



aquatic achievers
swim schools

**Aquatic Achievers
Safeguarding Children and Young People
Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident
Management Policy**

Responsible Officer: General Manager

Document History

Key Changes	Prepared By	Checked By	Approved By	Date
V1. Policy created for ACF approval	Anita P & Anitha M	ACF	Rob	16.3.22

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Scope

The Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident Management Policy applies to all team members, including employees, casual staff, Board and committee members and contractors involved with Aquatic Achievers. This policy applies in all our operational environments and without fail wherever children and young people are participating in our organisation's activities, programs, services and / or facilities.

Purpose

The purpose of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident Management Policy is to outline the actions required to ensure the effective management of incidents. Effectively managing incidents includes taking the appropriate actions in relation to incidents while also identifying any changes required to help prevent or reduce harm to our clients/service users, including children and young people, our team members, and other stakeholders.

Compliance with this policy ensures all incidents are reported and managed in a way that is responsive to the immediate circumstances of the incident, the rights of those involved, and wherever possible, any risks of recurrence are minimised.

This policy assists our organisation to:

- identify incident management and implementation roles and responsibilities
- review incident information over time to identify lessons and practice implications, and making recommendations for improvement
- generate and implement improvement strategies and action plans, and
- monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of actions taken.

In adhering to this policy, team members of Aquatic Achievers will promote equity and respect diversity of the children and young people and their parents /care givers who access our services. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children, young people with a disability, LGBTQI+ children and children who cannot live at home. Our organisation upholds a family's right to have their concern resolved.

Our policies and procedures reflect child safe legislation and promote best practice and care for the children and young people within our organisation. Our Aquatic Achievers General Manager, approves and endorses our Aquatic Achievers Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident Management Policy.

Responsibilities

All team members within our organisation have a duty of care, and at times a legal obligation, and specific roles and responsibilities to ensure that incidents are responded to and managed appropriately. 'Reasonable steps' are taken to prevent harm to children and young people. An incident can occur at any time and may be triggered from a conversation, email, phone call or an alarm.

Our team members are obliged to report any information relating to:

- Incidents, allegations, disclosures, or reasonable concerns in relation to abuse or neglect of a child or young person, either by team members within our organisation or by others

- breaches or actions of other team members within our organisation that contravene our policies and procedures, such as outlined in our Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct Policy.

We view failure by team members to fulfil their role as outlined in the Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident Management Policy as serious misconduct that, depending on the circumstances, may result in disciplinary action or be grounds for dismissal. Further legal implications may also apply.

The responsibility of each role in relation to the development and compliance of the Aquatic Achievers Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident Management Policy is detailed in Roles and Responsibilities section of this policy.

Reporting summary

In the immediate event of an incident, all team members must follow the steps outlined in the Safeguarding Children and Young People Reporting Policy.

- Responding- immediate response to incident or disclosure
- Reporting- internal and external reporting, including mandatory reporting
- Sharing of Information- confidentiality and sharing between authorities and other stakeholders
- Supporting- provision of support for children and young people and others involved

Categorisation of Incidents

Categorisation is an essential activity in incident management. The main objective is to understand what type of incident has occurred, and therefore how to manage most effectively. Over time, if incidents are categorised similarly, the data can be used to identify trends and focus efforts on improving proactively.

Given the broad definition of what constitutes an incident, three categories have been developed to allow for specialised responses based on the actual or potential severity of impact. These categories are as follows:

Incident Type	Description	Managed/escalated to
Minor Incident	Events which cause or may cause minor physical stress and or emotional stress to team members or clients/service users. Near misses and minor breaches of professional standards or agency policy (for example the Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct) that do not compromise the health and safety of clients/service users, including children and young people and team members.	Team members Managers/Supervisors/ Safeguarding Coordinator
Moderate Incident	Events which cause or are likely to cause physical stress or emotional distress to team members or clients/service users. Near misses and criminal behaviour or breaches of professional standards or agency policy (for example the Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct) by team members that may compromise the health and safety of clients / service users, including children and young people and team members.	Safeguarding Coordinator / Manager

