

# **New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme Youth Child Protection Policy**

**Version DRAFT**  
**Updated May 2025**

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## Document Control

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## Purpose

1. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure the safety of young people and the protection of Cadet Leaders in the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme.
2. The objective of this Policy is to ensure that all personnel operate in ways which ensure that young people and Cadet Leaders are protected from harm. This involves being able to recognise and identify signs of abuse and to know how to respond appropriately.
3. This document contains policy relating to child protection for the purposes of the [Children's Act 2014](#).

The Policy outlines the action to be taken to:

- prevent or minimise the risk of abuse of tamariki/children while they are engaging with New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets Programme
- report any concern of any form of abuse
- respond to actual or suspected incidents of abuse, complaints, allegations or disclosure of abuse
- establish what action is required when allegations are made against New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets Programme Cadet Leaders.

## Legislation / Codes / Standards and Priory Rules

1. This Policy is guided by the following legislation:
  1. [Oranga Tamariki Act 1989](#) (Children and Young People's Wellbeing Act 1989)
  2. [Children's Act 2014](#)
  3. [Family Violence Act 2018](#)
  4. [Crimes Act 1961](#)
  5. [Privacy Act 2020](#)
  6. [Children's Commissioner Act 2003](#)
  7. [Health Information Privacy Code 2024](#)
  8. The Health and Disability Commissioners [Code of Health and Disability Services Consumer Rights](#) (A Regulation under the Health and Disability  
i. [Code of Ethics for Youth Work in Aotearoa New Zealand](#) (Ara Taiohi, 2011)
  9. [Human Rights Act 1993](#);

## Scope

1. This Policy applies explicitly to Cadets, Cadet Leaders, personnel, parents/caregivers, events and activities of and relating to the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme.
2. This Policy enables Cadet Leaders to act in the best interests of the young people in their care, and to feel confident in challenging poor practice and raising issues of concern.
3. This Policy will be available via *[please enter station name here]* at *[name the location this document is stored for your station in hard and/or soft copy]*.

## Guiding Principles

1. The Policy and its implementation across New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme is guided by the following principles:

1. All decisions and actions of personnel will be guided by the principle that the welfare and best interests of the child they are interacting with is paramount.
2. Where appropriate:
  - a. Family, whānau, hapū or other culturally recognised family groups of the young person will be consulted
  - b. Consideration must be given to the wishes of the young person, so far as those wishes can be obtained
  - c. Endeavours must be made to obtain the informed support and consent of the young person and/or their parents, guardians, family or caregivers, where appropriate to do so.
  - d. New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme is inclusive of all its members, regardless of gender, ethnicity or sexuality. All members will treat all people as equals.

## Policy

### Code of Ethics

1. Cadet Leaders in the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme are expected to:
  1. Be a positive role model for young people, both when actively working with young people and in their personal time.
  2. Foster an environment where young people feel safe, supported and celebrated.
  3. Treat all people with respect and dignity.
  4. Perform their work honestly, impartially, competently and efficiently.
  5. Avoid situations which may compromise their integrity, or bring young people, fellow Cadet Leaders, or the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme into disrepute.
  6. Be open, honest and accountable to young people
  7. Remain mindful of their status 'in the place of a responsible parent' (in loco parentis) when actively supervising young people.
  8. Maintain appropriate physical, emotional and sexual boundaries with young people, and assist young people in understanding these boundaries.
  9. Act within the limits of their role and their own personal skills and competencies.
  10. Refrain from using their position to manipulate young people to their political, religious, ethical or cultural beliefs.
  11. Be aware and notify their manager of any circumstances that may affect their ability to work safely and effectively with young people.
  12. Empower young people by providing opportunities for improvement of skills, personal development and leadership development.

### Safe Working Practices

#### 1. Recruitment

1. Recruitment of Leaders must be carried out in accordance with Recruitment Policy.
2. All Cadet Leaders must consent to a criminal history and child safety check from New Zealand Police Vetting Service then every three years during the course of their involvement with the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme.
3. Check the chronological work history (for last 5 years) where the person is a prospective employee including any gaps in the history.
4. Contact referees for information about the person's suitability for the role. At least two referees will be contacted, who will be unrelated to the potential children's kaimahi and not part of their extended family.
5. Carry out a risk assessment; evaluating the above information to assess the risk that the children's Cadet Leader would pose to the safety of tamariki if they are to be employed or engaged, taking into account whether the role is a core children's role or a non-core children's role (as defined in the Children's Act 2014). The risk assessment will be completed in accordance with any regulations made under section 32 of the Children's Act 2014.

