
Serious Occurrences

The following incidents are considered to be reportable serious occurrences:

1. The death of a child who received child care at a child care centre;
2. abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a child care centre;
3. a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a child care centre;
4. an incident where a child who is receiving child care at a child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised; or
5. an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a child care centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving child care at the child care centre.

All Staff and volunteers are required to sign a document annually stating that they have read the Serious Occurrence Policy and will comply with it.

Serious Occurrence Notification Form

Within 24 hours of becoming aware of an occurrence, the centre must enter the information about the serious occurrence into the Child Care Licensing System (CCLS) and post a Serious Occurrence Notification Form to communicate to parents about serious occurrences that have occurred in the centre.

A serious occurrence notification form is posted for complaints that have been verified and has taken actions to address the issue. The exception is in the case of allegations or unverified complaints which will be posted at the completion of the follow-up / investigation.

The centre must ensure that the information posted protects information and privacy. No staff or child names, initials, and age or birth date of child, or age group indicators (e.g. preschool room) are to be used on the notification form.

This form will be posted in a conspicuous space such as the front and back entrances. This form will be updated as the centre takes additional actions or investigations are completed. This form is posted for a minimum of 10 business days after the final update on the form.

The centre must retain the Serious Occurrence Notification Form for at least 2 years from the date of the occurrence. This form must be readily

available for current and prospective parents, licensing and municipal children's services staff upon request.

For more information on how to fill out the Serious Occurrence Notification Form, refer to the August 23rd, 2011 memorandum – New Policy Requirement – Serious Occurrence Notification Form Posting

Serious Occurrence Response – Immediate Actions of Staff

Actions to be taken if a serious occurrence has occurred, or is suspected, include the following:

- 1) The child shall be provided with immediate medical attention when warranted, CALL 911 as needed.
- 2) Appropriate steps shall be taken to address any continuing risks to the child's health or safety. [Note: the need for the same or similar steps to address the health and safety of other children should also be considered, as appropriate.]
- 3) Ensure that the local coroner is notified immediately in all cases involving death, regardless of location (e.g. hospital) or circumstances.
- 4) The staff or any other person witnessing or having knowledge of the occurrence shall report the matter to the supervisor or designate to conduct serious occurrence inquiries.
- 5) The Supervisor or designate shall immediately begin a serious inquiry, in accordance with the following steps. The purpose of the inquiry is to gather information regarding the actual or alleged occurrence(s). The Supervisor will use the *Serious Occurrence Notification Form (Form 1939 09/02)*.
- 6) All persons having knowledge of the occurrence should be asked to remain on the premises until the designated person has interviewed them, or indicated that there is no need for their involvement at that point.
- 7) The inquiry information gathered by the designate will form the basis of the later Serious Occurrence Inquiry Report, and therefore should include as many details as possible at this time:
 - Description of the occurrence
 - Individual's allegations

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- Date, time, place where it occurred
 - Time occurrence reported
 - Reason for the occurrence (if known)
 - People involved
 - Action taken
 - Current status
 - Parties notified:
 - o Coroner in all cases of death
 - o Police/CAS, as applicable
 - o Parents/others, as appropriate
 - Further action recommended
 - o Specific to immediate situation; and/or
 - o Related to potential underlying factors (e.g. internal policy review)

8) If the basis of the injury, there is a reason to suspect that a child has been abused (and/or in need of protection), the designated person shall ensure immediate contact with:

- The Children's Aid Society, and police as appropriate, in the case of a child [Note: it is the person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection, who is legally obligated to make a report to the CAS];

If an individual staff member has concerns that a child may have been abused it is that person's responsibility to telephone CAS and ask to speak to a counselor and then follow that counselor's advice. The staff member does not need to consult with fellow staff members before taking action. It is that staff member's responsibility to write up the report regarding any suspected abuse.

Reporting Process – Within 24 Hours

When a serious occurrence is deemed to have taken place, the Supervisor will ensure that:

- 1) Within 24 hours, the centre must enter the information about the serious occurrence into the Child Care Licensing System (CCLS);
- 2) within 24 hours, the parent/guardian/advocate, and where applicable, and the person or agency who placed the client are informed unless immediate notification is contra-indicated (e.g. the person to be notified is alleged to have abused the client).

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- 3) within 24 hours, the centre must complete and post a Serious Occurrence Notification Form to communicate to parents about serious occurrences that have occurred in the centre for at least 10 business days.

Annual Summary & Analysis Report

An annual summary and analysis report of all serious occurrences is to be provided by the Supervisor to the ministry.

This report is to be submitted annually, reflecting the serious occurrence record from the previous one-year period. Specifically, the report is to be submitted by the end of the first month following the reported one-year period, using the standard MCFCS *Annual Summary & Analysis Report* form.

The annual report will be reviewed by the ministry as to the centre's provider's management of serious occurrences, including the service provider's analysis of any patterns which suggests a need for training, support or internal policy modifications, and the identified steps to address and of these needs. Upon reviewing the report, the ministry may also identify possible issues or action that could require follow-up by the service provider, and/or more general information that could inform ongoing ministry policy work.

In the event of any follow-up action being requested after review of the annual report by the ministry, the Supervisor must submit an outcome report upon completion of the identified action.

Ongoing Monitoring

The centre will monitor the performance in-year, on an ongoing basis, with respect to the reporting, management, and follow-up of serious occurrences.

Enhanced Serious Occurrence Reporting to Ministry of Children and Youth Services

In addition to the existing serious occurrence reporting as above to the City of Toronto, Enhanced Serious Occurrence Reporting procedures will be followed when emergency services (i.e. police, fire and/or

ambulance) are used in response to a significant incident involving a client of the MCSS or the MCYS, and/or the incident is likely to result in significant public or media attention.

In these circumstances, the supervisor or designate will ensure that the Ministries' early alert system is notified **within 1 hour** of becoming aware of the incident.

Notification will be by facsimile, or telephone if facsimile is not available.

Monday 6:30am to Friday 6:00pm

Fax: 1-866-312-0672 Phone: 1-866-312-0673

Weekends/Government holidays

Fax: 1-866-262-8881 Phone: 1-877-444-0424

The *Serious Occurrence Initial Notification* report (form 1939 09/02) will be used and kept on file.