

Guide for Reporting to Royal Commission.

Survivors, or a member of their whanau/family or a close friend, can report abuse in a Private Hearing to the Royal Commission. Reports to the private sessions of the Royal Commission are confidential. They provide information the Commissioners need to know about:

- what happened to survivors,
- where it happened and
- how it was allowed to happen.

If you are a survivor or member of a survivor's whanau or family, recalling what happened and putting a report together can be both traumatic and overwhelming.

The form on the following pages can be used as a guide or check list to help you organise the information you have about what happened. We know many of you have lots of documents and other evidence, but many will be relying on their memory. We hope the guide will help you organise your thoughts to make a written report you can read out, use as a prompt when you are talking to the Commissioner, or have as your own written record of what you report.

It will be important you also attach copies of any documents, photos or other information you believe is useful. They provide the commission with important information that will add to your personal experience.

We strongly recommend you have a support person available to you before, during and after any reporting of your abuse. Arrange a time with your peer supporter, therapist or counsellor near the time you plan to prepare your report so you can address any difficult issues or trauma that are triggered. If you do not have these supports in place, please do contact us so we can help find an appropriate person for you.

Some survivors will choose to just talk on the day about what you remember. Others will want to read a statement. However you choose to do it, we recommend you have your own written record of what you want to report and give a copy to the Commissioner as your formal statement. How much detail you report must be your choice.

REPORTING GUIDE

Remember this is a guide only. You do not have to write answers to all the questions. You may also have other information that does not fit the questions. Please do not leave it out and write as much as you can. Add extra pages as necessary.

We have split the guide for your report into two parts.

Part 1 includes those parts that are deeply personal and are not usually shared unless you trust the person you're sharing with, or may never have been shared before. It includes questions about the actual abuse and the impacts it had on your life.

Part 2 asks for information about the institution (i.e. school, church or other) your abuser was part of or where the abuse took place. It will help the Commissioners to understand more about the institution such as:

- whether and how it failed to provide a safe place and protect you and others from harm,
- the culture of the institution that allowed abuse to happen,
- whether there were others at the same institution you knew were also being abused,
- how did the institution responded if you told anyone about the abuse at the time or since,
- how you expected they would respond if you did not report your abuse at the time or were to report it to them today,
- how the same institution responded to others you knew who reported their abuse
- whether abuse could still be happening at the institution, and
- any other things about the institution you think it would be helpful for the commission to know.

PART ONE

If you have a peer supporter, counsellor or therapist, we recommend you use them for support when you complete this section. If you do not already have these people in your life we recommend you contact us so you have one in place to help you through any trauma that arises through the process of preparing your report, reporting and after reporting to the Royal Commission or any other body.

You may already have a report you have prepared for ACC or a police statement you can refer to or attach.

If you do not know the name of the person who abused you, write in any details you remember about the person, where they worked or the position they held

If you do not know the name of the place it took place then describe it from memory as best you can. Use the space below the chart for your comments.

This guide was put together by the Network for Survivors of Abuse in Faith-based Institutions as a guide for reporting to the Royal Commission. If you want to help to use this Guide, or need to be put in touch with professional or peer support, please contact a member organisation of Male Survivors Aotearoa <https://malesurvivor.nz/our-service-centres/>

1. When did the abuse happen? Where did it happen? Who was(were) your abuser(s)?

When (your age or the year)	Where	Do you know the name of your abuser(s) and his role in the institution.

2. What happened?

Write only as much detail as you are comfortable with.

It will be helpful for the commission to know the type of abuse you experienced (emotional, physical, sexual, or psychological, or more than one of the types of abuse listed). Include information about the duration of the abuse – was it one-off or did it continue over weeks, months or years?

3. How did you meet the person who abused you? How did that person create the opportunity to abuse you?

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4. If possible, list and describe the many ways it affected you, your whanau and family, and, what effect being abused has had on your life and is still having on your life today.

5. If you can, record how you managed the effects the abuse had on you.

People manage in many ways. Some medicate the pain with drugs or alcohol. Others cannot manage the anger they feel and end up in prison having committed violent crimes. Others suffer from ongoing health issues.

Please be assured you will not be judged for what you write here. The affects abuse as a child has on survivors lives is now well understood. So too are the many different ways survivors navigate their lives around the abuse they suffered. It is important, if you can talk about this, that the Inquiry learns more about the affects abuse has had and what needs to be done to compensate and provide redress.

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PART 2

The Commission needs as much information as possible about the institutions where abuse took place and what survivors had to deal with as a result of being abused. This is the information needed to seek justice, redress and make changes. It will be helpful if you can tell them about any other person in the school, church or other institution where you were abused who knew about the abuse and whether they were able to do anything to stop it happening.

6. If you did not tell anyone at the time, you were being abused, can you remember the reasons.

If this question makes you feel uncomfortable please do not answer it. It is already known that most survivors of abuse cannot report it at the time and do not for many years. If you can answer the question it will help the Commission understand there will be those who have been abused recently who will not be able to report to them. It will also help look at ways we can make it safe for survivors to report abuse earlier.

7. If you told anyone at the time, can you describe how they reacted and what happened as a result of you telling them?

8. Have you told anyone at the place where the abuse happened or where the abuser worked (school, church, orphanage, or other)? Can you list who they were and their role in the institution?

9. Please describe what happened when you told the person(s) about the abuse? What was their reaction? What did they do about it? Did they offer you any help?

**10. Do you know other persons who were abused by the person who abused you? How many?
Was the abuse similar or different?**

11. Have you reported your abuse to any official or to any complaints or abuse investigation process linked to the institution? Can you name the person or group you reported to?

If you could not find information telling you who to report to or there was no person, official or process to report your abuse to, please note that. It is important information.

12. What were you expecting when you reported the abuse to the institution, official, or organisation?

13. If you reported the abuse to the church, or organisation through an official complaints process, can you describe the process you went through and include your comments on how it worked at each step for you? Please include how the process affected you, how you felt, what you thought about it then and now and if you were offered support as you went through the process

14. If you used an institutions complaints process to seek justice, what was it called and what was the outcome? Have you any documents you can attach to your report and can comment on here. It would be helpful if you can list the documents and attach copies of them to this report.

15 How you feel and think about the outcome of the official institution complaint process now? Has the institution continued to support you or show you it took your complaint and its responsibility to address it seriously, or did they get to the end of the process and then terminate contact with you?

16 Comment on the effects, if any, going through the institutions process for reporting abuse had on you and what you would want to change.

17. If you reported your abuse to the police, probation office, judge or court, can you describe what happened as a result.

18. If your abuser was charged and went to court what did the court decide?

19. What was your experience of being a witness?

20. Did you think your justice was achieved? Include reasons for your answer.

21 What do you believe was the effect on you of going through the police and court processes?

22 If your abuser went to prison but he/she since been released, and how do you feel about that?

23. If you needed help with the effects of what happened to you from a doctor, counsellor, therapist or a social service, did you get it? Can you note any problems you had getting help when you needed it

24. If you reported your abuse to MSD(ministry of Social Development)Orangi Tamariki, Department of Social Welfare, CYS, other government department or ACC, can you describe how it was handled and what happened as a result.

REFLECTION

Take some time to reflect on what you have written and then your experience. Sometimes when you use a guide you get focussed solely on the questions. Make sure that something important for you to say has not been left out. Even if you have noted it on the form already, make a note below of what you want to make sure the commissioners especially note and take from your experience. Include what you want the commission to do about the abuse that has happened to you and others and your personal belief about how things need to change. Add pages as needed to give your full response.