

SOUTH AFRICAN SCOUT ASSOCIATION



Child Protection Policy

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1. Mission

It is the policy of the South African Scout Association to safeguard the welfare of all members by protecting them from physical, sexual, verbal or emotional harm, or the neglect that allows such harm to occur.

Accordingly, the South African Scout Association is committed to:

- recognising the culture, gender and religious diversity of South Africa's youth;
- taking into account in all its considerations and activities the interests and well-being of young people;
- respecting the rights, wishes and feelings of the young people with whom it is working;
- taking all reasonable practical steps to protect them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse; and
- protecting the welfare of young people and their protection within a relationship of trust,

in accordance with and within the principles of South African law and the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2. Aims

The aims of the Child Protection Policy are to:

- Provide clear guidelines to prevent harm;
- Provide clear guidelines to follow in the event of abuse;
- Ensure that this policy is accessible and can realistically be implemented.

3. Framework

Our primary aim is to ensure that our young members are protected from harm.

The South African Scout Association also helps its adult members to protect the young people in their care.

Scouting operates within a social context: we are part of society. Dealing with suspected abuse-involving members will involve other agencies. This will include the Child Protection Unit of the South African Police Services:

The Child Care Amendment Act 96 of 1996.

The Act requires that any child abuse or reasonable suspicion of child abuse must be reported. Failure to do so, in terms of the Act, will lead to prosecution of the person failing to report.

The Child Protection Unit may then involve other agencies, such as social services and other child protection organisations such as Childline.

The South African Scout Association will not conduct investigations, but will co-operate with the proper authorities. The Association will provide necessary support to members and the community.

The section entitled *Procedures* sets out the procedures to be followed in the event of abuse being reported.

The Child Protection Policy applies throughout Scouting including events such as meetings, camps, outings, training courses, SANJAMB, and the National Senior Scout Adventure. It also applies to South African Scouts travelling internationally, and to international Scouts visiting South Africa

4. The Rights of the Child

- I have the right not to be hurt.
- I have the right to be protected from physical, sexual and emotional harm.
- I have the right to speak and to be taken seriously, and I have the responsibility to tell the truth
- I have the right to be treated equally no matter my race, gender, language or religion, and I have the responsibility to treat others equally.
- I have the right to privacy, and the responsibility to respect the privacy of others.
- I have the right to be protected from cigarettes, alcohol and drugs, and I should not use substances that will harm me.
- I have the right to proper care and the responsibility to be the best person that I can be.

5. Responsibilities of adults within the Child Protection Policy

All adults within Scouting are responsible for the operation of the Association's Child Protection Policy. It is the responsibility of adults to ensure that:

- Their behaviour is appropriate at all times;
- They observe the rules established for the safety and security of young people;
- They follow the procedures following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse;
- They recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed; and
- In every respect, the relationships they form with the young people under their care are appropriate.

6. What constitutes abuse

Physical abuse

Any physical hurt or injury, which is inflicted deliberately, or is the result of deliberate neglect.

Emotional abuse

The negative effect on the emotional development of the child caused by emotional ill treatment

Verbal abuse

Excessive shouting or swearing at or in front of children, threats, teasing, insults or racial taunts.

Sexual abuse

Involving or exposing a child to any sexual activity or pornographic material.

7. Procedures**Recruitment**

All adults wishing to become members must undergo appropriate screening by completing in full the application form for adult membership.

This form should include disclosure of any criminal conviction or allegation of offences relating to the childcare act or involving children in South Africa or another country.

All appointments should be subject to a probationary period.

Training – adults

Child protection should be included in all adult leader-training courses.

Child protection material should be provided to all adult leaders in the Association.

Child protection training should be provided to leaders who have already completed training as adult leaders.

Training – Cubs and Scouts

Appropriate child protection training should be provided as part of the Cub and Scout advancement programme and in Patrol Leader training including PLTU.

Incident procedure

All allegations or suspicions of abuse, no matter how insignificant they might seem to be or when they occur, must be referred to the Area Commissioner or Area Manager immediately. Nothing must be withheld or filtered. At all times the young person's welfare should be paramount.

Swift reporting will enable the correct authorities to give advice and take appropriate action.