## **2. Managing Risks**

1. The Regional Youth Manager will decide whether it is appropriate to appoint the prospective Cadet Leader by assessing and deciding how to manage the risks, with reference to the following:
  - completion of an appropriate risk assessment
  - whether the risks can be safely managed i.e. can be avoided or minimised
2. Where confusion, questions or reservations arise at any stage of the recruitment process regarding an applicant's suitability to work with young people, it is best to err on the side of caution and decline the application.

## **3. Record Keeping**

A record will be kept in each Cadet Leader's file of:

- the background check results and any notifications of pending charges, investigations
- the process used for assessing risks and developing appropriate controls
- controls/mitigations considered and those agreed and implemented
- decisions and responses including the person's agreement to controls
- when and how the risks and controls were monitored and reviewed
- changes made to safety management arrangements and reasons for changes.

All personal information will be collected, used, stored, and disclosed in accordance with the [Privacy Act 2020](#).

## **4. Training**

1. All Cadet Leaders must complete the 'Child Protection in the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets Programme' online training and assessment programme. This training ensures they understand the procedures and policies in working with young people in the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme.
2. Completion of the 'Child Protection in the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme' training will be recorded in Firefighters records
3. National Cadets Coordinator will ensure that all paid personnel and Cadets, volunteers have completed the appropriate training, and certification is recorded accordingly.
4. Scenario-based child protection training will be part of Cadet Leader training to encourage Cadet Leaders to discuss and think about child protection issues.

## **5. Supervision of Young People**

1. All New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets activities will be appropriately supervised and managed to ensure the safety of all young people involved. Cadet Leaders will follow the procedures for supervision and risk management set out in the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#) to ensure the safety of young people.
2. Cadet Leaders are expected to be readily available to the needs of the young people at all times during New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme activities or events.
3. Cadet Leaders must not be under the influence of alcohol or mind-altering substances while fulfilling their role as a Cadet Leader.
4. All New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme activities are to be taught and/or managed by at least two adults who have undergone a police vet and completed the 'Child Protection in the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme' online training module. One of these adults must hold the position of Cadet Leader, or above.
5. In general, Cadet Leaders should avoid one-on-one contact with young people. If one-on-one contact occurs, Cadet Leaders should refer to the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#).
6. Adults who are not members of the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme may occasionally assist as a leader, within the guidelines of the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#).

7. 'Prospective Cadet Leaders' who are waiting for the results of their Police Vet before their official appointment to the role may attend brigade and off-site activities under supervision, within the guidelines of the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#).
8. Cadets who are 'young adults' may be placed in supervisory roles and form part of the adult-young person ratio. The conditions for doing so are set out in the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#).

## **6. Communication with Young People**

1. All Cadet Leaders and young people must avoid words and actions that are derogatory, discouraging, could be misunderstood or could cause offence (e.g. flirting, inappropriate or offensive language, putdowns, body language, clothing with offensive slogans, and unnecessary or inappropriate touch).
2. Cadet Leaders and young people are expected to adhere to the Fire and Emergency New Zealand [Media Policy](#).
3. Where Cadet Leaders engage with young people on social media, they must ensure all interactions are appropriate. This includes any comments, photos or posts that the young person may be able to view due to a connection with the Cadet Leader on social media (e.g. friends, followers).
4. Interactions with young people on platforms that do not retain conversations for future reference (e.g. Snapchat) must not be used to ensure the protection of all involved.
5. New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme recommends against Cadet Leaders adding young people on their personal social media accounts. Cadet Leaders who wish to add young people on social media as friends or followers are advised to create a separate 'New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme' social media account to do so.

## **7. Physical Contact**

1. Inappropriate physical contact with young people, or contact, which could be viewed as inappropriate, must be avoided at all times.
2. Corporal and physical punishment, e.g. smacking, are unacceptable regardless of the situation.
3. Physical contact between a leader and young person may sometimes be necessary (e.g. demonstrating a first-aid technique). In these situations, leaders should describe what they will do and gain consent from the young person before the interaction.
4. Appropriate and positive physical interactions, such as high-fives, short hugs, or pats on the back, are acceptable when both the young person and the Cadet Leader are comfortable with the interaction.
5. Both young people and Cadet Leaders should remember that different people have different levels of comfort with physical interaction, e.g. hugs. This should be considered before any physical contact occurs.
6. Refer to the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#) guidelines regarding restraint.

