

Loreto Sisters

Guidance on the Role of the Support Person

The role

The role of the support person is to:

1. Keep the complainant informed of the process of the case.
2. Help the complainant identify and access counselling and support.
3. Record any meetings or contact they have with the complainant, and pass on relevant information to the DLP, as appropriate.
4. Uphold the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

Being attentive to the expressed needs and objectives of the complainant, the support person should:

- Encourage and support the complainant in getting suitable help.
- Be extra mindful of the vulnerability of the complainant during the process.

Clarity about the role

- The support person is not a counsellor for the complainant and should not act in that role.
- The support person should not act as spiritual guide for the complainant.
- The support person does not manage the case file and will not have access to it.
- If the complainant is a child, the support person should liaise with the parents/guardians of the child.

Frequency of meetings

The frequency of contact/meetings should be dictated by the complainant, but the support person needs to initiate contact at least once a year on an ongoing basis, unless the complainant states that they do not want any further contact. This is to ensure that the Church authority continues to make every effort to offer a supportive and pastoral response to complaints.

Storage of records

Information regarding meetings between the support person and the complainant must be stored safely and securely. A record that the meetings have taken place, along with any relevant child safeguarding issues, should be forwarded to the case manager for placing in the third-party information section of the file

Support

Regular meetings between the support person and the DLP should be held to enable the DLP to keep up to date with the needs and requests of the complainant, and to advise the province leader of any requests for support. These meetings should incorporate any requests for supervision, in order to allow the support person to receive feedback on their role. If necessary and appropriate, external support for the support person should be used.

Training

All support persons should attend a local full-day training programme facilitated by trainers registered with the NBSCCCI. The province leader should ensure that support persons are given the opportunity to attend training provided by the NBSCCCI, in accordance with the NBSCCCI Training Strategy

