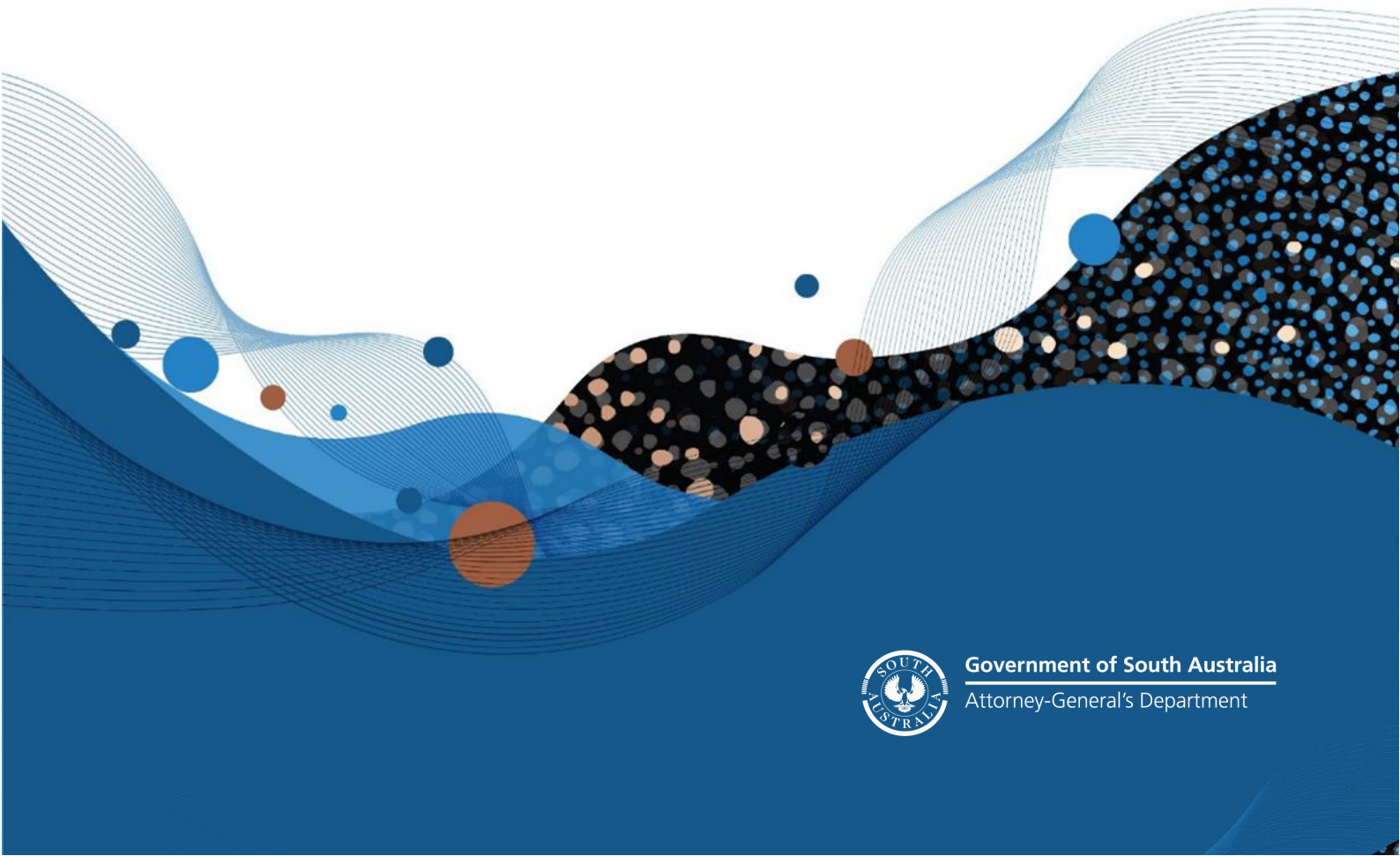


# Child Safe Environments Policy



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## Acknowledgment of Country

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The Attorney-General's Department (AGD) acknowledges and respects Aboriginal peoples as the state's First Peoples and nations, and recognise Aboriginal peoples as Traditional Owners and occupants of lands and waters in South Australia.

We recognise:

- the spiritual, social, cultural, and economic practices of Aboriginal peoples come from their connection to traditional lands and waters
- maintaining cultural and heritage beliefs, languages and lore's are of ongoing importance to Aboriginal peoples today
- Aboriginal peoples have made and continue to make a unique and irreplaceable contribution to South Australia.

Please be aware that this document discusses the risk of harm to children and young people. This content may be distressing or raise issues of concern for some readers.

If someone is at immediate risk of harm, call SAPOL on 000.

Lifeline provides 24/7 crisis support - 131 114.  
Beyond Blue provides support services - 1300 224 636.