## **8. Relationships**

1. If two young people are in a relationship, their line manager should speak with them about what behaviour standards are appropriate at cadet activities and events.
2. New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme does not condone romantic or sexual relationships between Cadet Leaders and young people.
3. In general, the power imbalance that exists between the young person and Cadet Leader creates a risk of manipulation or abuse. Relationships with a potential power imbalance (e.g. due to a considerable difference in age or rank) are not permitted, for the protection of the young person.
4. In some circumstances, safe and appropriate relationships can form between Cadet Leaders and young people (e.g. an existing relationship between two 17-year-olds where one turns 18). These relationships are the exception and are acceptable where there is transparency between the couple and their manager.
5. To ensure transparency and the safety of young people, Cadet Leaders who form a relationship with a young person (or are in an existing relationship) must disclose this

to their line manager, following the processes in the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#).

6. In most circumstances, the parents of the young person should be informed if a relationship develops between a young person and Cadet Leader. Refer to section 5.18 of this Policy for guidance surrounding informing parents/caregivers.
7. A Cadet Leader should not be put in a direct supervisory or leadership capacity of a young person they are in a relationship with (e.g. manager of the young person's Nationals team or assessing the young person).

## **9. Sexual Conduct**

1. All New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme members in relationships are expected to demonstrate appropriate, professional behaviour while at New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme events.
2. Any affection displayed at New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet events should be appropriate to the environment and the age of the young people present. Over-the-top or overly passionate displays of affection, especially those with sexual overtones, are not appropriate.
3. Sexual activity is not permitted at any New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet event or activity.
4. If sexual activity occurs at a New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet event, refer to the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#) for the procedure in responding to this sort of event.

## **10. Sexuality and Gender Identification**

1. New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programmes is inclusive of the sexuality and gender identification of all its members.
2. Refer to [Ministry of Educations Inclusive Education](#) for further guidance on this topic.

## **11. Cadet Activities and events**

1. Any event or activity involving young people that occurs outside of Fire and Emergency New Zealand property must be organised within the requirements the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#).
2. Any camps or overnight stays involving young people must comply with the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#)
3. Any transportation of young people by Cadet Leaders must comply with the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#)
4. Young people may attend events alongside Fire and Emergency New Zealand personnel to gain real-life experience. The requirements of the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#) must be adhered to where young people attend such events..

## **Child Protection Concerns**

### **1. Bullying**

1. All young people have the right to feel safe, secure and accepted at New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme activities. Bullying, harassment or other harmful behaviour between young people is unacceptable.
2. Cadet Leaders are expected to role model positive behaviour at New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme activities and events, encourage young people to stand up against bullying, and take action to stop bullying when it occurs.
3. Some forms of bullying can be subtle and difficult to identify. Therefore, Cadet Leaders must endeavour to have good relationships with young people and be alert to the signs that a young person may be experiencing bullying.
4. Any allegations of bullying or harmful behaviour between young people should be dealt with in accordance with the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#).

### **2. Child Abuse**

1. New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programmes are committed to safeguarding young people from abuse.
2. All leaders must remain vigilant to the signs that a young person is experiencing abuse. Refer to Appendix 1 of this Policy for further information on indicators of abuse.
3. If Cadet Leaders:
  - Believe a young person has been or is likely to be harmed, ill treated, abused (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), neglected or deprived, or
  - Have concerns about the wellbeing of a young person
4. Cadet Leaders must report their concerns following the processes set out in the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#).
5. All suspicions or concerns of child abuse will be reported to Oranga Tamariki (0508 FAMILY).

### 3. Disclosures

Acting to achieve the safety of rangatahi/young people is New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme's first priority. When a child is being hurt or where they are hurting someone else, inaction is not an option. Nor is leaving it to the child or someone else to manage. Safety and protection from abuse is central to our kaupapa and is everyone's business.

1. New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme's responds to disclosures of abuse in ways that are known to work by:
  - If a young person makes a disclosure of abuse or other wellbeing concerns to a Cadet Leader, it is essential the Cadet Leader takes what the young person says seriously.
  - supporting an interdisciplinary approach
  - providing an early response
  - being responsive to Te Ao Māori
  - being person-centred
  - being sensitive to age, gender, culture and disability.
2. Refer to the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#) for procedures.

