

New mandatory reporting laws for out-of-home care and youth justice workers

Changing the *Children and Young People Act 2008* to achieve better consistency in mandatory reporting laws.

The ACT Government is reforming child, youth and family services to ensure we strengthen families and keep children and young people safe and connected. Legislative change is a foundational element of this plan for reform. Proposed changes to the *Children and Young People Act 2008* will deliver significant, tangible, positive change for children, young people, families, carers and workers who intersect with the child protection system.

Who is this factsheet for?

This factsheet is for out-of-home care workers and youth justice workers. When it mentions out-of-home care workers, it **does not** mean kinship and foster carers.

How will I be affected?

The proposed changes to the *Children and Young People Act 2008* mean if you're employed as an out-of-home care worker or a youth justice worker, you'll be mandated to report children and young people who are at risk of significant harm due to:

- > physical abuse
- > sexual abuse
- > emotional abuse
- > exposure to domestic violence
- > neglect.

There are other changes proposed to mandatory reporting. You can read about these in our [factsheet about changes to mandatory reporting](#).

How is this different?

Most out-of-home care and youth justice workers are already mandated reporters through work conditions, for example by being an ACT Public Servant. These workforces are also guided by work policies that require these workers to report suspected child abuse, so this won't be a significant change for this workforce.

The change in legislation is to make sure all workers are consistently covered under the law to ensure stringent, consistent reporting to better protect children and young people.

Why is the ACT Government making this change?

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommended Australia should have national consistency in reporter groups. It said out-of-home care workers (but **not** kinship and foster carers) and youth justice workers should be included as mandated reporters.

The ACT Government doesn't want varying levels of safety and protection for children and young people. Including you as a mandated reporter acknowledges the important role you play in looking after the safety of this particularly vulnerable group.

Can I find out more?

Yes! The ACT Government has published an information paper about the proposed changes to the *Children and Young People Act 2008*. You can find it on the ACT Government's YourSay Conversations website at [Changing the Children and Young People Act 2008](#).

Can I tell you what I think?

Yes! After you've read the information paper, you can share your feedback through a submission. You can send us your submission through YourSay at [Changing the Children and Young People Act 2008 – Submissions](#). Submissions close on 14 November 2023.