<p>Critical Incident</p>	<p>Criminal behaviour, breaches of professional standards or organisational policy (for example Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct) by team members that cause harm to or significantly compromise the health and safety of including customers/ service users, including children and young people and team members.</p> <p>A critical Incident, in relation to a child under the care of the Organisation (whether at the relevant time the child is on premises controlled by the Organisation or is otherwise under the physical supervision of the Organisation) includes the occurrence of any of the following events or any similar event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child dies and: • abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in the death. • the death is, or appears to be, the result of suicide or accident. • the death is, or appears to be, the result of alleged murder, homicide, reckless conduct, or an act of violence; or • the child is under statutory care. • a child has not died but has sustained significant harm or is at risk of harm under the categories described in the relevant jurisdictional legislation of abuse and neglect. • ACF notifies the Organisation that a child has been, in the opinion of ACF, subjected to cumulative inaction or wrong action; or • ACF notifies the Organisation that an incident and or accumulation of incidents has occurred in relation to the child that, in ACF's opinion, gives rise to serious concerns about the adherence by the Organisation, or any employee or contractor of the Organisation, to any part of the Safeguarding Children Program • (Definition as per the ACF Accreditation Terms and Conditions Contract) 	<p>General Manager and Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT Coordinator) and Board</p>
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See Appendix 1 for additional guidance in relation to categorising incident types.

As a Safeguarding Children Accredited organisation by the ACF, reports must be made to ACF by completing the Child Abuse Incident- ACF Report Form as follows:

- All critical incidents to be verbally reported to ACF within 24 hours; and
- Any allegations of child abuse or neglect, that involves our team members within 28 days of the incident in accordance with the requirements of the Safeguarding Children Program.

Reports to the ACF will be made by our General Manager.

Following an incident being reported, the General Manager is responsible for assessing and categorising the incident as Minor, Moderate or Critical as defined above.

Moderate incidents and critical incidents must be reported to the General Manager immediately.

See Critical Incident Management Procedure for further information.

Investigation

Internal Investigation

After each incident, an internal investigation is conducted by General Manager. This investigation will aim to establish:

- Events that led up to the incident
- What the nature of the incident was
- Category of the incident
- Impact to children and young people
- Action taken by team members to report
- Causes and influencing factors in the lead up to the incident
- Procedure followed and actions made by team members
- Support provided to individuals impacted by the incident
- Follow up actions to be completed
- Corrective actions to be taken by the organisation which informs continuous improvement
- Report to the Board.

When the organisation lacks the specific skills or impartiality to complete a fair investigation, an incident may be contracted out to an external investigator. The General Manager may also initiate an external review.

Key Considerations for all Investigations

Careful planning is key to conducting an accurate and procedurally fair investigation. All investigations should consider:

- Fairness- ensuring the most appropriate investigator is engaged to complete a fair and unbiased analysis. Investigations should be clear in their purpose, scope, and plan. Each reportable allegation should be investigated separately. Investigations may still need to be completed regardless of if there has already been a police investigation
- Sensitivity- The rights of all parties involved should be upheld. Consideration for when, how and with whom interviews are conducted, avoiding any potential conflicts of interest. Interviews must be carried out sensitively and culturally appropriately with victims and witnesses. There should be procedural fairness towards the team member involved and a reasonable opportunity to respond
- Confidentiality- Gathering relevant and appropriate evidence which is clearly documented and stored appropriately. Managing risks during investigations such as impact on service, welfare of children and young people
- Outcomes and Recommendations- Recommending findings and opportunities for continuous improvement should be clear. Any action which goes against the recommendations should be thoroughly explained and justified.

External Investigation

In some cases, this may be instigated by an external regulatory body as part of a licencing or compliance requirement. An external investigation may be carried out by the appropriate authorities, for example Police, child protection, NDIS, Quality and Safeguards Commission.

Criminal Acts and Misconduct

Criminal Acts

If while categorising, investigating, or reviewing an incident, it is suspected that the incident may involve criminal acts, the [org] should refer the matter to the appropriate external body (i.e., police / child protection) so it can be addressed using the appropriate legal processes.