### 4. Reporting

1. New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme is committed to dealing with all complaints and reportable events fairly, confidentially, quickly and legally.
2. New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet's programme encourages the active sharing of information regarding potential and actual child protection concerns with Oranga Tamariki and the Police.
3. Any Cadet Leader who believes a young person has been or is likely to be, harmed, ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived, or where there are concerns about the wellbeing of the young person, must report this following the procedures set out in the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#).
4. Under no circumstances should a Cadet Leader attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with the problem alone.
5. At any time if the Cadet Leader has concerns, they may contact Oranga Tamariki directly at 0508 FAMILY. The Regional Youth Manager must be informed if this occurs.

|                            |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>STEP ONE: Recognise</b> | <b>STEP TWO: Consult</b> |
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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ stay calm;</li> <li>▪ thank them for telling you (letting them know they have done the right thing and are not in trouble);</li> <li>▪ make sure that they are safe right now (seek medical and emergency help where necessary via 111) and attend to any physical or emotional distress of the person who is harmed;</li> <li>▪ note what level of risk they report of the abuse happening again;</li> <li>▪ take detailed notes;</li> <li>▪ do not question further / have the story repeated unnecessarily;</li> <li>▪ listen and take the disclosure seriously.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ notify Management;</li> <li>▪ record in formal notes the conversations in relation to the concern, as well as all information about the disclosure, including the name of anyone present, what the reporter has said, photos of any injuries, and all actions taken in response;</li> <li>▪ advice may be sought from Oranga Tamariki (<b>0508 326 549</b>).</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>STEP THREE: Respond</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>STEP FOUR: Report</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consider the risk of the abuse occurring again in light of what has been reported and what is otherwise known.</li> <li>▪ If the client is in immediate danger, <b>call the POLICE on 111</b>.</li> <li>▪ Consider informing those with parental responsibility. This will be done in consultation with Management with the consideration for safety of the client, Cadet Leader and other whānau, and obligations under the Privacy Act 2020.</li> <li>▪ Those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed in cases where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o the parent or caregiver may be the alleged perpetrator;</li> <li>o it is possible that the client would be intimidated into silence;</li> <li>o there is a strong likelihood that important evidence would be destroyed;</li> <li>o the client does not wish the parent or caregiver involved at that stage and is competent to make that decision.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Agree a Safety Plan with the client and/or those with parental responsibility.</li> <li>▪ Safety Plan is reviewed and monitored by Management.</li> <li>▪ If the alleged perpetrator is a Cadet Leader, refer to section 7 of this Policy.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Report to Police or Oranga Tamariki using either:<sup>2</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oranga Tamariki Report of Concern Template 2021; or</li> <li>- Police Child Protection Protocol Referral form.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ An Incident Report will be completed for any related issues; for example, threats of harm because a report of concern has been made to Oranga Tamariki.</li> <li>▪ The Safety Plan remains in place.</li> <li>▪ All reports to Police or Oranga Tamariki to be recorded on the relevant client files along with agency responses. A central <b>Notification Register</b> will be kept to track that notifications are made and followed up in a timely way.</li> <li>▪ If Oranga Tamariki is already involved with the client, concerns will be reported to the Cadet Leader in accord with contractual requirements (phone <b>0508 326 459</b>).</li> </ul> |

## 5. Sharing Information About Tamariki/Children

1. All young people participating in New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet's programme must be aware and consent that, in general, their parents/caregivers will be informed if their Cadet Leaders have concerns regarding the young person's welfare, behaviour or attitudes at New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade. This may include:
  - Disclosures from the young person regarding mental health issues, self harm, suicidal ideation or other wellbeing concerns
  - Where the young person has been involved with bullying or harassment at New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade cadets programme, either as the initiator or the target
  - Where the young person displays a poor attitude or disruptive behaviour at cadet activities

