

# Emergency and Critical Incident Procedures

## 1. Overview of the procedure

This procedure is a guide for [insert organisation name] responding to critical incidents and to specific emergency situations. This procedure should be read accompanying the Emergency and Critical Incident Policy.

## 2. Considerations

All staff, Board members, volunteers and students are given information about responding to critical incidents and specific emergency situations as part of induction and orientation processes.

## 3. Procedures

### 3.1 Critical Incidents

Staff, board members, volunteers, students and consumers who experience a critical incident related to their involvement with [insert organisation name] should immediately inform where possible [insert position]. If this is not possible they should immediately inform [insert position].

#### A Critical Incident Report:

- is to be completed by the staff member involved in the incident or notification of the incident.
- is to contain as much information as possible and indicate the people directly involved in the incident.

The staff member who receives the report will ensure that the person(s) identified in the critical incident receives all appropriate support. They are to contact emergency services where required and must contact the [insert position] immediately.

The [insert position] in conjunction with [insert position] will assess the Critical Incident and implement a plan of action to follow up the Critical Incident.

Where required, a meeting will be organised to determine issues and responsibilities relating to:

- Assessing risks and response actions
- Liaison with emergency and other services
- Contact with the affected person's relatives and other supports
- Liaison with other organisations
- Counselling and supporting staff, board members, volunteers, students and consumers not directly involved in, but affected by, the incident.

- Media management (if required)
- Where appropriate **[insert organisation name]** may be required to provide support to the family in the form of:
  - o hiring interpreters
  - o making arrangements for hospital/funeral/memorial service/repatriation
  - o obtaining a death certificate
  - o assisting with personal items and affairs including insurance issues

**[insert organisation name]** will conduct a review of actions arising from the above meeting to ensure:

- Follow up such as de-briefing, counselling and prevention strategies have been completed.
- Relevant people have been informed of all outcomes from the incident
- A recommendation as to the response to the critical incident is documented and included in the quality improvement cycle
- Further follow up required is documented and responsibilities allocated to appropriate staff.

### **3.2 Critical Incident Debriefing (CID)**

Critical Incident Debriefing (CID) will occur within 48 - 72 hours after the incident.

Debriefing may include individual and group counselling, where the aim is to:

- Decrease feelings of isolation
- Provide people affected by the incident with a facilitated session to assist them to normalise their thoughts and feelings. Groups assist people to explore their differing perspectives of the incident and share their similar thoughts and feelings.

There will usually be an initial counselling session, followed up with one or more debriefing sessions.

Initial counselling will occur as soon as possible after the incident, preferably immediately or within a few hours. Depending on the type or severity of the critical incident, initial defusing may include:

- A short factual statement about what is known about the incident, the possible effects on those involved, what is being done for them and what is going to happen in the future, eg.; planned debriefing sessions.
- Information on acute stress response (what is happening to people now) and how people can care for themselves. See Information Handout – Traumatic Events
- An arrangement for a structured debriefing session within 48-72 hours.
- The provision of different levels of service for those differently affected
- Referrals to various resources including counsellors

**[insert organisation name]** will maintain confidentiality to ensure that:

- Only a record of when and where a debriefing took place will be kept; and
- No information will be released without the agreement of the individual or group.

### 3.3 Evacuation

In the event of an alert to evacuate - either verbal, automatic alarm or manual alarm – and the threat is not immediate, all consumers, staff, Board members, students, volunteers and visitors:

- Proceed along designated routes to the designated assembly area(s)
- Ensure assistance is provided to people with disabilities and/or special needs
- **[insert position]** to collect visitor sign-in and staff attendance registers and direct people to assembly point
- Check attendance at assembly area against the attendance registers.
- Remain at the assembly area until advised by the [insert position] and/or emergency personnel that it is safe to return to premises.

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- Proceed along designated routes to the designated assembly area(s)
- Ensure assistance is provided to people with disabilities and/or special needs
- **[insert position]** to collect visitor sign-in and staff attendance registers and direct people to the assembly point.
- **[insert position]** to check attendance at assembly area against the attendance registers.
- Remain at the assembly area until advised by the [insert position] and/or emergency personnel that it is safe to return to premises.

