THE INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOSEXUAL MEDICINE

Serious Incident Reporting Policy

Contents

Introduction

Given the challenging nature of the work undertaken and the difficult context faced by many charities, the Charity Commission understands that serious incidents will happen. When something serious happens, it is the Commission's role to ensure that Trustees comply with their legal duties and that the charity manages the incident responsibly. This means the Commission will be looking for assurance that the charity has taken steps to limit the immediate impact of the incident and, where possible, prevent it from happening again.

Most problems can be resolved by Trustees themselves, in some cases with timely advice from professional advisers. Sometimes the Commission needs to use its powers to protect a charity. Taking action quickly will help protect a charity from further harm. Reporting also means the Commission can identify whether other charities might be affected and can give better advice to all charities to help them protect themselves.

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures for identifying, reporting, and managing serious incidents within our charity. It ensures compliance with our charity regulator's guidelines and promotes transparency and accountability.

Scope

This policy applies to all Trustees, other volunteers, employees, contractors, and third-party representatives of the charity. Its requirements should be reflected in other policies and procedures, agreements and contracts, as necessary.

Charity Commission Guidance or References Applicable

Charity Commission (England & Wales) – Serious Incident Examples Table – Deciding What to Report.
Charity Commission E&W - How to report a serious incident in your charity
HSE – legal recording and reporting accidents.
HSE – RIDDOR
HSE – RIDDOR Index.
DCMS - Guidance on reporting safeguarding concerns in a charity.
ICO -https://ico.org.uk

Process

Definition of a Serious Incident

A serious incident is an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant:

- Harm to the charity's beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, or others who come into contact with the charity through its work.
- Loss of the charity's money or assets.
- Damage to the charity's property.
- Harm to the charity's work or reputation.

Investigating an Incident

Any incident that causes an injury or harm should be investigated. For serious incidents it may be necessary to have it formally investigated or even be investigated by external authorities. However, even if it is only minor and only requires an informal review by IPM Chair, the following process should be followed:

- Identify what happened and the extent of any injury or harm.
- Assess if there is a serious incident, or other, reporting requirement.
- Identify the cause and, in particular, if a mistake was made by someone and/or there was a weakness in policy or procedures.
- Identify what reasonable steps should be taken to prevent or at least mitigate the risk of it happening again, who should take these steps and a timescale for doing so.

Responsibility to Report

The responsibility for reporting serious incidents rests with the charity's Trustees. Trustees may delegate the task to an employee or professional adviser, but they retain ultimate responsibility for ensuring timely and accurate reporting.

What to Report

Incidents that must be reported include, but are not limited to:

- Fraud, theft, or significant financial loss
- Significant harm to beneficiaries, staff, or volunteers
- Major governance issues
- Any other incident that could seriously impact the charity's reputation or operations

The main categories of reportable incident are:

- protecting people and safeguarding incidents – incidents that have resulted in or risk significant harm to beneficiaries and other people who come into contact with the charity through its work
- financial crimes – fraud, theft, cyber-crime and money laundering

- large donations from an unknown or unverifiable source, or suspicious financial activity using the charity's funds
- other significant financial loss
- links to terrorism or extremism, including 'proscribed '(or banned) organisations, individuals subject to an asset freeze, or kidnapping of staff

- other significant incidents, such as – insolvency, forced withdrawal of banking services without an alternative, significant data breaches/losses or incidents involving partners that materially affect the charity

Examples of what should and should not be reported are contained in the Charity Commission (England and Wales) -Serious Incident Examples Table - Deciding What to Report.

How to Report

Action to take: If something does go wrong, we should take immediate action to:

- prevent or minimise any further harm, loss or damage
- report it to the Commission as a serious incident using the online form "Report a Serious Incident"
- report it to the police (and/or other relevant agencies) if it is suspected that a crime has been committed, and to any other regulators the charity is accountable to
- report any significant breaches or loss of data to the Information Commissioner's Office without undue delay
- plan what to say to staff, volunteers, members, the public, the media and other stakeholders, such as funders
- review what happened and prevent it from happening again – this may include reviewing internal controls and procedures, internal or external investigation and/or seeking appropriate help from professional advisers

Version Control - Approval and Review

No.	Approved by	Date	Main Changes	Review
Draft		4 March 2025	First version of new policy	3 years