

New laws for crimes against vulnerable people

ACT Government



Easy English

Hard words



This book has some hard words.

The first time we write a hard word

- the word is in **blue**
- we write what the hard word means.

You can get help with this book



You can get someone to help you

- read this book
- know what this book is about



- find more information.

About this book



This book is from the ACT Government.



There are new laws about crimes against **vulnerable people**.



Vulnerable people means

- adults with disability



- adults over 60 years of age with other support needs.



Other support needs can include

- mental health problems



- physical health problems.

What will the new laws do?



The new laws will help vulnerable people stay safe from **abuse** by caregivers.



Abuse can mean

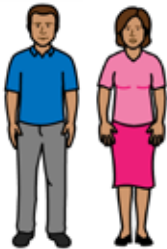
- a caregiver harms a person

- a caregiver does **not** protect a person from harm.

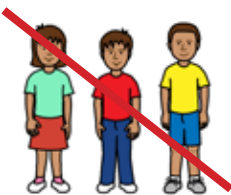


The new laws do **not** replace old laws.

The new laws add more protection for vulnerable people in the ACT.



The new laws are for **adults**.



Laws that protect children are **not** in this book.

What is disability?



Disability means

- it is very hard for a person to communicate, learn or move around



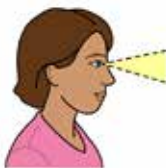
- the person needs support to do everyday activities



- the person is **not** likely to get better.

Disability can be **sensory**.

Sensory includes how we



- see



- hear

- smell or taste



- touch.

Why does the law include adults over 60?



People over 60 are called seniors.



The Australian community gives seniors extra support.



Research says that people over 60 have a high risk of being abused.



The new laws help to protect people over 60.

There are 3 new laws

Law 1. Abuse of a vulnerable person



It is against the law for a caregiver to abuse a vulnerable person.

There are different types of abuse.



Sexual abuse includes sex, kissing or touching a person who does **not** want it.



Physical abuse means someone hurts another person.

Threats of abuse are also against the law.



Threats mean the caregiver makes the vulnerable person

- feel unsafe
- think abuse might happen.



Abuse also includes when a caregiver makes it hard for a vulnerable person

- to do things without them



- to see other people



- to get support and services they need



- to feel safe



- to go places or do things they want.

A caregiver can do things that are **reasonable**.



Reasonable might mean a person acts to keep everyone safe.

Law 2. Failure to protect a vulnerable person



This law is for people who work in **institutions**.

Institutions include organisations that give supports to vulnerable people.

For example



- aged care services



- disability care services



- hospitals



- other services connected to an institution.



It is against the law for an institution to know that harm could happen and **not** stop the harm.

For example, a manager does **not** fix a problem when they know it could harm vulnerable people.



Law 3. Neglect of a vulnerable person

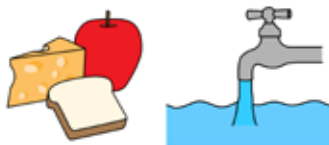
It is against the law to **neglect** a vulnerable person.



Neglect means someone does **not** give the vulnerable person **necessities of life**.

Necessities of life means things a person needs to survive.

For example



- food and water



- enough clothes

- medicine



- shelter.



When do the new laws start?

The new laws start on **20 April 2021**.



Who must follow the laws?

Anyone who gives care to a vulnerable person must follow the laws.



What happens if the law is broken?

If a person does **not** follow the laws, they can go to court and go to jail for up to 5 years.



A judge might **not** send someone to jail if their action

- was reasonable
- was part of the workplace rules
- was **not** in their control
- was what their boss or manager told them to do.





More information and support

ACT Government



Website justice.act.gov.au/vulnerablepeople

ACT Human Rights Commission



Website hrc.act.gov.au/complaints



Phone 02 6205 2222

Legal Aid ACT



Phone 1300 654 314

Victim Support ACT



Website victimsupport.act.gov.au/functions/contact-us



Phone 1800 822 272



To report a crime contact ACT Policing

Phone 131 444



Website police.act.gov.au/connect-us



Call 000 if you are unsafe and need help quickly.

Find other advocacy services



Website communityservices.act.gov.au

National

Relay

Service

Do you need help to speak or listen?

Contact the ACT Government through the National Relay Service or NRS.



Phone 1800 555 660



Website [communications.gov.au/
accesshub/nrs](http://communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs)



Do you need to speak in a language that is not English?

Contact the Telephone Interpreter Service or TIS.



Phone 131 450



Other contacts

ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service (ADACAS)

Phone 02 6242 5060

Advocacy for Inclusion

Phone 02 6257 4005

Canberra Rape Crisis Centre

Phone 02 6247 2525

Carers ACT

Phone 02 6296 9900

Consumer Law Centre and Care Inc

Phone 02 6143 0044

Domestic Violence Crisis Service

Phone 02 6280 0900

National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

Phone 1800 880 052

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