel confident and comfortable to discuss any allegations of child abuse, child exploitation or child safety concerns.

Operational areas are able to access training or seek assistance from the ONCALL Training College.

## Compliance Training

All ONCALL staff are expected to develop an awareness of our legal obligations, and responsibilities relating to the protection of children and young persons.

ONCALL requires staff to complete CAB (Candidate Assessment & Briefing Day), which includes content specific to behaviour and ethics when working with children. By completing this training staff will understand what conduct is expected and who can help if there are questions, or incidents to report.

## Identifying, responding, and reporting of risk, concerns, and incidents

### National Principles

6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

### Victorian Standards

7. Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
9. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed

## Mandatory reporting

Although everyone has a moral responsibility to report concerns about child abuse, some professionals are legally required to make a report to Child Protection Services, for example, teachers, principals, doctors, nurses, midwives, police, youth workers, social workers and psychologists are mandated to report concerns of child abuse to Child Protection Services.

The obligation to report arises when a person is such a profession, and in practising his or her profession, forms the belief on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection. A report must be

made where there is a reasonable belief a child has suffered or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse and the child's parents have not protected or are not likely to protect, the child from that harm. It is a criminal offence to fail to do so. The report must be made as soon as practicable to Child Protection Services.

ONCALL staff must report a sexual offence, sexual misconduct, physical violence, behaviour causing mental harm or neglect to a child involving an ONCALL staff member to the Commission for Children and Young People within one day of becoming aware. ONCALL must then investigate the allegations.

ONCALL staff who witness any form of suspected abuse or have any concern that a young person may be suffering abuse in any area of their lives, have a moral obligation to report said abuse to their manager, regardless of legal obligation. The manager will then consult with ONCALL's Quality and Compliance team to assess external reporting/investigation requirements.

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. In acting on this concern, ONCALL will use fair procedures when making decisions that affect a person's rights or interests.

Individuals who are subject of an allegation which ONCALL is investigating, will be afforded:

- the opportunity to respond
- an unbiased decision maker
- decisions based on evidence.

We record all allegations of child abuse, child exploitation and inappropriate behaviour relating to children including investigation information in a secure manner.

Refer [Client Incident Management Policy](#), [Freedom from Abuse and Neglect Policy](#)

### **Privacy, confidentiality and protections**

ONCALL fosters a culture of disclosure and learning. ONCALL will provide protections so that anyone who provides feedback, or a complaint may do so confidentially and without fear of intimidation, victimisation, disadvantage, or reprisal. In matters of the disclosure of misconduct ONCALL provides for Whistleblower protections (Ref: ONCALL Whistleblower Policy).

Refer [Whistleblower Policy](#), [Feedback and Complaints Policy](#)

### **Grooming for sexual conduct with a child under the age of 16 years**

Many perpetrators of sexual offences against children purposely create relationships with victims, their families, or carers to create a situation where abuse can occur. This may be a criminal offence called grooming.

The offence of grooming occurs when a person over 18 years of age communicates, by words or conduct, online or face-to-face, with a child under the age of 16 years or with a person who has care, supervision, or authority for a child, with the intention of facilitating the child's engagement in or involvement in a sexual offence with that person or another person over the age of 18 years.

Grooming, conducted online or over the internet, may include but is not limited to:

- asking a child inappropriate or personal questions
- sending a child offensive, confronting or obscene content
- asking a child to send intimate pictures or do things online that make them feel uncomfortable
- singling a child out for a 'special' relationship.

If it is found that any ONCALL staff member or representative is reasonably suspected of engaging in online grooming or cyberbullying, ONCALL may act in accordance with the Social Media Policy.

## Responding to a child disclosing (or suspected) incident/s of abuse

- It is important that ONCALL staff provide a supportive environment for children, personnel, or families of children to report allegations of abuse or child safety concerns.
- Where a child approaches you to make a complaint or raise a concern in relation to child abuse, try and separate them from the others discreetly and listen to them carefully. It is important to do so in a way that makes them feel safe.
- If a child approaches you, let the child use their own words to explain what has occurred.
- It is important that you reassure the child that you will take what they are saying seriously, and that you confirm that it is not their fault and that they are doing the right thing to seek help.
- Never blame or interrogate the child if an issue of abuse or suspected abuse is raised.
- Explain to the child that this information may need to be shared with others, such as with their parent/carer, specific people in your organisation, or the police or child protection services.
- Do not make promises such as promising not to tell anyone about the incident, except that you will do your best to keep them safe.
- Do not leave the child in a distressed state. If they seem at ease in your company, stay with them and make arrangements for them to go to another place where they feel of will be safe.
- As soon as possible after the disclosure, record the information using the child's words and report the disclosure to your Manager who will make recommendations about mandatory reporting requirements, and how best to support the child. They will also make recommendations about whether an investigation should be carried out in accordance with the [Child Safe Code of Conduct](#) (p.3).

