

## Support Planning Meetings

### Support Planning Meetings: *Information for professionals (agencies and service providers)*

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#### What is a Support Planning Meeting?

A Support Planning Meeting (SPM) brings a child sex offender together with the people committed to supporting them to remain offence-free.

The meeting creates a support network and a safety plan for the offender in the community. Research suggests that support networks increase the chances of a successful and non-offending future for the individual involved.

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#### What is the purpose of a Support Planning Meeting?

The purpose of an SPM is to establish a support network for the offender and to agree upon a safety plan.

The safety plan addresses any Court/Parole Board-directed conditions and includes strategies that the support network thinks will assist the offender to lead an offence-free lifestyle.

The plan is part of providing support and monitoring throughout the offender's sentence/order and afterwards to increase their chances of an offence-free future.

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#### When does a Support Planning Meeting happen?

SPMs are held, where possible, within the first four weeks following either release from prison, or the start of a supervision or extended supervision order.

The support group may agree to hold further SPMs monthly or every three months, or just before the end of the sentence/order.

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#### Who will be there?

Those who attend the SPM will be either directly involved in the offender's life or likely to be involved in the near future. The support network can include:

- support people identified by the offender, such as family members, employees and friends.
- other professionals or treatment providers, such as psychologists or specialist treatment programmes.
- relevant government agencies, such as the Department of Corrections, Child, Youth and Family, and the Police.

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#### What will be discussed at the meeting?

Participants introduce themselves and outline their role or relationship with the offender. The meaning of risk is discussed so everyone has the same understanding.

The meeting identifies specific risks for the offender, including any behaviours, thoughts or attitudes that may lead to further offending. Everyone in the support network should be familiar with the offender's specific risks so they can help them to overcome these before they re-offend. The offender will be asked to share their "offence chain" or information they have learned about their offending to date.

## Support Planning Meetings – continued

The meeting identifies strategies to cope with risks and creates a safety plan to highlight specific supports for the offender.

Once the safety plan is developed, the meeting will finish with confirming everyone's commitment to the plan and determining "where to from here".

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### What is the role of support people?

Support people can be anyone who the offender has shared their history with and who are willing to assist him/her to live an offence-free lifestyle. Support people are essential for an effective support network as the professionals involved generally have less frequent contact with the offender in the community.

Support people may help the offender in practical ways, such as providing transport, accompanying them to appointments, or being available for phone contact. They will also help the offender be aware of risky situations and warning signs and how to act on these. The role of support people will be discussed at the Support Planning Meeting and is a key factor in reducing the likelihood of the offender re-offending.

Support people will be able to contact other network members if they have any concerns.

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### Information sharing

The SPM involves sharing information about the offender that is relevant to the support network.

Before the meeting, information is shared between the professionals involved to determine who should be there (i.e. type and frequency of offending, age and gender of victims, and risk of re-offending). After that, any specific information about the offender will only be shared with those who will be directly involved in the support network.

The offender is asked to sign a consent form giving permission for the above sharing of information.

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### What are the limits of confidentiality?

There are limits to confidentiality if further offending is disclosed during the SPM.

For example, the Police are likely to investigate any reports of undetected offending.

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### Contact details

If you have any questions about Support Planning Meetings, please contact:

Probation Officer

Phone