The internal investigation or incident review may continue separately to the criminal / child protection investigation however it will usually be appropriate to suspend the review because of issues relating to the disclosure of information.

All suspected criminal activity must be reported to the General Manager and police.

Misconduct

If while categorising, investigating, or reviewing an incident it is suspected that the incident may contain elements of misconduct, the matter should be referred to the General Manager so it can be addressed using the appropriate team members management processes.

Where an allegation involves team members within our organisation, the General Manager will consider if such conduct contravenes the organisations behavioural guidelines / Code of Conduct and if required to by law, act in accordance with the Reportable Conduct Scheme. Information regarding Reportable Conduct Scheme can be found in the Reporting Policy.

The General Manager will take appropriate action to mitigate further potential harm and ensure the safety of the customers. This may include standing the team member down pending a formal investigation of the allegations.

The internal investigation or incident review may continue separately to the misconduct processes unless advised by the General Manager to cease the review because of issues relating to procedural fairness and transparency.

Incident Review

The management of moderate and critical incidents that impact significantly on the persons directly concerned and more broadly on the safe delivery of services and programs will be independently reviewed. An independent internal or external review of the management of the incident may be initiated by the General Manager.

Incident Reviews and investigations are required for incidents where:

- children and young people or team members are seriously injured, or their health and well-being is compromised
- external authorities / emergency services are involved
- insurance claims arise
- the reputation of the organisation may be brought into disrepute
- Work Health and Safety systems and procedures fail.

A root cause analysis of the incident forms part of this review.

A member of the senior leadership team will be assigned as the Incident Review Coordinator. Incident Reviews must be completed by the Incident Review Coordinator in conjunction with relevant team members who may include Board and General Manager and external experts. These team members will form an Incident Review Team. To support the objectivity of incident review processes the Incident Review Coordinator and Team should not have been involved in the management of the incident.

A Review should be completed within 21 days of the initiating date with a further 21 days for completion of any follow-up actions.

Follow-up actions may be identified throughout the process of an Incident Review. These actions will be assigned to a responsible person and a timeframe for completion be established. Follow-up actions arising will be added to the Risk Register to ensure that effective mitigation activities are implemented. The General Manager is responsible for ensuring that actions on the Risk Register are completed within required timeframes.

If there is a risk, then immediate controls will be put in place to control the hazard. This control may be temporary in nature whilst longer term solutions are determined.

The Incident Review Report must be provided to the General Manager. Where follow-up action is required of service / program areas the Incident Review Coordinator will advise the appropriate Manager of the actions to be taken and the timeframes for completion of the actions.

All Incident Review Reports are to be stored on a central and secure system. Regular thematic analysis review of all incidents will be undertaken by the Board as a minimum once per year.

Monitoring

All Incident Reports recorded on the Incident Register are to be regularly reviewed, every six months by the senior leadership team to ensure the effectiveness of actions taken and to identify areas for improvement.

All follow-up actions arising from an incident review, will be monitored by the General Manger via the Risk Register.

Data trend reports from both the Incident and Risk Registers are to be provided to the Board to assist with organisation incident and risk management strategies.

Incidents are not to be closed until actions have been completed and reviewed by the General Manager and persons reporting the incident have been informed of the outcome.

Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibilities of each role in relation to the development, implementation and compliance of the Aquatic Achievers Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident Management Policy are detailed below:

