

MAKING A REPORT TO DOCS

Children & Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

Reporting to DoCS Helpline by telephone on 13 36 27 (or 13 DOCS)

1. In the first instance you must attempt to report concerns about risk of harm by telephone directly to a caseworker at the DoCS Helpline. Before you make this phone call, ensure that you have all the relevant information in front of you, including the client health record.
2. Complete the *Recording form for the report of suspected risk of harm related to abuse or neglect of a child or young person* and place it in the client Health record.
3. Clearly document in the Client Health record that the report was made by phone. In this case **do not fax** a copy of the report to the Helpline.
 - If you have concerns for the **immediate safety** of a child or young person and you are unable to get through to the DoCS Helpline immediately, you must access the emergency paging system for contacting the DoCS Helpline (See box at bottom). In this case, also contact the Police.
 - Where there are no concerns for the **immediate safety** of the child or young person, and you are unable to get through to speak directly to a DoCS Helpline case worker within 10 minutes, you must fax the report to the DoCS Helpline (See box below).

Faxing the report to the DoCS Helpline

1. Complete the *Recording form for the report of suspected risk of harm related to abuse or neglect of a child or young person* and clearly outline the identified concerns.
2. When using medical terminology, explain what you mean as this will assist DoCS Helpline staff to understand the issues.
3. Ensure that your name and contact phone number is clearly printed in case the Helpline needs to contact you to clarify any information. **You must also sign the form.**
4. Fax the form to the Helpline on **02-9633 7666**. Ensure you use a fax that is not accessible to the public and that you provide a secure fax number to the Helpline for any DoCS feedback.
5. Place the form in the client Health record and clearly document that the report was faxed.

Using the Emergency DoCS Paging System

The emergency paging system is only to be used when there are **concerns for the immediate safety** of a child or young person. Designated Senior Health Staff may only use the paging system. These include General Managers, Directors of Community & Allied Health, Directors of Nursing, Senior Nurse Managers, Directors of Emergency, Medical Superintendents, Staff Specialist Paediatricians and Social Work Service Managers amongst others.

1. Contact one of the designated 'Senior Health Staff' (See *SWSAHS Child Protection Policy and Protocols*) and provide details concerning the circumstances of the emergency. The senior staff will assess the urgency of the case and decide whether to access the Emergency Paging System to contact DoCS.
2. Complete the *Recording form for the report of suspected risk of harm related to abuse or neglect of a child or young person*.
3. Place the form in the client Health record and clearly document that the report was made via the Emergency DoCS Paging System.

There may be additional requirements relating to your specific unit. Check with your unit Manager. Further information can also be obtained from: SWSAHS Child Protection Policy and Protocols (2004); NSW Health Circular 2003/16; SWSAHS Child Protection Policy and Procedure: Emergency Paging System for contacting the Department of Community Services Helpline, June 2001