

Serious Incident Reporting Guidelines

These Guidelines aim to help and support Disability Service Providers to meet their responsibilities when dealing with serious incidents or alleged incidents that involve, or impact upon, TAC or WorkSafe-funded clients

DISABILITY SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Attendant Care
- Shared Supported Accommodation
- Client Independence Skills Service
- RIPL

As part of the TAC and WorkSafe registration requirements Disability Service Providers must maintain an up-to-date Incident Register

1. WHAT IS A SERIOUS INCIDENT?

A 'serious incident' is where suspicion, complaint, allegation or other evidence is received or obtained regarding:

- the death of, or serious injury to, a client/injured worker
- a health, safety, abuse or unspecified risk to a client/injured worker
- a provider experiencing significant organisational disruption or mismanagement
- the ongoing financial viability of the Disability Service Provider; or
- alleged fraudulent or illegal conduct.

2. REPORTING A SERIOUS INCIDENT

It is important to report serious incidents immediately to ensure appropriate action can be taken. Early reporting is essential to:

- ensure timely and effective responses are taken to address immediate client/injured worker safety and wellbeing
- ensure strategies to address the serious incident or allegation can be effectively implemented as soon as possible
- ensure the Disability Services Provider complies with their duty of care to the client/injured worker
- support the provision of high-quality services to clients/injured workers through comprehensive reporting
- enhance the quality of service and supports to clients/injured workers through monitoring and acting on individual incidents as well as trends identified through the analysis of incident reports
- ensure the Disability Service Provider continues to meet its legislative and compliance obligations, and
- help mitigate against future incidents.

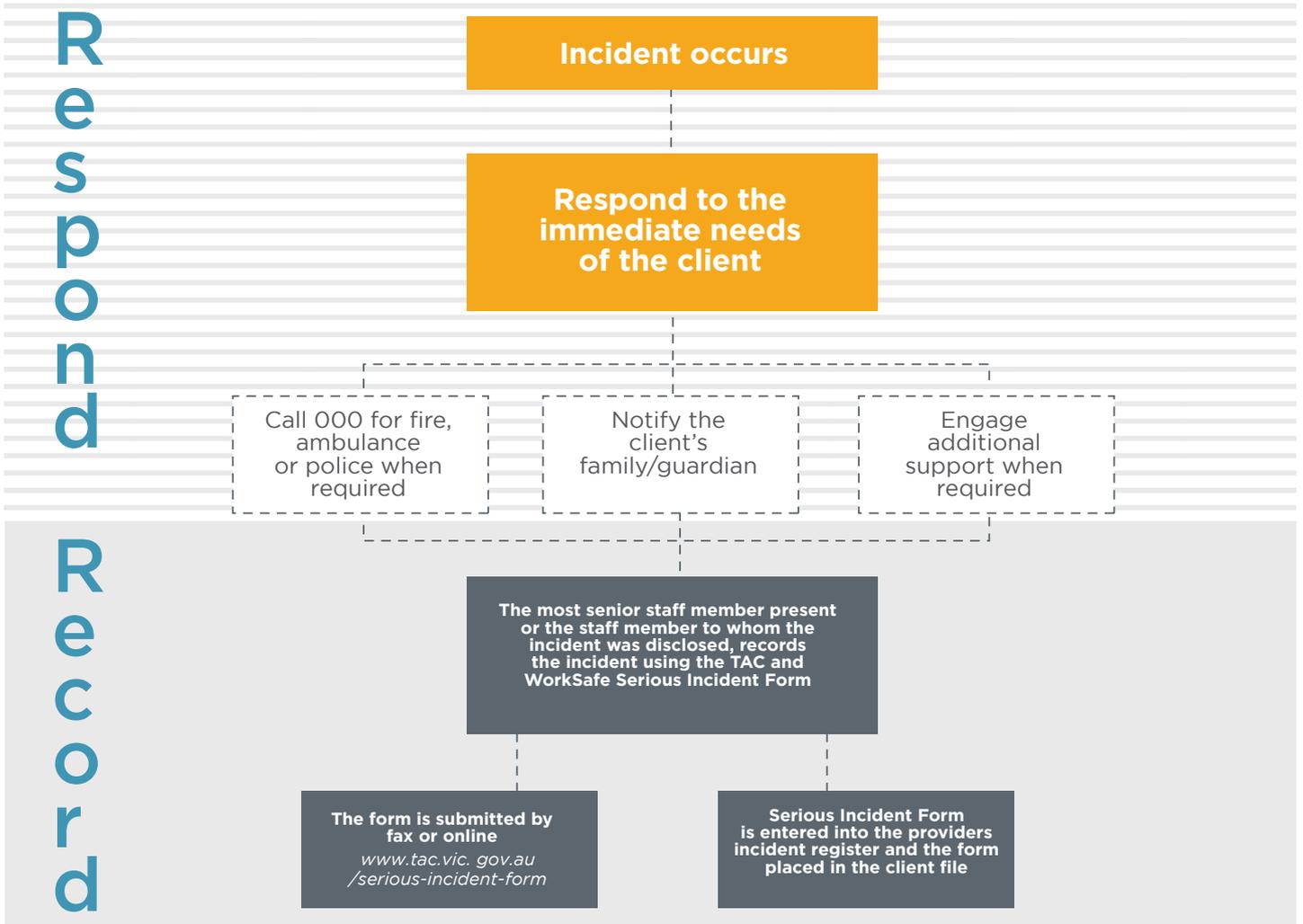
3. COMPLETING THE SERIOUS INCIDENT FORM

A senior staff member, or the staff member who was first made aware of the incident, must complete the **Serious Incident Form**. The form is to be submitted to the TAC or WorkSafe within 24 hours of the Service Provider becoming aware of an incident or allegation.