Position	Overall Responsibility for Incident Management	Responsibility in the event of an Incident
Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval and endorsement of this policy Receiving incident reports for specified categories of incidents, provide support and advice as appropriate, and utilise data to inform organisation incident and risk management strategies. Receiving incident report trends from General Manager. Media and/or regulatory reporting oversight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide advice and support to General Manager during specified incidents Manage media interviews and coverage
General Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement policies and procedures across the organisation Ensure team members have access to and understand this policy and related procedures Ensure all managers have access to support and advice to understand and implement this policy and related procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) and appoint a Coordinator of the CIRT where the incident is categorised as Critical. Lead internal and external incident reviews and investigations Receive a Critical Incident Debriefing Report from the CIRT Establish an Incident Review Team and Coordinator where required.
Safeguarding Coordinator Managers/ Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure this policy and related procedures are followed and implemented Provide support and advice to team members to help understand and implement this policy and related procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess each situation reported and notify appropriate team members of the incident as indicated on this policy Responsible for the response and recovery coordination of an incident Immediately control the situation including liaising with key stakeholders, obtaining and documenting details of the incident Report to all Moderate and critical incidents to CEO and/or the Critical Incident Response Team where required
Critical Incident Response Team	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate the response and recovery of an incident, including coordination of Emergency Evacuation Procedures (if required) Notifying relevant emergency contacts for staff or clients/service users involved in the incident and provide appropriate support Coordinate appropriate counselling and support services Manage internal and external communications include liaising with external authorities Implementing an ongoing plan of support to ensure follow up concerning the well-being of individuals involved in the incident

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the organisation complies with any additional external / legislative reporting requirements that may arise from the incident • <i>(The CIRT would usually include persons with management responsibilities for the effected program and appropriate skills in incident management.)</i>
Incident Review Coordinator	N/A	<p>Coordinate an Incident Review including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a confidential Incident Review Report to the General Manager. • Making recommendations for the management of such incidents in the future. <i>(This would usually be a person with no management responsibility for the effected program and who has appropriate skills and knowledge of Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident Management Policy requirements).</i>
Incident Review Team	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting the Incident Review Coordinator to acquit their responsibilities as outlined above • <i>(This would usually be persons who have with no line management responsibility for the effected program and who have appropriate skills and knowledge of Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident Management Policy requirements)</i>
Team Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of and compliance with this policy and related procedure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where necessary and if safe to do so, provide an immediate management of incident as stated in Reporting Policy • Notify and report to a Manager as soon as possible of the incident.

Communication

The Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident Management Policy will be communicated to all team members. Team Members will be involved in reviews of the Incident Management requirements. Any significant alterations to the Incident Management requirements and resources will be communicated to all team members.

Supporting Resources

- Incident Report Form
- Reporting to ACF – Incident Report Form
- Incident Review Report
- Incident Register
- Risk Register
- Risk Assessment

Related Policies

- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Reporting Policy
- Risk Management Policy

Related Frameworks and Legislation

Our Policy complies with relevant legislation and frameworks.

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009-2020
- Australian Human Rights Commission National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

Definitions

Term	Definition
Clients / service users	Persons accessing services from the organisation including children and young people and their families.
Incident Register	A register of incidents identified through incident report system.
Incident Review	A review of the management of an incident that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assesses whether the incident has been effectively managed • assesses whether the Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident Management Policy and processes are effective • makes recommendation(s) to ameliorate and deficiencies in policies and processes.
Team Members	All who work for the organisation whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Board and committee members and contractors
Risk Register	A register of risks identified through risk assessments and incident reviews. Risk mitigation activities and time frames for their completion are recorded. Risks remain on the risk register until risk mitigation activities are completed.
Root Cause Analysis	Part of an Incident Review. Root Cause Analysis probes the source of a problem and then suggests productive solutions in the form of preventive system changes. Root cause analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focuses primarily on systems and processes, not individual performance • progresses from special causes to common causes in organisational processes • identifies changes that could be made in systems and processes to improve the level of performance and reduce the risk of a particular and serious incident occurring in the future.

Review and Approval

This Safeguarding Children and Young People Incident Management Policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or more frequently as required. Any significant proposed changes are to be approved by Aquatic Achievers Board and/or General Manager.

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rob Macfarlane', written over a faint rectangular box.

Rob Macfarlane
General Manager

This document was reviewed and approved by the General Manager on 16th March 2022.