- If New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade cadets programme becomes aware that the young person is in a romantic or sexual relationship with a Cadet Leader.
- 2. While New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet's programme general policy is to inform the parents/caregivers when we have concerns for a young person, Cadet Leaders may decide not to inform the parents/caregivers. Some reasons not to inform may include:
  - The concern, misconduct or breach is relatively insignificant and does not require the parents/caregivers to be notified
  - The parent/caregiver is the alleged perpetrator of disclosed abuse
  - It is possible the young person may be intimidated into silence if their parents/caregivers are informed
  - There is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed by their parents/caregivers
- 3. Any other situation where it is believed the young person may be put at greater risk if their parents/caregivers are informed.
- 4. If the young person is likely to be put at risk if their parent/caregiver is informed about an issue, the Cadet Leader must inform their immediate manager, *[and the Regional Manager if the program expands outside the brigade]* if there is a child protection or other high level concern, to decide on a course of action in the best interests of the young person.
- 5. Details of a child protection incident or wellbeing concern involving a young person may only be discussed with leaders or managers directly involved in resolving the issue or supporting the young person. Youth leaders must not idly chat or gossip about such incidents amongst themselves, in order to maintain the privacy of the young person.
- 6. The parts of this Policy relating to the disclosure of information apply when personnel need to make decisions to disclose information in response to a situation where there is a serious threat or risk of harm. This Policy does not specifically deal with situations where New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet's programme receives a request from another agency to disclose information to them. This Policy should be read together with the [Fire and Emergency NZ Privacy Policy](#).

## 6. Allegations Against New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet's Programme Personnel

1. Everyone involved with the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet's programme is expected to report any concerns or suspicions about another member. They have the right to do this in confidence and free from harassment. Participants and leaders should report all concerns following the processes set out in the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#).
2. Managers who receive a complaint must deal with the complaint immediately and sensitively within Complaints Management Standard Operating Procedures.
3. Any complaints in relation to a cadet leader that constitute an allegation of child abuse must be referred to the immediate manager, *[and the Regional Manager if the program expands outside the brigade]*, who will follow the procedures outlined in the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#). New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet's Programme will cooperate fully with the Police and Oranga Tamariki in any investigations or assessments.
4. The fact that a person tenders their resignation, or ceases to provide their services, will not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with this Policy and the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#).
5. Allegations of abuse that could constitute a criminal offence are considered to be serious wrongdoing for the purposes of the [Protected Disclosure Act 2000](#) (and any replacement legislation), and if the Cadet Leader wants the disclosure to be protected (and access to the protections provided) they will need to make the disclosure in accordance with that Act.

## 7. Complaints

1. Young people or Cadet Leaders wishing to raise a formal complaint should submit their complaint to their line manager or another appropriate manager, in accordance with *[Brigades will need to make their own copy of this form and insert their name here]*

2. All complaints regarding a child protection matter will be referred to the immediate manager, *[and the Regional Manager if the program expands outside the brigade]*
3. Cadet Leaders can call the Ombudsman by phoning **0800 802 602** for free advice on serious wrongdoing and how to ensure any disclosure is protected under the Act.

## 8. Investigations

1. Investigations may be carried out in response to a number of situations, for example, a formal complaint regarding a Cadet Leader's conduct.
2. Investigations will be conducted by a Regional Manager or Community Programmes Manager as appropriate, in consultation with an HR Advisor.
3. If a Cadet is the subject of an investigation, their parents or caregivers should be informed and continue to be updated as the investigation progresses, unless doing so may compromise the investigation or safety of the young person.
4. If a Cadet Leader is under investigation, they may be suspended until the investigation is concluded, at the discretion of the Immediate Manager.
5. All investigations must adhere to the following New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets program Policies and Guidelines:
  - Raising a Concern or Complaint (Staff/Volunteer) Policy
  - Harassment and Bullying Prevention Policy
  - Disciplining with Integrity Policy
  - Manager Guidelines: Investigation and Escalation Protocols for Workplace Issues
  - Manager Guidelines: Disciplinary Outcome Consideration
  - Serious Wrongdoing (Whistleblowing) Policy.

## Roles and Responsibilities

1. **Cadet Leaders** (i.e all leaders working directly with young people in the cadets programme, event or camp) are responsible for:
  1. The overall safety and wellbeing of the young people they are directly supervising.
  2. Being aware of and alert to potential indicators of child abuse, neglect, bullying or the risk of any potential harm to a young person.
  3. Following reporting procedures outlined in this Policy and the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#) for all incidents, events or actions that have caused, or could cause, harm to a young person.
  4. Referring young people to appropriate support services where necessary.
  5. Making decisions in consultation with the immediate manager, *[and the Regional Manager if the program expands outside the brigade]* and Oranga Tamariki as to whether or not the matter warrants a Report of Concern.
  6. Making a Report of Concern of their own volition, where this is clearly required by the circumstances.
  7. Reporting any changes in circumstances regarding a child protection concern to the immediate manager, *[and the Regional Manager if the program expands outside the brigade]* and Oranga Tamariki as necessary.

