



HOW TO REPORT A CHILD OR ELDERLY PERSON IN DANGER

A comprehensive guide on the moral and legal duty to report abuse, neglect, and violence.

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WHAT EVERY SOUTH AFRICAN SHOULD KNOW

When a child or elderly person is in danger, it is not only a moral duty to act, it is also a legal responsibility.

In South Africa, abuse, neglect and violence remain a heartbreaking reality. Yet the correct reporting process can protect a vulnerable person and even save a life.

Understanding Your Moral & Legal Duty

The Children's Act 38 of 2005 requires mandatory reporting of child abuse or neglect by certain professionals and encourages all citizens to report.

The Older Persons Act 13 of 2006 protects elderly individuals from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, placing responsibility on communities to act.

Reporting Responsibilities

Any person who has a reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect should report it.

The law places a specific responsibility on professionals such as teachers, healthcare workers, social workers, police officers and caregivers to report such cases.

Any person with reasonable suspicion should report. You do not need proof, suspicion alone is enough to take action.

WHO MUST REPORT





When a case is reported, complete and accurate information helps professionals act quickly and effectively.

If possible, try to provide, even if all details are not available, any information remains valuable.

WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD BE REPORTED

- Name and Surname of the Child or Elderly Person
- Date of Birth or ID Number
- Telephone Numbers (if available)
- Physical Address of Person
- Details of Parent or Caregiver
- Examples of Recent Incidents
- How Often the Situation Occurs
- Any Observed Patterns of Concern

WHAT MUST BE REPORTED

The following situations must always be taken seriously and reported, even if there is any suspicion of them.



- Physical, Sexual Or Emotional Abuse
- Neglect Or Lack Of Supervision
- Unsafe Or Unhealthy Home Conditions
- Self-Neglect Among The Elderly
- Evidence Of Violence Or Substance Abuse In The Home

WHERE CAN IT BE REPORTED

Multiple Channels Available for Reporting

You may report without providing your identity. Your safety and privacy are protected.



For Children:

- Registered child protection organisations (such as CMR, Child Welfare, SAVF, Rata or the Department of Social Development)
- SAPS
- Directly at court

For Elderly:

- Registered elder-care organisations (such as the Council for the Aged or the Department of Social Development)
- SAPS
- Directly at court

Other Resources:

- Solidariteit Helpende Hand
- Childline (116)
- GBV Command Centre (0800 428 428)



WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A REPORT?

After a report is made, a social worker will first conduct a risk assessment, followed by a thorough investigation.

This process may include conversations with involved parties, home visits and further assessments. The aim is to determine whether the person needs protection and care.

Intervention usually begins with family support and prevention. However, if there is a serious risk, further steps may be taken, including legal processes to protect the person. Every case is handled with a focus on the safety and wellbeing of the vulnerable individual.

DO NOT STOP YOUR VOICE MATTERS

If you report a case and it feels as though nothing is happening immediately, do not lose heart. Keep reporting and follow up.

In some cases, investigations take time, but every report builds a record that can eventually help protect someone.



**YOUR VOICE MAY BE THE ONE THAT
BREAKS THE CYCLE OF ABUSE**



Such matters must also be reported to the relevant institutions.

All reports will be handled with confidentiality, respect, and seriousness.

Any form of child or elderly abuse or suspected abuse that a chaplain may encounter while carrying out his or her duties, will not be tolerated and must be reported immediately to Director (Past) Sanet Warren and or Director Billy Coetzee, so that the necessary support, guidance, and action can be taken.

SAFREC REPORTING

THANK YOU FOR CARING

—
Together We Protect



Let us work together within SAFReC to protect every child and elderly person in danger, and create communities where everyone feels safe, respected, accepted, and valued.



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