



FACTSHEET

Going to a 'Private Session' of the Royal Commission

One option for participation in the Royal Commission is to attend a 'private session'. You can attend a Private Session whether or not you have completed a written statement.

A private session is an opportunity for you to tell your story to the Royal Commission by meeting with one or two of the Commissioners, face-to-face.

- In this private session you can elaborate on the information that you have provided in your written statement, and explain things in more detail;
- It will run for a maximum of one hour;
- It is informal. It will be like having a conversation and the Commissioners will ask you some questions.

Confidential

- The Commission will not share your story with anyone else, without your consent;
- The Commission may share the information with law enforcement bodies. They will ask you first;
- The only reason this information would be shared without your consent, is if there is a person in danger, to prevent harm;
- The private session will be tape-recorded. This record will remain confidential.

Support person

You can bring along a support person to the session. For example, you might like to take a friend, partner or family member.

One of the Bravehearts staff members may be able to attend the session as your support person or Bravehearts can arrange someone to support you.

People that will be there

- You and your support person;
- There will be usually one, but sometimes two, Commissioners there to listen to your story;
- There will **not** be anyone there from the institution in which the sexual assault occurred;



- There will also be another 'administrative' person there that works with the Commissioners;
- After your private session you can speak to the duty counsellor. This counsellor will be available to you at the end of the session, at your discretion.

What to take with you

It may be helpful to take:

- A printed copy of your written statement (if you have one), that you have already sent to the Commission;
- A one-page piece of paper that lists the main things that you would like to say to the Commissioners. This will help you organise your thoughts;
- Documents that you think would help tell your story.

Documents

- Do not take the original documents. If you take photocopied versions of the documents, then you can give them to the Commissioners to keep;
- Only take a few documents – no more than three or four.

For example, you could take:

- A copy of a previous statement that you have made to police (if you have one);
- A copy of any letters you have written to the institution or others;
- A copy of any letters that the institution has written you. For example, the Catholic Church's *Towards Healing* unit may have written to you.

You do not have to bring anything extra with you. If you do not have these documents, that is okay as well.

If you have any questions or would like help with the Royal Commission, you can contact our case management team on rc@bravehearts.org.au or 1800 272 831

We understand that this process can often be personally difficult. Bravehearts is able to arrange counselling for you to support you during this time.