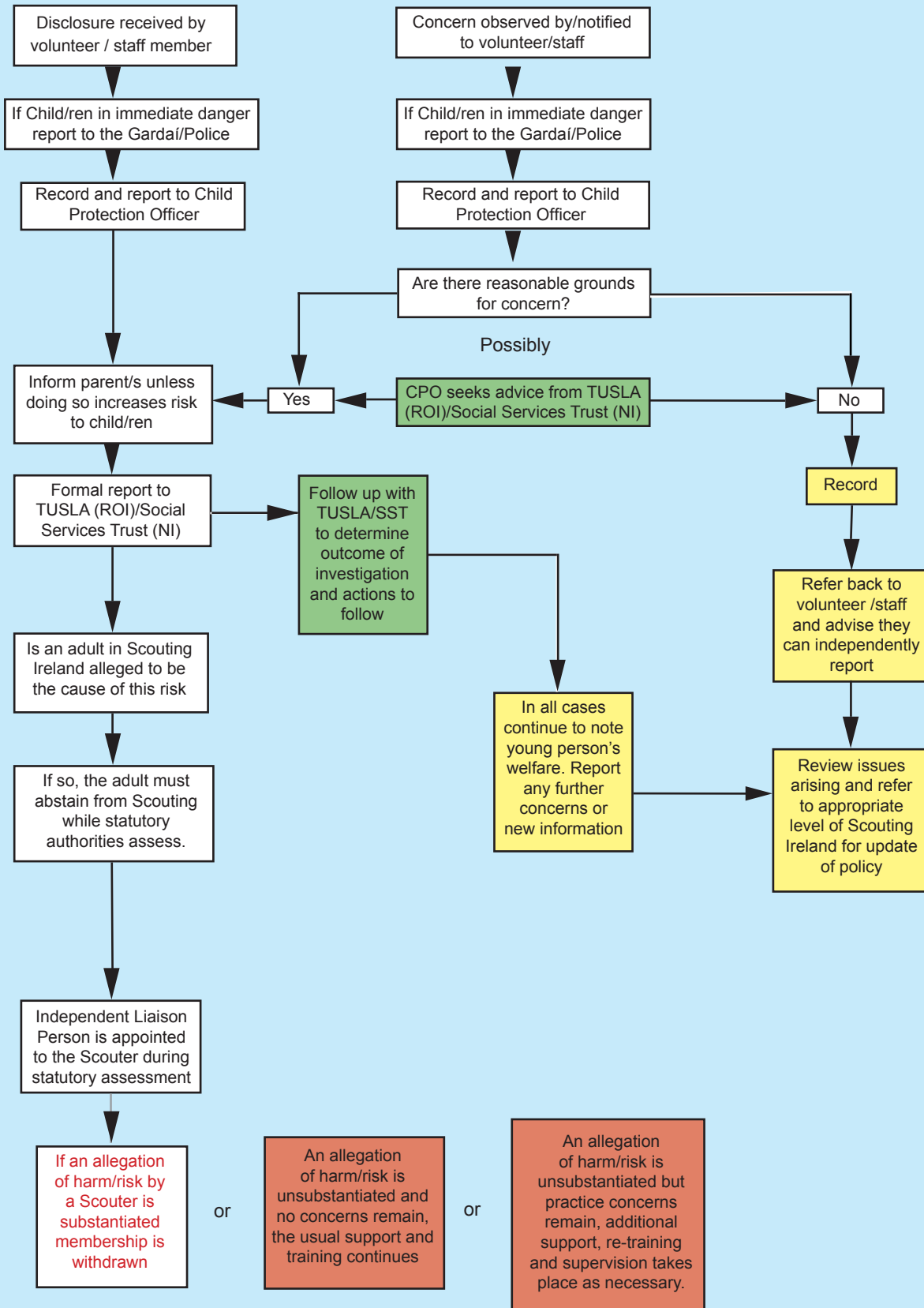


Reporting Procedure Overview



Reporting Procedures (Where any child protection concern is raised)

SID 40/05

Anyone, youth member, adult member or parent/guardian can and must be facilitated in raising a child protection concern with the Scouting Ireland National Office.

