

## **STANDARD 3**

### **- Responding to concerns or allegations**

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#### **What is the standard?**

Church entities have clear procedures and guidance regarding suspicions, concerns or allegations that may arise regarding a child or vulnerable adult's safety or welfare to ensure that there is a prompt response to meet legal requirements and to follow best practice. They also ensure fair processes for investigating and managing those matters compassionately. Complainants and their families are offered appropriate support, advice and pastoral care. Respondents are provided with support and monitoring.

#### **Indicators that ensure the standard is being met**

The Church entity:

- follows written safeguarding procedures and refers all claims of abuse or harm involving members of the clergy or religious orders to the National Office for Professional Standards;
- follows written procedures regarding management of other types of complaints;
- offers appropriate pastoral care to complainants, recognising their unique needs;
- has access to appropriately trained personnel to respond to the complainant and respondent in a manner that is considerate of needs;
- seeks specialist advice from the statutory child protection services;
- works with Māori to ensure provision of appropriate pastoral care and support; and
- follows written confidentiality practices including storage of information in line with legislation and guidance.

#### **Ways of providing evidence to support the implementation of this standard**

Evidence of response and care management for both the complainant and respondent may include having and using effective procedures and practice to:

- report all allegations of abuse;
- when abuse occurs, encourage complainants to report abuse to New Zealand Police and/or Oranga Tamariki;
- respond appropriately and compassionately to all allegations of abuse or harm and to all other complaints or concerns;
- undertake a risk assessment to produce an interim management plan;
- provide a pastoral response to complainants and others affected;
- support parishes and others affected when a priest takes leave from ministry;
- support the respondent to return to ministry when investigations find no case to answer; and
- support and manage the respondent following the conclusion of any investigation.