

Safeguarding and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) report handling

Standard Operating Procedure

Global

Owner: Head of Risk, Safety and Integrity

Purpose

This document explains how The Fred Hollows Foundation (The Foundation) receives, handles, and responds to safeguarding and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) concerns. It is designed to help anyone who has experienced, witnessed, or become aware of a safeguarding concern understand what to do and what happens after a report is made.

The Foundation is committed to protecting program participants including children and at-risk adults and all people connected to our work from harm. We uphold trauma-informed and survivor-centred approaches throughout every stage of our response.

Our commitment

- prioritise the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of survivors at every stage
- handle all reports confidentially and sensitively
- respond promptly and take immediate protective action where needed
- apply trauma-informed and survivor-centred approaches throughout
- protect people who raise concerns from retaliation
- meet all mandatory reporting and legal obligations

Who Can Report and What to Report

Who can report?

Anyone can raise a safeguarding concern, including:

- program participants, including children and at-risk adults
- community members
- The Foundation's staff and representatives
- local partners
- anyone who interacts with The Foundation's work

What should be reported?

Any allegation, suspicion, concern, disclosure, or incident involving an actual, suspected, or potential breach of the Safeguarding People Policy must be reported. This includes, but is not limited to:

- any form of harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation, or mistreatment of a child or at-risk adult
- sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment
- behaviour that is manipulative, coercive, intimidating, exploitative, or sexually inappropriate towards a child or at-risk adult
- retaliation against a person who raises or participates in a safeguarding matter
- any conduct that places a child or at-risk adult at risk of harm, even where no harm is known to have occurred

When should it be reported?

Immediately, or within **24 hours** of becoming aware of the concern. Always ensure the safety of the person affected first.

How to Make a Report

Reports can be made openly, confidentially, or anonymously. You do not need proof to raise a concern; reports should be made honestly and in good faith.

Anonymous complaints: Anonymous reports are accepted. Please note that anonymity may limit our ability to investigate or respond fully if insufficient information is provided.

Reporting channels:

- Email: speak-up@hollows.org
- Phone, Text or WhatsApp: +61 418 814 609
- Direct approach to the [Global Safeguarding Manager](#) or any FHF staff member

If you are unsure whether something needs to be reported, you can contact the [Global Safeguarding Manager](#) for confidential guidance. This will not be treated as a formal report unless it becomes clear that it should be.

What Happens Next

#	Stage	What this means for you
1	Received & logged	Your report will be recorded in a secure, access-controlled case management system. Access is restricted to the people handling the matter on a strict need-to-know basis. If you have provided contact details, we will acknowledge receipt within a reasonable timeframe.
2	Immediate safety assessment	The Foundation will promptly assess any immediate safety, psychosocial, medical, legal, or protection needs for all parties and put appropriate support and protective measures in place. The Chief Integrity Officer and, where required, the CEO will be informed.
3	Investigation or response	Where further fact-finding is required, The Foundation will initiate a confidential investigation or other appropriate response. This will be trauma-informed, survivor-centred, procedurally fair, and conducted by appropriately qualified personnel. All child safeguarding concerns will be handled in a child-centred manner, with the best interests, safety, and wellbeing of the child as the paramount consideration. Where required by law, regulation, or the seriousness of the concern, a report will be made to the relevant external authority in a confidential and lawful manner.
4	Outcome & response	Those directly involved in or affected by the matter will be informed of the outcome and relevant next steps, subject to confidentiality, privacy, legal, and procedural fairness requirements. Where the matter relates to donor-funded activities, the relevant donor will be notified in line with contractual and reporting obligations.
5	Closed & reviewed	A matter is formally closed once the investigation or assessment is complete and required actions are finalised. The Foundation reviews safeguarding matters to assess fairness, identify lessons learned, and strengthen systems and practices. De-identified information may be provided to the Board to support oversight and accountability.

Possible Outcomes

Following assessment and investigation, The Foundation may:

- find that the Safeguarding People Policy has been breached, which may result in disciplinary action, termination of employment or engagement, or other corrective action
- refer suspected criminal conduct to the relevant authorities
- implement management action, policy review, training, supervision, or other remedial measures
- find that there is insufficient information to substantiate the concern and take no further action

Appropriate follow-up support will continue to be available to those affected by the matter, including counselling, safety planning, workplace adjustments, and other safeguarding measures as required.

Protection and Support

Anyone who raises a safeguarding concern in good faith is entitled to protection from retaliation. The Foundation does not tolerate reprisals, victimisation, intimidation, or any other form of detriment against a person who reports a concern, participates in a process, or supports a safeguarding matter.

Appropriate support will be provided before, during, and after the process, depending on the nature of the concern and the needs of those affected. This may include welfare support, safety planning, counselling, referrals, and workplace adjustments.

More Information

For further information, please refer to the documents below on our [FHF website](#):

- Safeguarding People Policy
- Speak Up Policy
- Whistleblowing Complaint SOP
- Privacy Policy

Questions? Contact speak-up@hollows.org, call +61 418 814 609, or reach out to the [Global Safeguarding Manager](#) directly.

Document Name	Safeguarding and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) report handling Standard Operating Procedure		
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