***In the absence of the following roles appointed by FENZ, the responsibility of these roles falls to the CFO.***

2. **Area and District Cadet Managers** are responsible for:
  1. Providing guidance and support to cadet leaders in their area or district regarding incidents and issues involving young people
  2. Being available to Cadet Leaders for consultation and advice regarding wellbeing and child protection concerns.
  3. Managing low-level or localised incidents in their area or district.
  4. Ensuring reporting procedures are followed when an incident or concern is raised
  5. Informing the Regional Cadet Manager of all serious incidents or child protection concerns.
  6. Responsible for interviewing, conducting background checks and, in conjunction with

the CFO of the Brigade, appointing Cadet Leaders.

3. **Regional Cadet Managers** are responsible for:
  1. Fulfilling the role of Regional Child Protection Officer (RCPO) for the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme. This can be shared on a rostered basis with appropriately trained persons.
  2. Being available to leaders for consultation and advice on best practice in matters involving young people, including child protection concerns, abuse or any other incident.
  3. Receiving and managing child protection concerns and general complaints within their region, and closing off resolved issues.
  4. Remaining informed with current legislative requirements and advise all members regarding updated appropriate actions and responses
  5. Ensuring reporting procedures are followed when an incident or concern is raised
  6. Ensuring that training or education is made available to New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets Programme personnel, as required
  7. Frequent reporting of Police Vetting and 'Child Protection in the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet's Programme' online training to the National Cadet Manager and ensuring a reasonable standard of compliance.
  8. Maintaining contacts with Oranga Tamariki and Police officers
    - Aligning New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet's programme activities to this Policy and related documents
    - Monitoring, auditing and reporting compliance with this Policy and related [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#) to the National Cadet Manager.
  9. Making a Report of Concern to Oranga Tamariki if deemed appropriate or supporting Cadet Leaders to make a report.
  10. Keeping clear, confidential, detailed and dated records for child protection events in their region.
  11. Confirmation of 'Child Protection in the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme' online training.
4. **Community Programmes Managers** are responsible for:
  1. Being available to Regional Cadet Managers for consultation and support regarding child protection issues.
5. **National Cadet Manager** is responsible for:
  1. Being available to Regional Youth Manager for consultation and support regarding child protection issues.
  2. Reviewing and updating this Policy every three years
  3. Monitoring effectiveness and the continuous improvement of this Policy
  4. Receiving monitoring and compliance reports from the Regional Youth Manager, and reporting this to the Director of Community Health Services
  5. Ensuring bi-monthly reviews of the Child Protection Policy compliance
6. **Director of Community Health Services** is responsible for:
  1. Ensuring this Policy has been reviewed and updated if required
  2. Issuing this Policy
  3. Providing reports to the Executive Leadership Team and the Priory Trust Board as required, with the support of the National Youth Manager.

## Monitoring and Compliance

1. Reviewing and updating of this Policy will occur every three years, unless there are changes to legislation, standards, and national codes of conduct.
2. Data relating to responses to and compliance with this Policy will be analysed and reported on by the National Cadet Leadership Team.
3. Reports will include a summary of incident data and trends, the appropriateness of

responses and recommendations on improvements.

4. The National Cadet Leadership Team will audit and report to the Director of FENZ Services on compliance with this Policy and related [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#), from time to time, as agreed and ensure Assurances.
5. The National Cadet Manager will monitor the Policy's effectiveness and recommend changes as required.
6. Day to day compliance with this Policy and related [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme SOPs](#) will be monitored by managers.

## Associated Documents

1. The following documents are associated with this Policy:
  1. **Policies:**
    - [Fire and Emergency New Zealand Media Policy](#)
    - Recruitment and Selection
    - Accident Management
    - Alcohol Host Responsibility
    - Disciplining with Integrity
    - Children and Youth at Events
    - [Fire and Emergency New Zealand Privacy Policy](#)
  2. Vulnerable Children, Young Persons and Adults Protection Policy **Procedures:**
    - New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets Programme Youth Child Protection
    - Incident Management and Reporting
2. **Forms and other relevant resources:**
  1. Child Protection in the Youth Programme – Sexuality and Gender Identification Guidelines
  2. Child Protection – Reporting Process Diagram (Appendix 1 of this Policy)
    - Cadet Issues Management Guide
  3. Policies are accessible on the Fire and Emergency New Zealand intranet portal. Hard copies should be held on station, however where possible they should be accessed directly from the intranet portal to ensure they are current and up to date.

