

Incident Reporting

Guidance

Incident Reporting

An incident is any unplanned event that could result in injury or ill health, damage or loss to property, including data losses and/or a negative impact on reputation. An incident may also include any allegation of misconduct, any safeguarding disclosure and any near miss. Importantly, an incident is any event that has impacted or has the potential to impact the wellbeing of young people, their families and workers; these factors are **always the first priority**.

The reputation of the organisation, the programme or service provision and any partners involved - in both legal and financial terms - also need to be considered in relation to the incident.

There is a moral obligation and legal duty of care to safeguard all young people, workers and volunteers engaging in youth sector programmes and to protect all individuals from harm. Youth work incidents will usually involve people. The priority must therefore always be to take immediate action to give medical and welfare treatment to those involved and contain the severity of the incident where possible.

It is good practice to report all near misses as well as all accidents that result in harm. A near miss can be defined as *an event that does not cause harm but has the potential to cause injury or ill health*. Examples may include a driver having to swerve or perform an emergency stop to avoid a young person crossing the road, a slip or fall as a result of a spilt drink or horseplay, a failure or breakage of non-safety critical work equipment (e.g. gardening tool) during use, or protective equipment not used during an activity when stipulated as necessary in the risk assessment.

Reporting helps to identify problem areas, raises awareness of hazards and risk, and helps organisations and workers to make informed decisions and take effective preventive or corrective actions to help prevent similar or more serious incidents from reoccurring.

Incident reporting practice should promote a culture of thorough, timely and accurate reporting, and must ensure that relevant workers are adequately trained in the incident reporting procedure defined by the organisation. Most organisations produce an incident report template for workers and copies of this should be provided to workers who are delivering offsite activity.

When reporting incidents, only factual information should be provided, including as much detail about the incident as possible. Workers should make an accurate record of the incident as soon as possible to help safeguard against memory fade. Workers should complete their organisation's incident reporting form, or if not immediately available make notes to report formally later.

The following information should be recorded as applicable:

- Time and date of the incident
- Incident location (be as accurate as possible)
- A detailed description of what happened
- Who was involved and details of any injuries
- Names of any other uninjured parties
- Relevant environmental information (e.g. weather, ground/water conditions)
- Actions taken, including all communications
- Details of any moves from the incident site (times, who moved, where to, how)
- Names and contact details of witnesses
- Any other useful information such as the registration numbers of any motor vehicles involved
- Proposed actions to follow

After any incident, the emotional needs of any young people, workers or others affected should be considered and support provided as appropriate.

It is important that periodic reviews of incidents are undertaken to ensure that any lessons learned can be applied to future practice, programme planning and staff training as applicable. Lessons learned should be communicated effectively with workers.

Statutory reporting including RIDDOR

All organisations classified as a workplace or employer are legally required to have policies and procedures in place for the reporting of some specific types of incidents.

The [Reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences regulations \(RIDDOR\)](#) puts duties on employers, the self-employed and people in control of work premises (the 'Responsible Person') to report certain serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases and specified dangerous occurrences (near misses).

It is the responsibility of employers and workers to ensure that any applicable incident is reported. Full details and further information regarding RIDDOR and reportable incidents can be found on the [Health & Safety Executive website](#).

How to make a RIDDOR report

Reports can be made online [here](#) by selecting the appropriate form. Once submitted, reports can be downloaded and a record maintained. For most qualifying incidents, a RIDDOR report must be submitted within 10 days of the incident occurring. For incidents that only qualify on the basis of incapacitation of a worker for more than seven days, a report must be submitted within 15 days.

What needs to be reported?

RIDDOR reporting is not necessarily reserved only for very serious incidents or those that result in serious injury or death. A RIDDOR report is required for the following:

Accidents & injuries:

- A death or injury occurs as a direct result of a work-related incident and the injury is [specified](#) in the Regulations
- An incident resulting in a worker being incapacitated from work for a period of more than seven days
- Occupational diseases: Any disease contracted or made worse as a direct result of work.
- Dangerous occurrences: Certain specified near miss events must be reported. Primarily these are events with a high potential to cause death or serious injury. No complex analysis or test is required to make an assessment, rather a reasonable judgement is required as to whether the circumstances gave rise to genuine risk.
- Non-fatal accidents to non-workers (eg. members of the public)

*Note: "Accidents to members of the public or others who are not at work must be reported if they result in an injury and the person is taken directly from the scene of the accident to hospital for **treatment** to that injury. Examinations and diagnostic tests do not constitute 'treatment' in such circumstances. There is no need to report incidents where people are taken to hospital purely as a precaution when no injury is apparent."*

In some cases, workers may not initially be in a position to know the full extent of an injury. In such situations, there is no requirement to make precautionary reports of specified injuries.

RIDDOR and COVID-19

The reporting requirements relating to cases of, or deaths from, COVID-19 under RIDDOR apply only to occupational exposure, that is, as a result of a person's work.

Therefore, cases relating to young people would not be reportable but illness of a worker may be.

Charity Commission reporting

For youth work organisations that are registered charities, the Charity Commission requires the reporting of serious incidents, defined by the Commission as any incident or occurrence which results in, or risks, significant:

- harm to people who come into contact with your charity through its work
- loss of your charity's money or assets
- damage to your charity's property
- harm to your charity's work or reputation

These are relatively broad in scope and the responsibility for deciding what is reported sits with a charity's trustees: this should be done 'promptly and as soon as reasonably possible'. The Charity Commission seeks to ensure that charities and their trustees undertake their legal obligations in the event of a serious incident and that the situation is managed responsibly. [Full guidance](#) is available detailing what, how and when to report.