The onus is on everyone involved with Scouting Ireland to raise any child abuse concern or suspicion that they have to the Child Protection Officer (CPO). This may be done verbally or in writing. A completed Scouting Ireland internal reporting form should follow (this form is reproduced at the end of this Appendix). Discussing any such concerns with the CPO is not regarded as making an accusation against another person.

Any member of Scouting Ireland, who receives or knows of an allegation of child abuse in relation to a youth member, must report this to the Child Protection Officer (CPO) without delay. The CPO must inform the Child Protection Management Team (CPMT) of the reported concerns.

Any allegation, suspicion, or concern of child abuse that gives rise to reasonable grounds for concern will be reported to the TUSLA Child and Family Agency or Social Services Trust.

If a member fears that a young person might be in immediate danger they must directly contact An Garda Síochána or the PSNI as a matter of urgency, following this, report to the CPO. Out of Hours Numbers - 01 5547840 (ROI) 028 95680080 (NI)

The Child Protection Management Team (CPMT) is comprised of the CPO, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), a nominee of the National Team for Policy Implementation and Coordination, Chief Commissioner - Adult Resources (CC-AR), and Chief Commissioner - Youth Programme (CC-YP) or their designated nominees in the event of their absence. The Chief Commissioner - Adult Resources is the Chairperson of the Child Protection Management Team.

The Child Protection Management Team has responsibility to manage Child Protection concerns so as to:

- Ensure that no child is left at unnecessary risk.
- Seek advice from the TUSLA Child and Family Agency or Social Services Trust.
- Liaise, where deemed necessary, with the appropriate volunteer at local level.
- Keep a factual record.

They may consult the TUSLA Child and Family Agency or Social Services Trust on whether a formal report to them is necessary and on the appropriate actions to take.

If, following consultation with the TUSLA Child and Family Agency or Social Services Trust, a formal report is not required, the CPO on behalf of the CPMT must inform the person who first raised the concern of the decision not to make a formal report and the reason(s) supporting this decision. The person must also be advised that if they wish they can pursue their concerns with the TUSLA Child and Family Agency or Social Services Trust.

If a formal report to the TUSLA Child and Family Agency or Social Services Trust is required ...

The CPO will be responsible for ensuring that a Standard Reporting Form for the relevant statutory agency is completed and submitted without delay. The CPMT will designate the most appropriate person to inform the parents of the child, unless doing so might place the child at greater risk. The manner in which this is done will be based on the advice of the statutory agency. Responses will be noted and included in the formal report.

The designated individual should also be responsible for keeping the parents/guardians updated on the progress of the procedure in Scouting Ireland.

The onus is on everyone involved with Scouting Ireland to report child protection concerns or suspicions relating to any adult involved in Scouting activities to the Child Protection Officer (CPO). This may be done verbally or in writing. A completed Internal Reporting Form (reproduced at the end of this Appendix) should follow.

Discussing any such concerns with the CPO is not regarded as making an accusation against another person.

If a concern is raised or an allegation/disclosure of child abuse is made against any member of Scouting Ireland who is over 18 years of age they will be expected to abstain, with a presumption of innocence, from participation in all Scouting activities.

Any member of Scouting Ireland, who receives or knows of an allegation of child abuse against an adult member/employee, should report this to the Child Protection Officer (CPO) without delay. The CPO will inform the Child Protection Management Team (CPMT) of allegations or concerns against an adult member / employee.

Where an allegation is made or a concern is raised against an adult member or employee*

Any allegation, suspicion, or concern of child abuse against an adult member /employee that gives rise to reasonable grounds for concern will be reported to TUSLA Child and Family Agency or Social Services Trust. (NI)

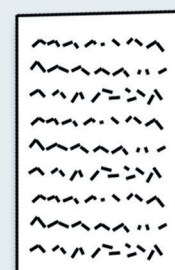
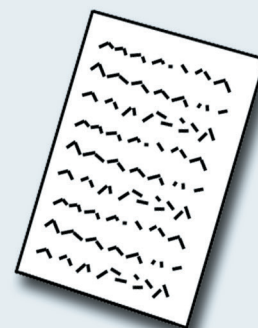
If a member fears that a young person might be in immediate danger they should directly contact An Garda Síochána or the PSNI as a matter of urgency, following this, report to the CPO.