# Child Safe Environments Policy

## Introduction

Children and young people have a right to be safe and protected at all times. The commitment to protect and support children and young people should be embedded in every organisation's culture. Every individual within that organisation should be aware of their responsibilities and the shared commitment to keeping children and young people safe and protected.

AGD's policy complies with the:

- *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*
- *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

## Our Commitment to the Safety of Children and Young People

AGD promotes and maintains a culture that does not tolerate any harm or the risk of harm towards children and young people. This policy establishes AGD's expectations of all employees to provide a safe environment for children.

We value and respect children and young people and welcome them regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, social, economic or cultural background. Bullying and harassment is not tolerated.

## Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, and work placement students employed by AGD (unless otherwise exempt), otherwise referred to throughout the policy collectively as employees.

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) is exempt from the application of this policy.

## Communication

This policy and related documents are available on our website and available to employees through the AGD intranet page.

We encourage and respect the views of children and young people and involve them in decision-making as appropriate. We provide clear, age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate explanations to children and young people including



their right to safety, their right to be listened to, and their right to provide feedback or make a complaint if they have a concern, to any worker or ask their parent/guardian to do this on their behalf. We will listen to and act upon any complaints or concerns that a child or young person raises with us.

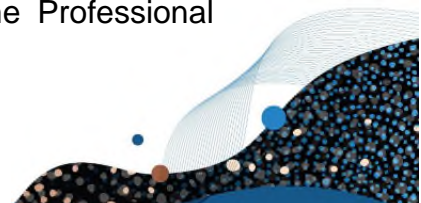
## Employee Conduct

Working with or around children and young people brings additional responsibilities for employees. Employees are responsible for promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by:

- Adhering to this policy at all times and taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people.
- Being professional and adhering to the Public Sector Values and the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector (the “Code of Ethics”) in all interactions with children and young people.
- Treating everyone including those of a different race, ethnicity, culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attribute, and religious beliefs with respect honesty and ensuring equity is upheld.
- Encouraging children and young people to have a voice in consultations on matters that may impact them.
- Ensuring another adult (for example, employee, parent/guardian) is always present or in sight when conducting one-on-one interviews, instruction or other activity with a child or young person.
- Responding quickly and fairly, and appropriately addressing any complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/ guardian.
- Being alert to children and young people who have been harmed, or may be at risk of harm, and reporting this quickly to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78).

Breaches or suspected breaches of these requirements must be reported to your Manager, Business Unit Head, Human Resources ([AGDhumanresources@sa.gov.au](mailto:AGDhumanresources@sa.gov.au)), or an AGD Responsible Officer ([AGD Responsible Officers](#)). Breaches or suspected breaches will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly, fairly and transparently.

Managers or delegates may seek advice from AGD Human Resources about behaviour that may be considered misconduct. A breach of the Professional



Conduct Standards of the Code of Ethics is misconduct under the *Public Sector Act 2009*. Workers may face disciplinary action for proven misconduct.

## Recruitment

In accordance with the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*, AGD is registered with the Department of Human Services (DHS) Screening Unit, and AGD links all WWCCs to this registration.

The AGD Criminal History Check Policy and Procedure outlines the requirements for workers who must hold and maintain a current Working with Children Check (WWCCs) issued by the DHS Screening Unit. AGD will verify the accuracy of all WWCCs in the DHS Screening Unit portal.

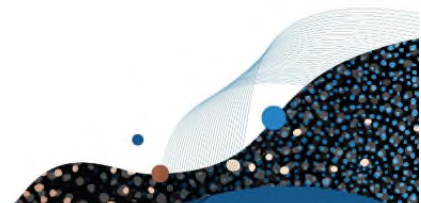
In accordance with the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*, AGD will immediately contact the DHS Screening Unit when AGD becomes aware of new 'assessable information', in relation to an employee in a prescribed position who works with children, or where it is reasonably foreseeable that they will work with children. 'Assessable information' includes the following:

- The person has been charged with or found guilty of an offence or is subject to disciplinary or misconduct proceedings, an intervention or restraining order.
- Is prohibited from working with children in another State or Territory
- Becomes a registrable offender under the *Child Sex Offenders Registration Act 2006*; or
- Makes a disclosure under section 66 of the *Child Sex Offenders Registration Act 2006*.

## Training, supervision and support for employees

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring there are strategies in place to supervise, train and support employees in roles that work with or around children and young people. This includes supporting employees to understand AGD's Child Safe Environments Policy, their mandatory reporting obligations, how to build culturally safe environments and their responsibilities to create a child safe and friendly environment.

For employees that work with or around children, training will ensure employees read and understand the [Mandatory Notification Information Booklet](#).



## Reporting and responding to harm or risk of harm

AGD aims to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm and risk of harm.

Section 17 of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* defines 'harm' to mean physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental emotional abuse or neglect.

All employees (even if not a mandated reporter) have a legal obligation to report child sexual abuse by another employee to SAPOL and to protect a child from sexual abuse by another employee. Failure to meet these obligations may be considered a criminal offence.

