

Scouts Victoria

What can I expect in an investigation?

Scouts Victoria is a child safe organisation with zero-tolerance for any harm, abuse or neglect. We value the diversity of our members, including gender, sexuality, race, religion and ability.

Reports can come into Scouts Victoria in a variety of ways, including emails via childsafes@scoutsvictoria.com.au and phone calls via 1800 870 772.

Once the report is made, the Scouts Victoria team triages the report into a number of different categories. Some of the broad categories are; Scouting adult to youth, Non-Scouting adult to youth, or youth to youth. Some categories require us to report to external authorities such as Victoria Police, Department of Family, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) or Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP).

It's important to note that in many cases, Scouts Victoria is not permitted to share that we have made an external report. This can be challenging, as it can feel like nothing is happening. Once the external agencies have given us the green light, Scouts Victoria will start our own investigation. This is a requirement, particularly in adult to youth cases.

Scouts Victoria may choose to suspend the alleged perpetrator. This is not a finding of guilt, but is done to protect all parties involved and to ensure that a fair process can be conducted.

There are a number of teams at Scouts Victoria who might take the lead on our internal investigation; our People & Culture team, our Adult Grievances team or our Child Safety team. Each of these teams contain people who are experienced in their type of work.

Generally, there will be a lead investigator and a support manager. The support manager is there to support you, and you should feel free to ask them any questions that you have. They can also assist you in getting extra support if needed.

Our internal investigation will usually consist of three parts. The investigation, where we aim to hear from all parties involved, the recommendations and the communication. Confidentiality is important to us, and we aim to only share with those who need to know for well-being reasons. This may include the Group Leader, District Commissioner and Region Commissioner.

During any interviews, you are welcome to have a support person with you. A support person can provide emotional and moral support to you in an interview. They are not able to answer questions or to advocate for you.

While we aim to close cases as fast as possible and we recognise the impact that this has on people, this process can last between 1 – 12 months, depending on the external agencies and our reporting requirements.

We understand that these cases can have a heavy impact on both victims, subject of allegation and all of those around them. If you need professional support for your emotional and mental health, please consider booking an appointment with your general medical practitioner.

APPEALS

If you are unhappy with the outcome of the investigation, you may make an appeal.

Appeals should be made in writing, within 21 days of the outcome being communicated and can be made to Craig Whan, Assistant Chief Commissioner – People & Culture (acc.peopleandculture@scoutsvictoria.com.au).

Sometimes, an appeal will need to be made to Jon McGregor, Executive Manager (exec.manager@scoutsvictoria.com.au).

We aim to respond to your written appeal within 7 days, to outline the next process.

Our Chief Commissioner, Rod Byrnes, is the ultimate decision maker in all appeals.