## Reporting Allegations

ONCALL takes all allegations (current and historic) of child abuse and child exploitation seriously and is committed to:

- providing processes for reporting allegations of child abuse and child exploitation.
- ensuring thorough and quick investigation/ referral where required.
- maintaining adequate record keeping of reports of alleged child abuse, child exploitation and child safety concerns.
- our individuals knowing what to do and who to tell if they observe child abuse, child exploitation or if they notice inappropriate behaviour towards children; and
- the responsibility of reporting an allegation of child abuse or child exploitation to appropriate authorities if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place.

## Good Faith Reporting

It is not unprofessional conduct for a report to be made in good faith. The law generally protects those that report in good faith from legal repercussions and in some cases also prevents the disclosure of the name or any information likely to lead to the identification of the person who has made a report. ONCALL staff should feel it is safe for them to make a good faith report relating to alleged child abuse, child exploitation and/or child safety concerns where they are legally obliged to do so.

## When and what to report

Concerns must be reported as soon as practical.

Individuals must report when they observe or suspect that a child is or has been the subject of abuse, including physical violence, sexual abuse, serious emotional or psychological abuse and serious neglect.

A suspicion may exist if:

- a child tells an individual of conduct that could constitute abuse or neglect; or
- a child displays indicators of abuse or neglect and there is no other satisfactory explanation.

Staff are also required to report general concerns such as:

- physical environment risks to children
- inadequate staff-child ratios (where relevant)
- breaches of the Code of Conduct (Child Safe Standards)
- feeling uncomfortable about interactions between an adult and a child
- observations of concerning changes in the child's behaviour

## How and who to report to

In an emergency or where it is believed that there is an immediate risk to the child's safety, emergency services should be immediately contacted on 000. Staff should also report to their manager and complete an internal incident report (OIMS) immediately.

Communications will be treated according to privacy procedures and shared on a 'need to know basis'.

## Maintaining records

ONCALL will maintain records of any child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Code of Conduct and stores these records in accordance with security and privacy requirements.

## National Redress Scheme

The National Redress Scheme provides support to people who experienced institutional child sexual abuse.

The Scheme:

- acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions
- holds institutions accountable for this abuse, and
- helps people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse gain access to counselling, a direct personal response, and a Redress payment.

The Scheme started on 1 July 2018 and will run for 10 years. ONCALL will join the scheme at such time as ONCALL is named in a redress application.

## Warning Signs of Child Abuse

The following will help individuals to identify some warning signs of child abuse, however this list is not exhaustive and there may be various reasons why a child is displaying certain behaviour.

We recommend individuals seek advice from the Safer Community Unit.

### Physical abuse signs and symptoms

- Unexplained injuries, such as bruises, fractures or burns
- Injuries that don't match the given explanation
- Untreated medical or dental problems

### Sexual abuse signs and symptoms

- Sexual behaviour or knowledge that's inappropriate for the child's age
- Pregnancy or a sexually transmitted infection

- Blood in the child's underwear
- Statements that he or she was sexually abused
- Trouble walking or sitting or complaints of genital pain
- Abuse of other children sexually

### Emotional abuse signs and symptoms

- Delayed or inappropriate emotional development
- Loss of self-confidence or self-esteem
- Social withdrawal or a loss of interest or enthusiasm
- Depression
- Headaches or stomach aches with no medical cause
- Avoidance of certain situations, such as refusing to go to school or ride the bus
- Desperately seeks affection
- A decrease in school performance or loss of interest in school
- Loss of previously acquired developmental skills

### Neglect signs and symptoms

- Poor growth or weight gain
- Poor hygiene
- Lack of clothing or supplies to meet physical needs
- Taking food or money without permission
- Eating a lot in one sitting or hiding food for later
- Poor record of school attendance
- Lack of appropriate attention for medical, dental or psychological problems or lack of necessary follow-up care
- Emotional swings that are inappropriate or out of context to the situation
- Indifference

## Document Control

Document Owner: Audit, Compliance and Risk Management Committee		
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## ONCALL Documents Listed in Framework

Charter for Children in Out-of-Home Care .....	10
Child and Youth Protection Policy .....	5
Client Incident Management Policy.....	5, 7, 12
Code of Conduct .....	5, 7
CREATE brochure.....	10
Disciplinary Action Policy.....	5, 7
Diversity Policy.....	10
Feedback and Complaints Policy.....	12
First Nations Diversity Policy .....	10
Freedom from Abuse and Neglect Policy .....	12
Participation, Empowerment, and Advocacy Policy.....	10
Privacy Policy.....	11
Social Media Policy.....	7, 13
Staff Recruitment Procedure .....	7
Staff Supervision Procedure.....	7
Valid – Staying Safe Poster.....	10
Whistleblower Policy.....	12
Working with Families Policy.....	10
Zero Tolerance to Abuse .....	10