## Definitions

|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Adult:</b>       | Any person aged 18 years or over, who has the potential to interact with a young person under the care of New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet Programme. This includes, but is not limited to, Cadet Leaders, New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet Programme volunteers or paid personnel, bystanders, patients, parents, teachers, students and guest instructors working with children and young people. |
| <b>Adult Member</b> | Any member of the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet Programme aged 18 years or over.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Appropriate</b>  | Suitable or acceptable for the particular situation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bullying</b>            | <p>Bullying is a form of aggressive or threatening behaviour, which is usually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliberate – the bully intends to cause pain or discomfort</li> <li>• Involves a power imbalance – e.g due to size, age, gender or rank</li> <li>• Is a pattern of behaviour over time – usually not a one-off event</li> <li>• Causes short or long-term physical or psychological harm</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Child/ Young Person</b> | The same as “child” as defined in section 5 of the Children’s Act 2014; that is any person under the age of 18 years.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Child Abuse</b>         | <p>Any harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill treatment, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any action that may result in emotional, financial or physical hardship</li> <li>• Any single act or number of acts forming a pattern of behaviour (even if any of these acts, when viewed in isolation, may appear minor or trivial) which may amount to abuse</li> </ul> <p>It encompasses the definition of family violence in the Family Violence Act 2018.</p>                                                                                                             |
| <b>Child Protection</b>    | Any activity or initiative for the purpose of preventing or responding to a specific or suspected incident of child abuse.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Contact</b>             | Communication, whether physical or verbal, or through any electronic medium (including writing or visual images).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Harassment</b>          | Harassment means to unfairly trouble, upset or annoy another person by picking on them or singling them out for adverse special attention.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>In Loco Parentis</b>    | Anyone looking after a child or young person on behalf of the parents                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Neglect</b>             | <p>The persistent, willful failure to meet a child or young person’s basic needs, when reasonably able to do so. This may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical neglect – not providing the necessities of life, e.g. food, clothing, shelter</li> <li>• Emotional neglect – not providing comfort, attention, love</li> <li>• Neglectful supervision – leaving the child without someone safe looking after them</li> <li>• Medical neglect – not taking care of health needs</li> <li>• Educational neglect – allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in education, or inattention to special education needs</li> </ul> |
| <b>Personnel</b>           | Includes those employed by, or who contract services to New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet Programme, including paid and volunteer personnel, members, contractors, observers and group entities managed by New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet Programme. Also covers New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet Programme adult members and cadet programme members.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Physical Abuse</b>      | A non-accidental act resulting in physical harm to a child. May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, biting, poisoning, cutting, strangling or anything else that could cause a physical injury.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

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| <b>Prospective Cadet Leader</b>       | An adult who has undergone the recruitment process to become a Cadet Leader or Programme aide, and is awaiting the results of their police vet before their appointment to the role is confirmed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Psychological/ Emotional Abuse</b> | Any act or omission that results in adverse or impaired psychological, social, intellectual and/or emotional functioning or development of a person.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Police Vetting</b>                 | A series of criminal history and background checks provided by the New Zealand Police vetting service.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Sexual Abuse</b>                   | <p>Sexual abuse can involve, but is not limited to, forcing or enticing a young person to take part in sexual activities. This can involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical contact – e.g. assault by penetration, masturbation, rubbing, kissing or touching outside of clothing</li> <li>• Non-contact – e.g. involving a child or young person in watching sexual images or sexual activity, producing sexual images of the child, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways</li> <li>• Grooming – acts which prepare the child or young person for sexual contact by lowering their inhibition and gaining their trust, whether in person or via social media and the internet.</li> <li>• Cadet Leaders will be aware of their duty of care which precludes developing a sexual relationship with a child. This includes the grooming of a child for a sexual relationship. A sexual relationship between an adult and a child or young person will always be wrong, unequal and unacceptable and may also constitute a crime.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Sexual Activity</b>                | Sexual activity is considered to be any sexual act, including intercourse, genital stimulation, groping, and intensive/prolonged kissing or touching.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>SOP</b>                            | Standard Operating Procedures. In this Policy, use of the term ‘SOP’ refers to <a href="#">New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet Programme Youth Child Protection Standard Operating Procedures.</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Cadet Leader</b>                   | Any adult member of the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets programme                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Cadet</b>                          | Any member of the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadet Programme under the age of 18 who has not registered with Fire and Emergency NZ as a recruit firefighter or operational support member.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## Appendix

