

Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety Incident reporting guide for residential care services

Critical incidents — Report immediately

- Note: Police involvement should only be for emergencies or where alleged criminal behaviour occurs.
- Call 000 for Queensland Police, Fire or Ambulance, where appropriate
 - Follow internal policies and procedures to alert responsible parties, as required
 - Call the local Child Safety Service Centre during business hours or the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre on 1800 177 135 outside of business hours as soon as you can after safety is assured and the emergency response is completed
 - Submit a written critical incident report within 4 business hours of becoming aware of the incident or as soon as it is reasonable to do so.

Incidents which result in life threatening or serious injury or trauma to a child or young person living in, or receiving support from, a care service

Death	■ Child dies
Life threatening injury (hospitalisation)	■ Child receives a life threatening or serious injury that results in hospitalisation
Missing or abducted child	■ Child is missing, location is unknown and there are fears for the child’s safety or wellbeing ■ Child is, or it is reasonably suspected the child has been, abducted or taken against their will ■ For more information, refer to <i>Reporting missing children: Guidelines for approved carers and care services</i> . Go to Reporting missing children: Guidelines for approved carers and care services
Major security incident	■ Child is involved in an incident (e.g. a fire, bomb threat, hostage situation, significant destruction of property or theft of a car) and emergency services is required to attend and relocation is required.
Rape, sexual assault or other serious assault	■ Child is allegedly raped or sexually assaulted ■ Child is seriously assaulted and medical treatment is required ■ Child is allegedly responsible for rape, sexual assault or serious assault of another person ■ Child is allegedly responsible for serious animal cruelty
Significant mental health episode (immediate medical treatment)	■ Child experiences a serious mental health episode which places their life at risk and requires immediate medical attention in a hospital
Concern requiring immediate response	■ Child experiences harm which is suspected or has been caused by action or inaction by a care service staff member or person involved with a care service ■ Child experiences a prohibited practice such as the use of physical force, chemical or mechanical restraints, inappropriate hot or cold bathing, applying chilli powder on food or body parts, corporal punishment or other unethical practices
Alleged criminal behaviour	■ Child engages in high risk behaviour with an adult, such as communicating in a sexual nature, possessing an image of an adult of a sexual nature (e.g. on a mobile device) or sending a personal photo of a sexual nature to an adult ■ Child leaves the premises with police due to an investigation into their alleged criminal conduct or as an alleged victim of a crime
Negative experience during family time	■ Child reports possible harm caused during family time

Incidents which result in life threatening, serious injuries or trauma to a care service staff member or person involved with a care service which impact, or have the potential to impact, the safety, wellbeing and best interests of a child or young person in care

Death	■ Person dies at a care service or their death is due to an incident that occurred at a care service. ■ Child is allegedly involved in the death of another person
Serious or life threatening injury	■ Person receives a life threatening injury in a care service while performing their duties ■ Person receives a life threatening injury during an incident which occurs at a care service
Rape, sexual assault or other serious assault	■ Person is injured as a result of a serious assault sustained while caring for a child or young person and immediate medical treatment or hospitalisation is required ■ Person is allegedly raped or sexually assaulted whilst performing their duties ■ Person is allegedly involved in a rape or sexual assault whilst performing their duties

Category 2: Major incidents — Report by close of next business day

- Follow internal policies and procedures to alert responsible parties, as required
- Submit a written report to the local Child Safety Service Centre by 5pm the next business day after you become aware of the incident (an immediate, verbal report is not necessary)

Incidents which threaten the safety, wellbeing and best interests of a child or young person living in, or receiving support from, a care service but do not result in a Category 1 incident

Serious injury	■ Child suffers a serious injury which is not life threatening (e.g. a broken arm) or experiences a mental health episode that requires medical treatment but does not result in overnight hospitalisation or admittance to a mental health facility.
Alleged harm, neglect or exploitation	■ Child is allegedly harmed or neglected (not by care service staff), however, immediate safety is not threatened.
Self-harm	■ Child directly or deliberately harms their body without the conscious intention to die.
Escalating risk taking behaviour	■ Child displays increased risk taking behaviour which poses an increased risk to themselves or others.
Alleged criminal behaviour	■ Child is charged with an offence and/ or there is a pending Childrens Court hearing. ■ Child is alleged to have stolen goods or illicit substances in their possession, or has suspected involvement in other criminal actions warranting police investigation.
Serious threat	■ Child makes a serious threat of destruction to property or injury toward others in the care service.
Substance misuse	■ Child engages in substance misuse or the effect of such is observed but does not appear seriously impacted and does not require medical attention or hospitalisation.
Absence	■ Child is absent for a short period without permission and their location is known or can be quickly established. ■ Child is absent, their location is known but there are safety concerns e.g. with a person unauthorised to have contact due to previous harm or allegations of previous harm.
Property damage	■ Child deliberately causes noticeable damage (e.g. broken windows, holes in walls), however, relocation is not required ■ Child is with another person who causes damage to the property e.g. a young person returns to the care service with a friend, and the friend causes damage

Note: Category 1 and 2 incidents are provided as a guide only

Incidents of significant concern

- There may be incidents that are of significant concern but are not required to be reported to Child Safety and/or emergency services as they do not fit within Category 1 – Critical incidents or Category 2 – Major incidents.
- However, it may still be appropriate to inform Child Safety of incidents that are of significant concern. Follow internal policies and procedures and consider if the event can be resolved by providing direct care and attention at the time of the incident with follow up case work conducted as part of, for example, the Behaviour Support Plan and Safety Plan.
- If you believe the matter requires attention, but do not require police attendance, please contact Policelink on 131 444.