



Youth justice custodial practice manual

Secure Services

(<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual>)

If you print and store this document, you may be looking at an outdated version and this may impact on your duty of care. Always check the latest version in the Youth justice custodial practice manual on the DHS intranet before taking action under this procedure. Please make sure the printed procedures are kept securely.

Youth Justice Custodial Services Practice Manual (<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual>) > Case management, education & employment (<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/case-management-education-and-employment>) > Case management (<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/case-management-education-and-employment/case-managment>) > Client incident reporting (<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/case-management-education-and-employment/case-managment/client-incident-reporting>)

Client incident reporting

This section outlines procedures for reporting incidents related to young people in the precincts.

When to use this procedure

- Following an incident involving a young person who is in youth justice custody – including incidents that occur outside of the precinct.
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What else you need to know

Make sure you have read and understood the following procedures:

- [Emergency procedures](http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/emergency-safety-and-security-procedures/emergency-procedures) (<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/emergency-safety-and-security-procedures/emergency-procedures>)
 - [Operational debriefing](http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/emergency-safety-and-security-procedures/operational-safety-processes/operational-debriefing) (<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/emergency-safety-and-security-procedures/operational-safety-processes/operational-debriefing>)
 - [Significant Event Case Notes](http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/case-management-education-and-employment/case-managment/significant-event-case-notes) (<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/case-management-education-and-employment/case-managment/significant-event-case-notes>)
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Staff responsibilities

Find your role below to see what your responsibilities are:

- All staff
 - Most senior staff member to witness an incident or to whom the incident was reported
 - Unit Manager or Operations Manager
 - General Manager
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All staff

At all times

- Be aware of your incident reporting responsibilities.
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Most senior staff member to witness an incident or to whom the incident was reported

Following a critical incident involving or impacting on a young person

- Ensure that all young people and staff involved in the incident are safe and being cared for.
 - Complete a Client Incident Report, following the guidelines in this procedure.
 - Submit the Client Incident Report to the Unit Manager or Operations Manager for checking and endorsement on CRIS.
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Unit Manager or Operations Manager

Once a Client Incident Report has been completed

- On receiving the Client Incident Report, record a brief description of the incident in 20 words or less, and:
 - record the local action in response to the incident and, if appropriate, the action planned to prevent recurrence
 - check the Client Incident Report for quality, ensuring that appropriate incident type, category, young person and location were recorded.
 - Send the Client Incident Report to the General Manager on CRIS.
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General Manager

On receipt of a Client Incident Report from Unit Manager or Operations Manager

- Check the report, review any outstanding issues and forward it to the Director Secure Services on CRIS within the applicable timelines.
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The procedure in detail

- [The aims of client incident reporting](#)
 - [What is a critical incident?](#)
 - [When is a Client Incident Report required?](#)
 - [Reporting a critical client incident](#)
 - [How to choose an incident type and category](#)
 - [Incident review](#)
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The aims of client incident reporting

The overall aims of client incident reporting for all program areas of the department are to:

- ensure timely and effective responses are taken to address the immediate safety and wellbeing of young people
 - be accountable to young people for actions taken immediately and planned in response to their experience of a critical incident
 - ensure due diligence and responsibilities to young people are met
 - support the provision of high-quality services to young people through the full and frank reporting of adverse events
 - assure and enhance the quality of service and supports to young people by monitoring and acting on individual incidents as well as trends identified through the analysis of incident reports
 - support organisational consistency
 - ensure that identified deficits in service and support are addressed
 - inform the appropriate ministers, the secretary, executive directors, directors and regional directors of significant incidents affecting young people in a timely and accurate manner.
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What is a critical incident?

A critical incident is an event where there are significant concerns for a young person's safety and wellbeing.

There are two categories of critical incidents – Category One and Category Two.

