

What happens when I report a child safety incident?

All CFA members have a moral, ethical, and legal responsibility to report concerns about the safety of a child. The following process occurs when you report a child safety incident:

The Child Safety team receives the child safety report.

A case manager from the Child Safety team will contact you to confirm that your report has been received and is being actioned. The case manager will be your point of contact if you have questions or concerns through the process. CFA Wellbeing Services will be offered to you at this time.

The Child Safety team will do an immediate assessment of the report and take any actions required to reduce the risk of further harm to the child/children.

Depending on the nature of the report, the Child Safety team may be required to report the incident to Victoria Police and/or Child Protection.

The Child Safety team will engage an external, independent investigator specialising in child safety investigation services.

The investigator will assess the information and contact you to organise a time to discuss your report. They may take a formal statement, which you will receive a copy of and be asked to sign. You can have a support person with you for any meetings or interviews.

The investigator will use the information to speak to any witnesses who were there during the incident or who know about the incident.

The investigator will review all the information they've received so far. If there are allegations of misconduct, a letter of allegation will be written and provided to the subject of allegation(s) (SoA). The SoA will then be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations in a formal interview with the investigator.

Once the investigator has gathered all the information and evidence, they will write an investigation report. The report will make a finding on the balance of probabilities whether the allegation(s) can be substantiated or not.

The investigation is considered complete at this stage. If the allegation is substantiated, the case will move to a disciplinary process. In some cases, the investigator might also make recommendations to CFA about other ways to manage the situation. This could include mediation, education, or policy changes.

If at any stage the Child Safety team or the investigator have reason to believe that the matter may involve criminal conduct, the matter will be reported to Victoria Police.