

Practice Guideline – Consultations

Introduction

1. This Practice Guideline provides information about how the Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (the Commission) will listen to and engage with people at community consultations.
2. The Commission may vary, replace or withdraw this Guideline at any time.
3. The Commission will publish other guidelines during the course of its Inquiry, including in relation to how to provide information to the Commission in other ways. All guidelines will be available on the Commission's website.

Primary Purpose of Consultations

4. Consultations are intended to provide opportunities for the Commission to hear from individuals, including representatives of particular community groups or organisations.
5. Consultations may guide future inquiries under the Commission's Terms of Reference or answer questions that the Commission is considering. They may lead to further requests for specific information.
6. Consultations will typically involve a small group of invited participants, engaging in discussions with the Commission about particular topics or themes that relate to the Commission's Inquiry. The form of a consultation will vary depending on the group or the topics to be discussed.
7. The focus of the Commission will be on the current domestic, family and sexual violence systems in South Australia, and understanding changes that might be needed to those systems. Individuals will not be asked to share details of their lived experiences of domestic, family or sexual violence.
8. The focus of the initial phase of consultations will be on the Commission listening to the views and perspectives of people in attendance. The latter phase of consultations will be focussed on obtaining particular information or testing particular ideas.

Invitations to a Consultation

9. Individuals or organisations will be invited to attend a consultation by:
 - Invitation from the Commissioner

- Invitation from a Consultation Host, being an organisation engaged by the Commission to host a consultation.

10. Attendance and participation at consultations is voluntary.

11. All reasonable efforts will be made by the Commission, or a Consultation Host:

- For individuals to join online rather than in person, if they wish.
- For locations to be safe and accessible.
- To provide interpreters.

Participating in a Consultation

12. In advance of every consultation, as far as is practicable, the Commission or Consultation Host will provide an agenda and list of attendees to each attendee and give advance notice of the topics to be discussed. This is to encourage clarity and build trust, to ensure every person can choose if and how they wish to participate.

13. A consultation is not a formal hearing of the Commission. Participants in a consultation are not witnesses and will not be asked to take an oath or affirmation.

14. As indicated at [10] above, participation in a consultation is entirely voluntary. People will not be compelled to speak and may leave at any time.

15. As explained at [7] above, individuals will not be asked to share details of their lived experiences of domestic, family or sexual violence.

Conduct of Participants

16. The Commission will encourage all attendees to:

- Listen and engage in an inclusive and safe way to encourage everyone to contribute and be heard.
- Be respectful of the diverse views and experiences of other participants.
- Prepare and contribute the rich depth of their knowledge, ideas and perspectives to the consultation.
- Contribute to a safe environment and understand other participants will hear information they choose to share.



Recording of Consultations and Confidentiality

17. The general themes of each consultation and topics covered may be made public. The identities of attendees at consultations will only be made public with their consent and personal contact details will not be published.
18. At each consultation, notes will be taken by a Commission staff member. Any notes taken will not be published or otherwise made public.
19. Consultations may be audio or video recorded, but only with the prior consent of all participants. Audio and video recordings will not be published or otherwise made public.
20. The Commission may publish (for example in its newsletter or final report) a summary of what took place or particular comments which were made. Permission will be sought from a participant to attribute a comment to them or their organisation, or to use a direct quotation in a Commission publication.
21. Attendees will not be permitted to take notes or record the consultation in any way.
22. Attendees will be required to keep what is discussed during a consultation confidential.
23. Any notes or recordings will be retained as part of the Commission's formal records. Please see the Commission's [Practice Guideline – Privacy](#) for more information about privacy and use of information.

Notifications to other departments

24. If information provided at a consultation suggests that a person is at risk of harm, the Commission may provide the relevant information to South Australia Police or the Department for Child Protection, as deemed appropriate.
25. If information provided at a consultation raises a potential issue of corruption, misconduct or maladministration in public administration, or a complaint about the conduct of a South Australia Police Officer, the Commission will provide that information to the Office for Public Integrity.