THIS INCLUDES ALL INCIDENTS OR ALLEGATIONS THAT OCCUR:

- while a staff member is with the client/injured worker
- when the client/injured worker attends a service provider premises, including offices, residential services, respite facilities or day services, or
- when a staff member is providing in-home support or support in the community with the client onsite at the service, including inside and around the building and locations that are within view of staff.

PROCESS FOR REPORTING A SERIOUS INCIDENT



Improve

1. RESPOND TO THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS OF THE CLIENT

The Disability Service Provider must ensure the client's health and safety needs are attended to immediately, including their mental and physical needs. Providers should seek medical assistance when required.

2. CONTACT EMERGENCY SERVICES WHEN REQUIRED

If the client is in immediate danger or a serious allegation has been made, call 000 for emergency services (fire, ambulance or police).

3. NOTIFY THE CLIENT'S FAMILY/GUARDIAN

You must notify the client or injured worker's family or guardian as soon as possible to explain the incident or allegation and the action being taken to remedy it.

4. ENGAGE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT WHEN REQUIRED

When appropriate, and once the client's immediate needs have been met, the Provider can facilitate additional support for the client from:

- Crisis Assessment and Treatment Teams - CAT
- Centre Against Sexual Assault - CASA
- Disability Services Commissioner - DSC
- National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

5. COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THE FORM

The Serious Incident Form must be completed and submitted to the TAC or WorkSafe within 24 hours of the Provider becoming aware of a serious incident.

6. SERIOUS INCIDENT FORM IS ADDED TO THE PROVIDER'S INCIDENT REGISTER AND A COPY PLACED IN THE CLIENT'S FILE

As part of the TAC and WorkSafe's registration requirements, Providers must ensure a copy of the Serious Incident Form is kept in the client/injured worker's file and they maintain an up-to-date Incident Register.

4. INCIDENT TYPES?

The Serious Incident Form provides a list of incident or allegation types. When choosing an incident type, please choose the incident type that best describes the circumstance of the incident or allegation.

Absent/missing client: Where a client is absent and there are concerns for their safety and welfare or that of others. Abuse: Neglect or exploitation of any kind. Types of abuse include, but are not limited to, financial, physical, psychological / emotional and sexual.

Behaviour – dangerous: Client actions that lead to or place self or others at risk of harm.

Behaviour – disruptive: Client actions that cause disorder, are intrusive and/or offensive to others.

Behaviour – sexual: Sexually orientated actions by client in inappropriate circumstances.

Breach of privacy/confidentiality matters: The inappropriate disclosure of confidential client information.

Community concern: Incidents that involve or impact upon clients which cause community concern.

Death – client: The death of a client during service delivery.

Death – other: The death of a person other than a client or staff member that involves or impacts upon a client.

Death – staff: The death of a staff member that involves or impacts upon a client.

Drug/alcohol: The use or misuse of drugs and/or alcohol and/or other substances.

Illness: An unforeseen illness that is not described in the client's documented care plan.

Injury: Actions or behaviours that unintentionally cause harm which requires medical attention.

Medical condition known – deterioration: The unanticipated and/or disproportionate deterioration of a known medical condition.

Medication error – incorrect: The administration of incorrect medication.

Medication error – missed: Missed administration of medication.

Medication error – pharmacy: An error in the dispensing of medication.

For example, there was an error in the written instruction or medication provided by a pharmacist that resulted in the administration of incorrect medication.

Physical assault: Actions, or attempted actions, that involve the use of physical force against a person that result in, or have the potential to cause harm.

Poor quality of care: Inappropriate behaviour or inadequate care by caregivers or staff.

Property damage/disruption: Damage or disruption to premises that involves or impacts upon clients.

Provider: A provider experiencing significant organisational disruption and executive mismanagement.

Provider: The ongoing financial viability of the provider.

Provider: Conduct which is or is potentially fraudulent, illegal or is engaged in other criminal activities; about which suspicion is raised, or a complaint, an allegation or other evidence is received or obtained by a Provider, the TAC or WorkSafe.

Self-harm: Actions that intentionally cause harm or injury to self.

Suicide attempted: Actions that intentionally cause harm with the intention to end one's own life.

Sexual assault – rape: Penetration or attempted penetration (anal, oral, vaginal) through the use of physical force, intimidation and/or coercion without that person's consent.

Sexual assault – indecent: Unwanted sexual actions which are forced upon a person against their will, through the use of physical force, intimidation and/ or coercion.

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Reporting alleged criminal acts

It is an expectation that Disability Services Providers report alleged criminal activity to the police as soon as possible once being made aware of the allegation.

Reporting to the Coroner

In addition to reporting client or injured worker deaths through the serious incident reporting processes, a statutory obligation to report deaths to the Coroner may also apply. A 'reportable death' to the Coroner includes deaths that appear to be unexpected, unnatural or violent or to have resulted, directly or indirectly, from accident or injury.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONSULT [HTTP://WWW.CORONERSCOURT.VIC.GOV.AU/](http://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/).

Third party information

A Serious Incident Form may include personal information obtained from a third party. A third party includes someone who is not a client/injured worker or staff member of a Disability Services Provider. A third party may be involved in witnessing an incident or making an allegation. Where a third party is involved in an incident or allegation, the Disability Services Provider should notify them that the information will be shared with the TAC or WorkSafe.

Sending information by fax

If the Serious Incident Form is not submitted online, it should be sent to the TAC and WorkSafe by fax using the numbers on the Serious Incident Form. Please be aware that there are privacy and information security risks in sending information by fax and it is more secure to send the form online at www.tac.vic.gov.au/serious-incident-form

Do not send information by email

As the TAC and WorkSafe cannot guarantee the privacy or security of information sent by email, Disability Service Providers must submit the completed Serious Incident Form online or by fax.