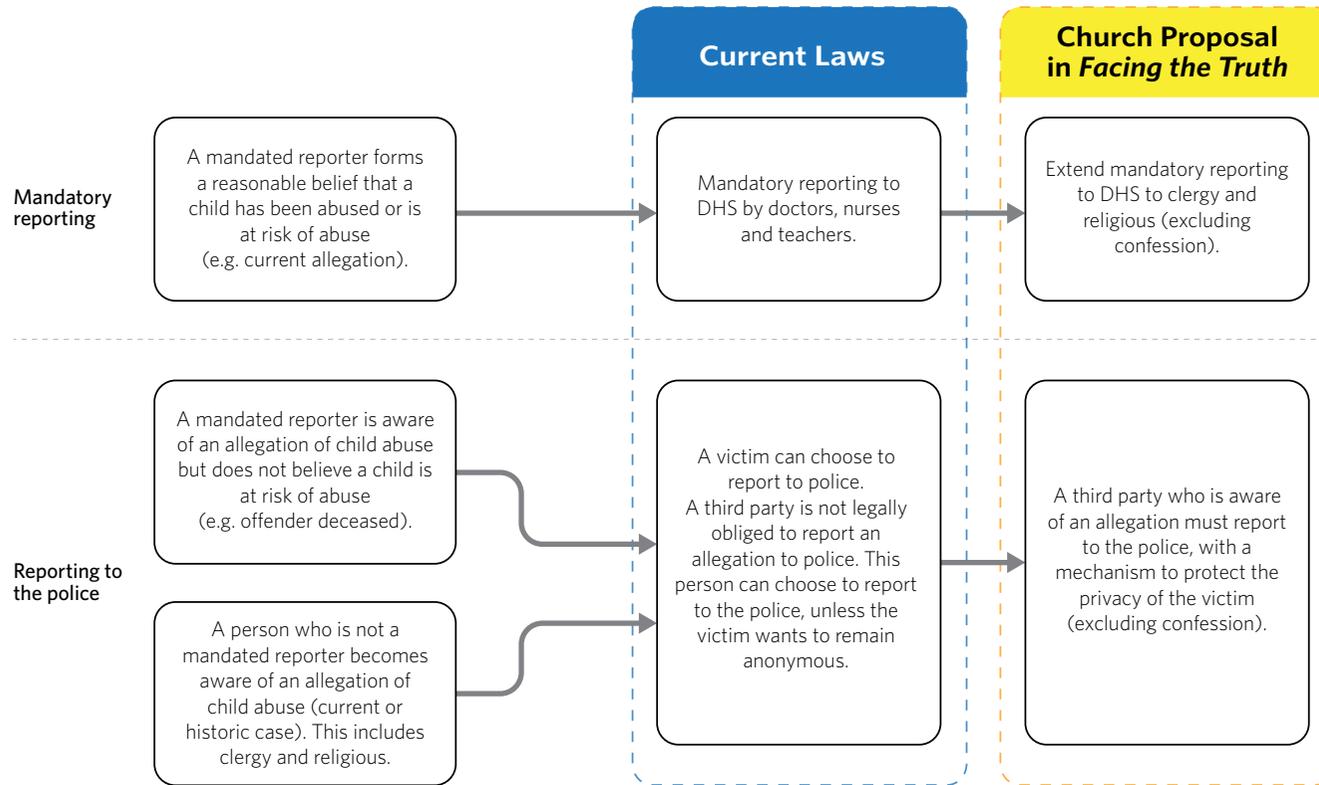


Facing the Truth

Learning from the Past
How the Catholic Church in Victoria has Responded to Child Abuse

Fact Sheet 4 Two major recommendations in *Facing the Truth*



WHEN A CHILD IS AT RISK

Current laws

Under current laws, mandatory reporting to Department of Human Services (DHS) applies when a mandated reporter forms a reasonable belief that a child is at risk, for example because a complaint is made of recent child abuse. Doctors, nurses and teachers are currently mandated to report.

Church proposal

The Church proposes that mandatory reporting be extended to clergy and religious, so that they are required to report to DHS. The reporting obligation applies regardless of the identity of the accused. It includes circumstances where the accused is another member of the clergy or religious.

WHEN THE COMPLAINT DOES NOT POSE A CURRENT RISK TO CHILDREN

Current laws

Where a child is not at risk, which is the case in most complaints to the police by an adult victim, there is no obligation under current laws to report crimes to police or DHS. The law recognises the right of adults to decide whether to report allegations.

Church proposal

The Church proposes that any third party who becomes aware of allegations of criminal abuse must report the allegations to the police, even when adult victims want their privacy protected and do not want to report their complaint to police. A mechanism is required to protect the privacy of the victim.

For more information and support

www.facingthetruth.org.au

The Melbourne Response

Ph: (03) 9225 7979

www.cam.org.au/Melbourne-Response

Towards Healing

Ph: 1800 816 030 or (02) 9669 6218

www.catholic.org.au