Incidents are categorised into the following types:

- absent or missing young people
 - behaviour
 - breach of privacy confidentiality matters
 - community concerns
 - death
 - drug or alcohol
 - escape
 - illness
 - injury
 - medical condition known – deterioration
 - medication error
 - physical assault
 - poor quality of care
 - possession
 - property damage or disruption
 - self-harm
 - suicide attempted
 - sexual assault.
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When is a Client Incident Report required?

A Client Incident Report is required for all critical incidents that occur at the service or during service delivery which involve and/or impact upon young people.

This includes all critical incidents that occur:

- while a staff member is with the young person
- when the young person attends a service provider's premises, including offices, residential services, respite facilities or day services
- when a staff member is escorting a young person on leave or supporting them in the community on the Pre-release Program
- onsite at the service, including inside and around the building and locations that are within view of staff.

For a service providing 24-hour care, including the custodial precincts, a report is required for all incidents involving young people of this service regardless of the location of the incident.

Reporting a critical client incident

Respond to immediate needs of the young people and staff involved

In the case of any incident the first step is to make sure young people and staff are safe.

Once that has been achieved a Client Incident Report must be completed. The report must include immediate actions that have been taken and planned follow-up actions.

Completing the Client Incident Report Form

The most senior witness to the incident or, if there were no witnesses, the staff member to whom the incident was reported must complete parts one to four of the Client Incident Report Form on CRIS.

The Client Incident Report should record all necessary factual details including:

- who was involved
- what happened
- how, where and when the incident occurred
- who was injured and the nature and extent of injuries (if there were any)
- what action is being taken in response to the incident.

Use of force, restraint and isolation

If force, restraint or isolation was used to manage a young person a SECN is required and the tick box on the case note window in CRIS must be selected to indicate an isolation.

The details of the force or restraint must be outlined in the SECN including:

- which staff were involved
- if any injuries were sustained by young people or staff
- the method of force or restraint used
- how long the force or restraint lasted
- if the young person was placed in isolation, how they were escorted there, for example they walked or were placed in an arm lock
- the length of isolation.

Information in the Isolation tab in CRIS must also be completed for every isolation.

Objective language must be used. Refer to **Writing an effective Client Incident Report** for further guidance.

Submitting the completed Client Incident Report

After parts one to four of the Client Incident Report form have been completed the Unit Manager or Operations Manager records a brief description of the incident in 20 words or less, and:

- records the local action in response to the incident and, if appropriate, the action planned to prevent recurrence
- completes the staff to client assault section if applicable
- check the Client Incident Report for quality, ensuring that appropriate incident type, category, client and location details were recorded.

The Unit Manager or Operations Manager sends the Client Incident Report to the General Manager on CRIS. The General Manager completes part six and seven, checks it, reviews any outstanding issues and forwards it to the Director Secure Services.

The General Manager and the Director can revoke a Client Incident Report if it is thought to be inaccurate. The Director must be advised of all Client Incident Reports revoked by the General Manager.

Timelines

The Client Incident Report must be forwarded to the Director Secure Services within the following timelines:

- Category One – as soon as possible and at the latest within one working day of the incident or one working day from first being told of the incident
- Category Two – as soon as possible and at the latest within two working days of the incident or two working days from first being told of the incident.

Alleged criminal acts

In addition to the incident reporting process, any alleged criminal acts that occur during service delivery must be reported to the police as soon as practicable.

Additional details

The need to quickly submit the Client Incident Report may conflict with the time required to develop long-term or complex responses.

In such cases the Client Incident Report must be submitted to meet the set timelines with a note on the form stating that a response is still being developed.

Once a Client Incident Report has been completed and made final the incident description must not be changed or altered in any way or for any reason.

If another witness or individual disagrees with the content of the report the alternative views must be put in writing as a file note and attached to the completed Client Incident Report.

Third-party information

A Client Incident Report may include personal information from a third party to an incident – that is, someone who is not a young person in custody or staff member but who witnessed or was involved in the incident. This could include program providers or visitors to the precinct.

The person should be notified that the information is being collected by the department for the purpose of service improvement and, in particular, to try and prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future. It may not be necessary to name witnesses.