### Appendix 1: Indicators of Child Abuse

| Type of abuse: | Physical Indicators – Child | Behavioural Indicators – Child | Behavioural Indicators – Adult |
|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Neglect                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extremely dirty or unbathed.</li> <li>- Inappropriately dressed for the weather (e.g. shorts and t-shirt in winter).</li> <li>- Malnourished undersized, low weight, sickly complexion.</li> <li>- Persistent skin disorders and rashes resulting from lack of hygiene.</li> </ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of attachment to parents.</li> <li>- Poor social skills.</li> <li>- Steals food.</li> <li>- No understanding of basic hygiene.</li> <li>- Poor school attendance.</li> <li>- Indiscriminately demanding of affection or attention.</li> <li>- Left home alone frequently</li> </ul>                                                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fails to provide for child's basic needs – food, clothing, medical care, etc</li> <li>- Fails to provide adequate supervision for child.</li> <li>- Is frequently unaware of child's whereabouts.</li> <li>- Demonstrates little involvement in child's life – doesn't attend activities, school events, etc.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                |
| Physical Abuse                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unexplained bruises, especially on face, lips, mouth, eyes, torso, back, buttocks, back of legs.</li> <li>- Unexplained welts, cuts or abrasions.</li> <li>- Unexplained burns, especially cigarette burns or identifiable outlines of objects.</li> <li>- Unexplained fractures.</li> </ul>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wary of adults.</li> <li>- Violent towards other children or animals.</li> <li>- Flinches or cringes if touched.</li> <li>- Cannot recall how injuries occurred or gives inconsistent explanations</li> <li>- Imitates negative behaviour while playing – e.g. smacks or yells at a doll.<sup>477</sup></li> </ul>                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vague about how an injury was caused, or changes the story.</li> <li>- Blames the accident on a sibling, friend, or the child themselves.</li> <li>- Is aggressive to the child in front of others.</li> <li>- Publicly threatens or attempts to injure the child.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                           |
| Emotional / Psychological Abuse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bedwetting</li> <li>- Complains frequently of headaches, nausea, abdominal pain, without medical cause</li> <li>- Malnourished</li> <li>- Dressed differently from other children in the family</li> <li>- Pale, emaciated, sunken cheeks</li> <li>- Prolonged vomiting or diarrhoea</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aggressive or withdrawn.</li> <li>- Displays self destructive behaviours e.g. self harm, suicidal talk.</li> <li>- Almost 'too eager' to please.</li> <li>- Appears sad</li> <li>- Imitates negative language or behaviour while playing – e.g. smacks or yells at a doll</li> </ul>                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publicly humiliates child or calls them names</li> <li>- Treats child differently from siblings or peers</li> <li>- Threatens child</li> <li>- Withholds affection</li> <li>- Ignores the child</li> <li>- Refuses to allow child to have unsupervised interaction with friends or peers</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                     |
| Sexual Abuse                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Torn, stained or bloody underwear</li> <li>- Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in genital areas.</li> <li>- Excessive or unusual itching in genital areas</li> <li>- Pain experienced in urination</li> <li>- Pregnancy, especially younger girls.</li> </ul>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Age-inappropriate, sexually explicit drawings or play with toys, self or others.</li> <li>- Fear of certain individuals.</li> <li>- Fear of certain places – e.g. bathroom, bedroom</li> <li>- Refuses to go home or to the home of a friend or relative.</li> <li>- Comments like "I have a secret".</li> <li>- Describes or hints about sexually abusive activities</li> <li>- Compulsive behaviours,</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unusually protective or controlling of the child</li> <li>- Jealous of child's relationships with others</li> <li>- Accuses child of being sexually provocative</li> <li>- Invades child's privacy, e.g. during dressing, in the bathroom</li> <li>- Favours their victim over other children</li> <li>- Demonstrates physical contact or affection with sexual overtones towards child</li> </ul> <p><u>Indicators of grooming</u></p> |

|  |  |                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | e.g. handwashing<br>- Afraid of being alone with people of a particular sex. | - Asks the child to do things in private involving physical contact, e.g. massages<br>- 'Accidentally' touches or brushes up against child's body<br>- Comes into child's bedroom or bathroom when child is undressed<br>- Looks at or touches child's body to 'see how they are developing'<br>- Asks child to keep any of these things a secret. |
|--|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|