Following a report being made to CARL or SAPOL, employees must make an internal report to the Manager or Business Unit Head. AGD will be guided by the Department for Child Protection and/or SAPOL after a report has been made as to whether AGD can conduct an internal investigation.

Where AGD is advised that an employee has been reported to CARL or SAPOL for causing harm or risk of harm to a child or young person, they will be removed from any role that involves working with any child or young person until authorities have concluded their investigation. Other actions may be taken as appropriate.

Following a report to CARL or SAPOL, AGD will continue to support the child or young person and their family as appropriate.

The Manager or Business Unit Head will document all information received regarding the report and ensure that it is stored securely.

## Mandated Reporters

**Mandated reporters** are listed in section 30(3) of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* and includes the following positions:

- prescribed health practitioners (medical practitioners, pharmacists, registered or enrolled nurses, dentists and psychologists).
- police officers
- community corrections officers
- social workers
- ministers of religion, employees of, or volunteers in, an organisation formed for religious or spiritual purposes
- teachers employed as such in a school, pre-school, or kindergarten
- employees of, or volunteers in, an organisation that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, childcare or residential



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services wholly or partly for children or young people, being a person who:

- provides such services directly to children or young people, or
- holds a management position in the organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children or young people
- officer or employee of a prescribed organisation as per section 114 of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* who holds a management position in the organisation, the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of services to children and young people.

Mandated reporters have a legal obligation to notify the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable belief that a child or young person is or may be at risk of harm. If a child is at immediate risk, report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000.

Employees who are not classified as mandated reporters can also report harm or risk of harm to a child or young person. Information about making appropriate reports of harm or risk of harm is available from the South Australian [Department for Child Protection website](#).

### General complaints or feedback

Providing opportunities for complaints and feedback ensures that children and young people as well as their families feel valued and respected. Compliments, complaints, or feedback surrounding AGD's engagement or interaction with any child or young person can be made by telephone on (08) 8207 1555 or by email at [AGDfeedback@sa.gov.au](mailto:AGDfeedback@sa.gov.au) or through the [complaints and disclosures](#) on the AGD website, which provides information regarding processes followed to manage any complaint.

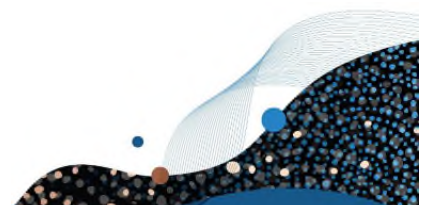
### Risk Management

In line with Principle 8 of the National Principles for Child Safety Organisations, risk management strategies help to add clarity to potential risks in environments where children and young people are present. Below are potential risks and actions intended to minimise identified risks.



**Risk Management Strategies for AGD**

Identified risk	Actions to minimise risk
Organisational culture is not focussed on having a child and young person safe environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Safe Environments Policy is provided to new and existing employees in roles that work with or around children and young people. This includes to support employees to understand AGD’s child safe policy, their mandatory reporting obligations, how to build culturally safe environments and their responsibilities to create a child safe and friendly environment.</li> </ul>
Workers harm children or young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment processes and referee checks are undertaken to ensure people are suitable before they are employed or volunteer with AGD.</li> <li>• Workers identified in the criminal and other relevant screening procedures have WWCC with ‘not prohibited’ result prior to working with children and young people.</li> <li>• WWCCs renewed every 5 years and status must remain as not prohibited.</li> <li>• AGD’s Child Safe Environments Policy and complaints and feedback processes are made available online.</li> </ul>
Online communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyber security and awareness, and social media guidelines are in place and provided to all employees.</li> <li>• Employees must not communicate with children or young people via social media otherwise than in accordance with approved social media guidelines and as relevant to their employment.</li> <li>• Strategic Communications authorise/ manage and review social media platforms of AGD.</li> </ul>
Privacy and confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documents containing confidential information will be stored and disposed of in accordance with the Records Disposal and Offsite Storage Policy.</li> </ul>



## Related policies and procedures

- Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Management Policy
- Criminal History Check Policy and Procedure
- Employee Grievance Resolution Guideline
- Information Classification Policy
- Information Sharing Guidelines Procedure
- HR Policy & Procedure - Induction for Employees
- Personal Information Policy
- Professional and Ethical Conduct Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Procedure
- Records Disposal and Offsite Storage Policy
- Recruitment, Transfer and Separations Guideline
- Risk Management Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Work Health and Safety and Injury Management Policy

## Policy Review

At a minimum, AGD will review this policy and the related procedures every 5 years as required by the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*.

AGD will lodge a new Child Safe Environments Compliance Statement with the Department of Human Services each time this policy is updated.

Date approved	Approved by	Date for review	Version
30/09/ 2025	Chief Executive	30/09/2030	1.0





**Government of South Australia**  
Attorney-General's Department