Appendix 1 – Additional Guidance on incident definition and categorisation

Minor incidents are events which are within the range of ordinary human experiences and have no after effect on those involved and do not disrupt the normal operations or services of an organisation. For example: injuries not requiring medical treatment¹ (cuts, abrasion, bruises, minor sprain), near misses or minor breaches of organisation policy or procedure that do not compromise the health and safety of children and young people.

Moderate incidents are events which may be within the range of ordinary human experiences but have a short-term effect on those involved. Moderate incidents may cause temporary closure to an area of an organisation or interrupt normal services. For example: injuries requiring immediate medical treatment (concussion, lacerations, fracture, or dislocation) threats of violence, near misses, criminal behaviour, breaches of Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct Policy that compromise the health and safety of children and young people.

Critical incidents are events which are outside the range of ordinary human experiences and have the potential to leave lasting effects on those involved. Critical incidents cause temporary closure of an organisation / service. For example: serious injuries, fatalities, near fatalities, extreme threats of violence, assaults, an event, or media coverage that has the potential to bring the organisation into disrepute, criminal behaviour or serious breaches of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct Policy, that cause harm to or significantly compromise the health and safety of children and young people.

Moderate / Critical Incident Types

Health, safety, and wellbeing	
Absent/missing client	Client who is in the care of the organisation is absent and there are concerns for their safety and welfare
Accidental Injury	Actions or behaviours that unintentionally cause harm which requires medical treatment
Assault - physical	Actions or attempted actions that involve the use of physical force against a person that result in or have the potential to cause harm. Any assault of a client or staff member must be recorded as a critical incident. Assaults can vary in nature from life-threatening events to incidents that threaten clients or others health, safety, or wellbeing. Allegations of assault of a client by a team member, volunteer carer or member of the carer's household must be reported as a critical incident regardless of whether medical attention is required and regardless of the type of assault alleged.
Assault - sexual	Sexual assault includes the full range of sexually abusive behaviour including rape, assault with intent to rape and indecent assault. Inappropriate touching or exposure by a client with a disability needs to be considered in the context of the individual client's behaviour or disability. A police report may not be necessary or appropriate in this case. If the behaviour is such that criminal charges are likely, or the client has previously been charged with sexual offences, then the incident must be categorised as a critical incident.
Client Behaviour – dangerous	Client actions that place self or others at risk of harm or are violent and dangerous including sex work of a client under 18

Death – client, team members, other	<p>The death of a client or team member or another person during service delivery. All deaths occurring during service delivery are classified as critical incidents. The death of a client that doesn't occur during service delivery does not in itself constitute a critical incident. However, a critical incident classification may be required where the death:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is of a client under the age of 18 years • occurs in unusual or unexpected circumstances, such as, but not limited to, murder, overdose, or suicide • has a direct or obvious correlation to the service the person was receiving • is reportable, for example to the Commission for Children and Young People. • Client deaths as the consequence of the progression of a diagnosed condition or illness are not usually classified as critical incidents.
Drug/alcohol misuse	Life threatening use of drugs and/or alcohol and/or other substances including potential overdose
Property damage/disruption	Damage or disruption to premises that involves or impacts upon services to clients
Self-harm / Suicide attempted	Actions that intentionally cause harm or injury to self or with the intention to end one's own life
Conduct of Team Members	
Criminal behaviour by team members	Behaviour that has had or may have an adverse impact on clients or the organisation including the possession of illegal or unauthorised goods.
Breach of confidentiality	The inappropriate disclosure of confidential client information.
Breach of professional standards, policy, or duty of care	Poor professional practice, inappropriate behaviour or breach of professional standards or agency policy by team members or that results in or has the potential to cause harm to a client, or other team members.
Public Relations	
Community concern	<p>Incidents that involve or impact upon clients which cause community concern and had or may have an adverse impact on the reputation and standing of the organisation. Community concern includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subpoena of agency team members to Coronial or other Statutory Inquires in relation to service users • information that suggests that the organisation is in breach of regulatory or certification requirements • a breach of agency policy that leads to an adverse impact on the reputation and standing of the agency.
Involvement of External Authorities	Emergency Services, Police Child Protection, courts