* Where a child protection concern relates to an employee it should be reported to the National Secretary. In such an instance the National Secretary undertakes the role of the CPO as outlined in this reporting procedure.

Where an allegation is made or a concern is raised in relation to Peer Abuse.

Peer abuse is where both the alleged perpetrator and victim of the abuse are children (i.e. under 18yrs). In a situation where child abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, the child protection procedures should be adhered to for both the victim and the alleged abuser; that is, it should be considered a child care and protection issue for both children (Children First 2011: National Guidance for the Welfare and Protection of Children).

If an allegation, suspicion, or concern of peer abuse is made against a youth member who is a child that gives rise to reasonable grounds for concern, this should be reported to the Child Protection Officer. The matter will be referred to the TUSLA Child and Family Agency/ Social Services Trust(NI), who will deal with it as a child care and protection issue for both children.



What to do if an allegation of abuse is made against you:

Adults in Scouting may feel vulnerable to accusations of abuse. If an allegation is made, the adult should:

- Stay calm.
- Co-operate with the investigation.
- Abstain from Scouting activities, under the presumption of innocence, while the allegation is being investigated. (see below)
- Seek advice from, where appropriate, your Group Leader, Commissioner, National Office or a professional organisation, family or friends.
- Keep clear records of any meetings attended, discussions or correspondence about the allegations.
- Not discuss the allegation with the person who has made the allegation.

Where an allegation is made against an adult member (where the child is a member of Scouting Ireland) National Office will provide details to the adult on accessing Scouting Ireland's Group Legal Protection Insurance.

Information on appropriate counselling services should be made available from National Office if requested by either or both parties.

Recommendations for improvement in practices and procedures

Whether a formal report to the statutory authority is made or not the Chief Commissioner - Adult Resources may make recommendations to the appropriate level of the Association to address any issues identified in the report. Such recommendations could address:

- Shortcomings in training.
- Interpretations of Policies and Procedures.
- Practices not in line with the Code of Good Practice.
- Updating of the Code of Good Practice.
- Suitability of the adult in a leadership role.

What is understood by "Abstaining from Scouting Activities"?

If an allegation of abuse is made against you, it is essential that you agree to abstain from all Scouting Activities. This allows space for all parties to reflect while facts are established, and while any investigations by the authorities take place.

Scouting Ireland looks at 'Scouting Activities' under three headings;

- Access** You must not have access to youth members of any programme section. The protection of children is our policy and is law. Please understand that Scouting Ireland are obliged follow the same procedures, even if you feel that allegations against you are unfounded.
- Authority** You must not pursue any appointment or position, or any role with authority or apparent authority at any level of Scouting Ireland. This includes membership of Group Council, quartermaster, den maintenance, fund-raising or similar roles. Young members are encouraged to respect all adult members. They are entitled to expect that adults against whom allegations have been made be not in a position to make decisions on their behalf.
- Association** You should refrain from 'dropping by' during or after scouting activities. Young people trust their Scouters and associate such trust with people they see associating with their Scouters. In addition, those who have made allegations are entitled to expect equal treatment from Scouting Ireland without any hint of bias.

Those with families, partners or close friends in scouting should discuss their particular difficulties with their Designated Liaison Officer. Scouting Ireland encourages all adult members to have a social circle that is wider than Scouting Ireland.

There is no doubt that this will be a difficult time for you. Your Designated Liaison Person will help you to maintain contact with Scouting Ireland and help you understand what is happening.

Scouting Ireland accepts the 'paramountcy principle' i.e. that the best interests of the child are the primary concern. We also understand that the term 'child protection' includes a duty to support our adult members.