#### Additional guidelines for threat of fire

In the event of a fire threat and if it is safe to do so, close all doors and windows and turn off power supply before leaving the premises.

#### Additional guidelines for bomb threat

In the event of a bomb threat and the threat is not immediate, open all doors and windows before leaving the premises.

### 3.4 Fire

In the event of a fire:

- Trigger the fire alarm
- Contact fire emergency services.
- Alert the nominated fire warden and/or a senior staff member
- Evacuate people from the immediate area of the fire behind a rated fire door or outside the building
- Fight the fire with existing equipment if safe to do so

### 3.5 Bomb Threat

In the event of a bomb threat via phone call:

- Remain calm
- Record as much information as possible from the caller using questions and observations including:
  - *What type of bomb is it?*
  - *How will it go off?*
  - *What does it look like?*
  - *When it set to go off?*
  - *Where is it?*
  - *When was it put there?*
  - *Who put it there?*
  - *Why was it put there?*
  - *Will it explode or will something be released?*
  - *If a substance is released, what is it? How much is there? How will it be released?*
  - *Observations about the caller: gender, age, accent?*
  - *Any background noise?*
- Contact police who can assist in determining if evacuation is required
- If instructed, evacuate consumers, staff, Board members, students, volunteers and visitors as for the above evacuation procedures
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other senior staff

In the event of a letter bomb (threat via postal mail):

- Do not disturb, move or touch the package if possible
- Contact police who can assist in determining if evacuation is required
- If instructed, evacuate consumers, staff, Board members, students, volunteers and visitors as for the above evacuation procedures
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other senior staff

### **3.6 Suspicious Mail**

In the event of a suspicious item of postal mail arriving to the premises:

- Do not disturb, move or touch the package if possible
- If you have touched the article wash your hands if it is possible, within the work area
- Contact police who can assist in determining if evacuation is required
- Inform others present of what has occurred and advise them to stay in their work area
- Prevent others from entering the work area
- Do not attempt to clean up spilt material or brush it off your clothing
- If instructed, evacuate consumers, staff, Board members, students, volunteers and visitors as for the above evacuation procedures
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other senior staff

### **3.7 Hold-up**

In the event of a hold-up situation:

- Assume the offender is armed and that any firearms are loaded
- Comply with instructions given by the offender, doing no more or less than what you are told to do, and answer all questions asked
- Do not attempt to disarm or apprehend the offender
- Take mental notes of details about the offender and any items that are touched by the offender
- If it is safe to do so, raise the alarm by **[insert method of raising alarm, eg duress button]**.

Immediately after the incident:

- Lock access doors to secure the area and prevent people from approaching
- Notify the police immediately
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other senior staff
- Attend to the post-incident needs of consumers, staff, Board members, volunteers, students and visitors affected by the incident.

### **3.8 Earthquake**

In the event of an earthquake:

If you are indoors:

- Remain indoors and seek shelter under strongly constructed tables, desks or door frames
- Keep away from windows, fixtures, furniture, and items that may become unstable
- Evacuate the premises if it is safe to do so.

If you are outdoors:

- Move quickly away from buildings, electrical structures and flammable products
- Proceed to designated assembly area if safe to do so.

After the earthquake:

- Check attendance at assembly area against the attendance registers
- Respond to injured people
- Check for gas leaks, power failure and any other hazard
- Turn off electricity, gas and water if it is safe to do so
- Prevent entry to premises if unsafe
- Contact and liaise with emergency services if required
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other senior staff.

### **3.9 Flood**

In the event of a flood:

- Do not enter the flood waters
- Eliminate potential electrical hazards
- Place high value equipment and records away from impending floodwaters if it is safe to do so
- Stay in a safe location while it continues to offer protection
- Evacuate consumers, staff, Board members, students, volunteers and visitors as for the above evacuation procedures.
- Contact and liaise with emergency services if required
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other senior staff.

### 3.10 Emergency Contact Numbers

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Phone / Address</b>
Police	000
Local Police	
Fire Brigade	000
Ambulance	000
Local Hospital	
State Emergency Centre	
Drug Rehabilitation Counselling	
National Association of Loss & Grief	
Centrelink	
CEO	