Do not send information by email

There are particular risks in sending messages via the internet. Client Incident Reports must not be sent by email but should be completed and submitted for endorsement on CRIS.

How to choose an incident type and category

Incident type

An incident type is simply a descriptor. For each incident only one incident type must be selected. There is a set list of incident types that can be used in Client Incident Reports.

When choosing an incident type, choose the incident type with the definition that best describes what happened in the incident, or the behaviour or circumstance that had the greatest impact.

Refer to **Incident type categorisation table 2011** to assist in selecting the most appropriate incident type.

Category

There are two categories of reportable incidents. In grading an incident, give consideration to the actual impact or apparent outcome for the young person and the likelihood that the behaviour or circumstances will occur again.

Category One incidents are the most serious. A Category One incident is an incident that has resulted in a serious outcome, such as a young person's death or severe trauma.

Category Two incidents involve events that threaten the health, safety and/or wellbeing of young people or staff.

It is expected that senior staff will use their professional judgement in considering the sensitivity and appropriate grading of incidents being reported.

The Critical Client Incident Management Summary Guide and Categorisation Table assists staff to select the appropriate reporting category.

Factors to consider in determining whether an incident is reportable

Senior unit staff must exercise professional judgement to assess whether a Client Incident Report is needed.

The following factors should be considered when determining whether an incident is reportable:

- Was the young person hurt in the incident? To what extent?
- Are they still at risk?
- Does service delivery to the young person have to change substantially as a result of the incident?

These factors are considered in more detail below.

Severity of outcome

Consider:

- the nature and extent of the trauma

- the level of distress caused to the victim.

If a young person is admitted to hospital as an inpatient (requiring an overnight stay) as a result of a physical or sexual assault, accident, sudden illness, injury, self-harm or possible overdose, the event is reportable as a Category One incident.

Vulnerability of the young person

Consider:

- the age and stage of development, culture and gender of the young person
- the balance of power or position between the alleged perpetrator and victim and the potential for exploitation
- the young person's individual mental and/or physical capacity, understanding of potential risks and communication skills.

An incident is likely to be reportable if it involves the conduct of (or negligence by) a staff member that significantly impacts on or places at risk the health, safety and wellbeing of a young person.

Pattern and history of behaviour

Consider:

- the history and pattern of offending or being offended against
- the young person's risk-taking behaviour
- the frequency of the event
- the likelihood of recurrence.

Significant Event Case Note (SECN)

A SECN must be written if the incident is not serious enough to warrant a Category One or Category Two Client Incident Report, but is still an incident of concern – particularly where it relates to an ongoing behaviour. The Significant Event Case Note procedure provides guidance on how to do this.

Young people receiving multiple service types

Many young people in custody are also supported by a number of other service providers or government departments. This includes young people who are also receiving services from Child Protection or Disability Services.

Information regarding a critical client incident may be disclosed to the other service providers for the purpose of:

- service improvement
- lessening or preventing a serious or imminent threat to a young person's life, health, safety or welfare
- trying to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.
- The Unit Manager should notify the Area Youth Justice Worker and, where relevant, Child Protection or Disability Services of any reportable incidents involving young people.

Incident review

Secure Services needs to review incidents for quality improvement purposes.

Following the Director's endorsement of a Client Incident Report, the details are recorded on the TRIM database and are analysed monthly. Data relating to the time, type, categories and location of incidents is analysed to identify themes and systemic issues requiring attention.

Following Category One incidents and selected Category Two incidents, operational debriefs are conducted to review the circumstances surrounding the incident and to learn from the incident to prevent recurrence.

All Category One and selected Category Two incidents are audited on a six monthly basis by Secure Services.

Additional Information

- [Client Incident Reporting \(http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/resources-and-tools/policies-and-standards/incident-reporting-departmental-instruction\)](http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/resources-and-tools/policies-and-standards/incident-reporting-departmental-instruction)
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