The Area Commissioner / Area Manager must follow the procedure overleaf. These procedures must be followed to fulfil our legal as well as our moral responsibilities.

Roles of key individuals

Person child discloses to:

- listen sympathetically
- write report, using the child's own words as far as possible
- contact Area Commissioner / Area Manager immediately
- must not investigate – must refer.

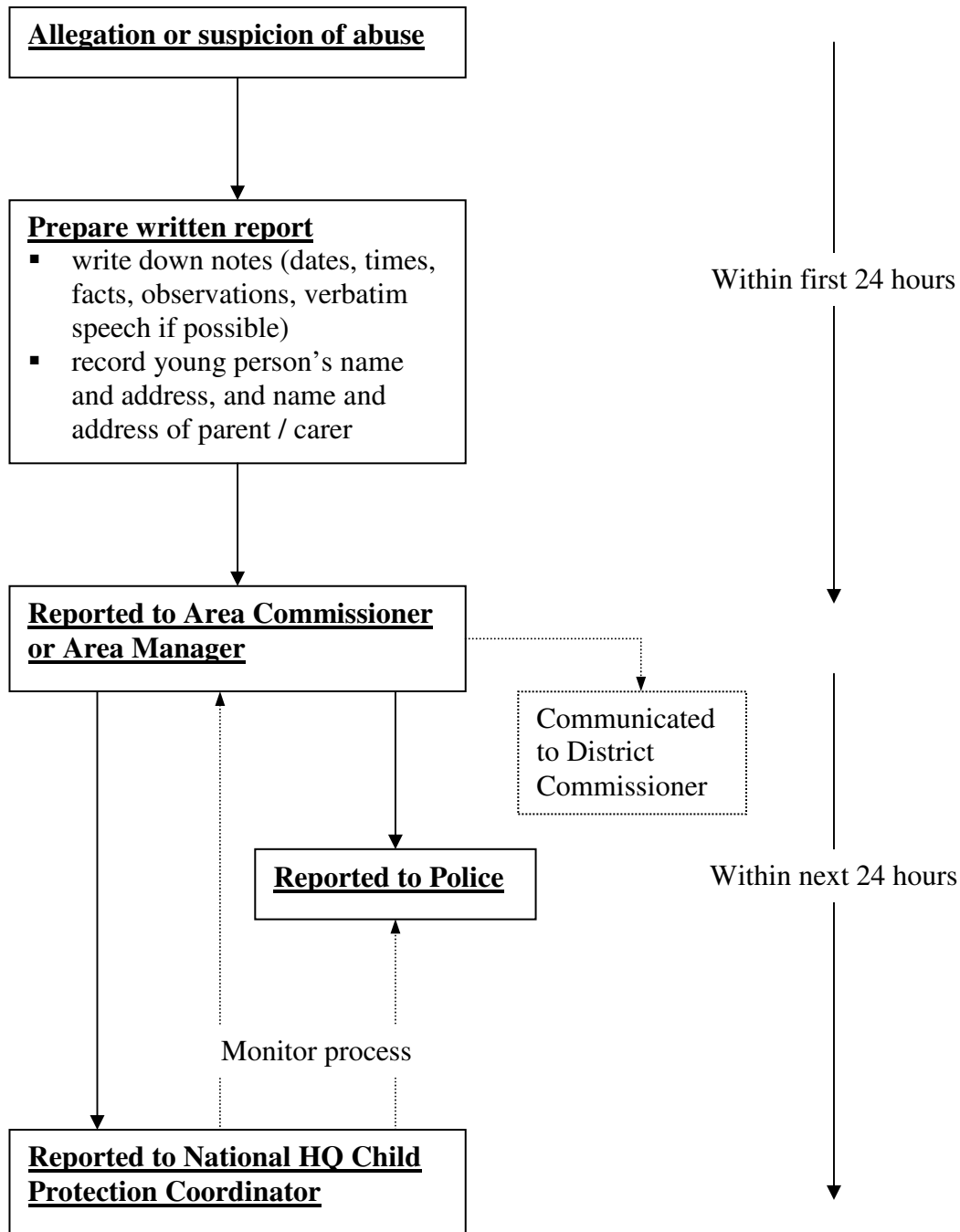
Area Commissioner / Area Manager

- inform National Headquarters
- the Area Commissioner or Area Manager will discuss the allegations/ report with the person reporting the alleged abuse
- suspension is at the discretion of the Area Commissioner. Suspension is appropriate for allegations of offences denoted as "class C" in the Code of Conduct for Volunteer Leaders.
- if reasonable grounds exist of suspected child abuse, the allegation must be reported to the appropriate external authorities

