

APPENDIX B. Protection and support of employees who report child abuse

All staff and third-party providers, engaged through a formal service agreement with the Department of Education, are protected from civil, criminal and disciplinary liability by providing information to the Department of Communities, WA Police or the Department's Standards and Integrity Directorate (SID) for the purpose of investigating child abuse.

If acting in good faith, staff are deemed not to have breached a duty of confidentiality, professional ethics or standards; or to have engaged in unprofessional conduct by providing information under s129 of the *Children and Community Services Act (2004)*.

Under Sections 124F and 240 of the Children and Community Services Act, the identity of the person making a report to the Department of Communities is protected and can only be released with the permission of the reporter or the court, for investigative purposes.

When there is concern for the safety of the reporter, it is important that the residential setting has a risk management plan in place. The residential college manager/principal advises the Department of Communities and/or the WA police and contacts the Manager Residential Colleges or in the case of WA Colleges of Agriculture, Regional Education Office, for further advice.

Staff are entitled to seek counselling through the Employee Assistance Program (staff only).

An employee or third-party provider, engaged through a formal service agreement with the Department of Education, who attempts to threaten, intimidate, coerce or take reprisal against an employee who has disclosed or intends to disclose unethical or unlawful behaviour may face disciplinary action (refer to the Staff Conduct and Discipline policy).