

Policy: Reportable Incidents

Policy Purpose

This policy seeks to ensure that Territory Families responses to all reportable incidents are professional, appropriate and proportionate in addressing risks, protecting rights and discharging our legal requirements and duty of care.

The expeditious identification and reporting of incidents is necessary to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of all persons involved in or who are directly impacted by the incident;
- Implement best practice in managing and responding to risk, in this and all future similar cases; and
- Learn from issues arising to improve service delivery and prevent future incidents.

Policy Statement

A reportable incident is any significant incident, or alleged incident, that negatively affects, or is likely to negatively affect a:

- Territory Families client (child, carers, parents or family) which includes those with an open case as well as those on orders;
- Territory Families staff member;
- Territory Families contracted service provider or organisation; or
- Member/s of the wider community.

A reportable incident includes:

- Actual, alleged, attempted and threatened physical and sexual assault (including grooming);
- Illegal or inappropriate behaviour;
- Actual, attempted and threatened self-harm and attempted suicides;
- Attempted abductions, absent or missing children;
- Serious injury, illness and medical conditions suffered by a child in Territory Families care or their carers;
- Fatalities; and
- Actual and alleged breaches of privacy and loss of sensitive client information.

All reportable incidents must be reported in accordance with the *Reportable Incident Procedure*. This means a Territory Families staff member who receives an allegation or disclosure, is present at an incident, or who first becomes aware of an incident or allegation, is required to record the details of the incident on the approved *Reportable Incident Form*.

All forms must be completed and endorsed by the required line managers within 24 hours and then provided to the Territory Families Practice Integrity Unit at TF.PracticeIntegrity@nt.gov.au.

Approved reportable incident forms must articulate the actions that have been, and will be taken in response to the incident or allegation, the persons responsible for the actions and the deadline for the actions.

The chosen response to address a reportable incident must align to the nature and severity of the incident, comply with necessary legal requirements and have a clear purpose with desired outcomes.

Responses to a reportable incident may include:

- Addressing the issues arising from the incident through the course of normal casework;
- Taking specific actions to ensure the immediate safety and wellbeing of a child, carer or staff member;
- Engaging Territory Families Human Resources (HR) to take appropriate human resource actions (including disciplinary actions) in relation to an incident involving a staff member;
- Advising the Chief Executive Officer, Minister, HR, Placement Unit and/or Procurement Branch, or other appropriate Territory Families staff of the occurrence of the reportable incident;
- Informing Central Intake Team of concerns about the safety of a child in care; and/or
- Requesting an internal case review of practice or decision making.

The Practice Integrity Unit will use the completed *Reportable Incident Form* to monitor and record actions taken following a critical incident.

A central database on all reportable incidents, including the planned responses and response outcomes, will be maintained in order ensure actions are taken and Senior Territory Families Managers receive regular reports on the number, type and cause of reportable incidents by region, client and response type. For further information refer to *Reportable Incident Guidelines*.

Practice Standards

Standards of Professional Practice - 2 & 6

Authorised by:

Executive Director, Professional Practice	1/04/2014	Active from:	1/04/2014
Version 1.0	This policy seeks to ensure that Territory Families responses to all reportable incidents are professional, appropriate and proportionate in addressing risks, protecting rights and discharging our legal requirements and duty of care.		

Current Version V 1.04

Active from:	14/10/2019	Authorised by:	Director, Policy
Update:	Minor amendments	61:TFD2019/0089026	
Review due:	October 21	Maintenance:	Policy TF.Policy@nt.gov.au