National Child Protection Co-ordinator

- monitor process and advise the Area Commissioner/ Area Manager
- keep records
- contact with media (if required)
- deal with education department in cases involving in-school Scouting

Procedure following allegation or suspicion of child abuse



Addendum:
Items relating to child protection to be included in the
Staff and Adult Leaders code of conduct

Child protection offences are governed by the Law. Investigation of criminal matters is done by the police. In cases of alleged or suspected child abuse the South African Scout Association's internal disciplinary procedure does not constitute the investigation.

Internal procedures

In cases of alleged or suspected child abuse the procedures laid down in the Volunteer's Code of Conduct and Policy, Organisation and Rules will be followed. (Suspension and Cancellation of Warrants and Disciplinary Procedures.) The Area Commissioner has the discretion to distinguish between an allegation of abuse warranting police investigations and those dealt with internally. The Area Commissioner also has the responsibility to respond to community concerns.

External procedures

The South African Police Services are governed by law to:

- Receive and investigate complaints
- Obtain sworn statements
- Arrest the alleged offenders

Criminal offences and allegations

Any criminal allegation relating to child abuse that is proven will result in dismissal.

The Association reserves the right to dismiss if an allegation is made even if it is not proven.

The following will result in criminal proceedings and dismissal and are regarded as "Class C" offences.

Physical abuse:

Beating

Scalding

Hitting with an object

Strangulation

Locking in a small place

Burning

Kicking

Sticking with pins

Suffocation

Murder

Burning with cigarettes or hot object

Sexual abuse of a child

An adult showing his / her genitals

An adult touching the child's genitals

An adult having a child touch his / her genitals

Oral genital contact

Forced masturbation

Digital penetration

Intercourse

The use of a child in the production of pornographic material

Forcing a child to view pornographic material and Voyeurism

Non-criminal offences

These offences that are not classified as abuse, which will result in disciplinary action. These may be seen as "precursors to abuse" and can be dealt with by the internal procedures of the Association.

Offences class C (dismissal)

Possession of pornography at a Scout event

Allowing / encouraging nudity e.g. nude swimming

Allowing mixed male and female nudity

Racial verbal abuse

Sexual intercourse or other sexual relations with a minor Scout over the age of consent

Being under the influence of a banned substance or alcohol at a Scout event

Offences class B (final written Warning)

Discussion of sexual matters with other adults where children may hear

Scouter and another adult seen / heard engaging in sexual activity at a Scout event

Failing to act after discovering Scouts who have acquired pornography

Failing to act after discovering Scouts who have acquired alcohol

Failing to act after discovering Scouts who have acquired illegal substances

Forcing a child to do things that go against their religion, e.g. forcing a child to eat something forbidden by their religion or denying a child reasonable opportunities for religious observance

Failing to stop peer initiation practices if discovered

Sharing a tent with a young person or young people

Bullying or allowing bullying to continue

Threatening, humiliating or belittling a child

Offences Class A (Written Warning)

Swearing in front of children

Excessive shouting constituting verbal abuse

Enforcing physical forfeits / punishments such as press ups that are beyond the physical ability of the individual

Depriving a child of sleep

Not providing appropriate toilet facilities resulting in compromising the privacy of a mixed group

Not providing single sex changing areas for young people

Inconsistent discipline

Failing to provide separate sleeping areas for boys and girls on a camp

Failing to provide separate sleeping areas for adults and children on a camp

Failing to act after discovering Scouts who have acquired cigarettes

Arranging / carrying out an activity that involves one leader and one child

Failing to maintain the appropriate ratio of leaders to children at an event

Yellow Card:

Guidelines to adults to prevent opportunities for abuse or allegations of abuse.

Green Card:

The rights and responsibilities of the child.