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# Covid-19 update

## Incident policy and procedure

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**We have added Covid-19 to In-Form, both as an incident type and as an action type, so incidents and relevant actions can be recorded.**

**Incidents recorded as Covid-19 will cover:**

- **Customers that have tested positive for Covid-19**
- **Hospital admissions and call out of emergency services for customers showing symptoms of Covid-19**
- **Any quarantine arrangements where customers share kitchen or bathroom facilities**
- **Any incidents of customers refusing to comply with Evolve infection control measures**
- **Any incidents of a customer's refusal to comply with self-isolation measures if positive with Covid-19**

**Colleagues are reminded to refer to our Control of infection policy and procedure (HS02) and our Covid-19 Infectious Disease Policy Guidance.**

**All staff should socially distance wherever possible and use PPE as advised.**

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**Updated: 21 July 2021**

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# Incident

## Policy and procedure

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**Document reference** Housing + Support 10

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**Approved by:** SMT

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## **1 Policy statement**

- 1.1 Evolve Housing + Support provides accommodation and support services to homeless people, some of whom will engage in risky behaviour and/or be at risk from others. Due to the level of need amongst those who use our services, it is likely that colleagues will at some point need to deal with an incident.

## **2 Scope**

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to define incidents and set out the obligations of colleagues in responding to and recording incidents.
- 2.2 This policy and procedure applies to all colleagues and volunteers. It covers:
- the process required to prevent risk
  - how to respond safely to incidents
  - immediate reporting requirements and actions
  - how to approve incidents and inform the relevant parties
  - how to record incidents

## **3 Principles**

- 3.1 Evolve recognises its responsibility is to ensure the safety of all customers, volunteers, colleagues, and visitors to the service, and will take all necessary steps to achieve this.
- 3.2 The organisation works in a way that is risk aware rather than risk averse, meaning incidents are never viewed in isolation and that services are managed in ways that promote the safety and security of customers and colleagues and that the risk of incidents occurring is minimised.
- 3.3 Incidents that occur off site should also be reported
- 3.4 An 'open culture' is promoted within Evolve where complaints, issues or concerns may be raised and are taken seriously. Good communication between managers, workers, customers, carers/relatives (with consent) and other professionals will ensure that any feedback is used to manage risk effectively.
- 3.5 All teams must be aware of their Local Authority guidelines for alerting concerns or abuse. Evolve works in line with the London multi-agency policy and procedure for safeguarding adults at risk.
- 3.6 Managers are responsible for keeping a file of all incidents that occur and making sure that this is up to date.
- 3.7 Area Managers are responsible for monitoring incidents in their area. This must include the monitoring of any incidents of harassment, victim support and how perpetrators are dealt with.
- 3.8 The Buildings Safety Manager is responsible for reviewing fire incidents.
- 3.9 All incidents will be reviewed and reported to the board quarterly. This is to identify trends, increasing levels of need, needs in specific areas or increases in level or types of risk. Appropriate action and organisational learning can then

be implemented. This report will focus on the number, nature and type of incidents, the service where incidents have occurred, and outcomes.

## **4 Definitions**

- 4.1 Incident - an event or circumstance which could have resulted, or did result in unnecessary damage, loss or harm such as physical or mental injury to a customer, colleagues, volunteer or member of the public.
- 4.2 Serious incident - some incidents are so serious that they should be immediately reported to the Area Manager and the Director of Operations. These will include death, sexual assault, serious physical assault and injury, serious accident, overdose or attempted overdose, use of weapons, or any form of abuse. For serious incidents involving death please see the sudden death policy.
- 4.3 Hate crime – The term 'hate crime' can be used to describe a range of criminal behaviour where the perpetrator is motivated by hostility or demonstrates hostility towards the victim's disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity. These aspects of a person's identity are known as 'protected characteristics'. A hate crime can include verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, assault and bullying, as well as damage to property. (Taken from the Crown Prosecution Service website: <https://www.cps.gov.uk/>)
- 4.4 CMT – Corporate Management Team

## **5 Risk prevention**

### **Assessing risk**

- 5.1 All customers will co-create their Staying Safe plan on the day they move in. Where relevant, others (such as family members, partner agencies or advocates) will be involved in this process to develop an agreed approach. Colleagues will support customers to minimise risks posed by and to customers.
- 5.2 Effective staying safe plans, joint working arrangements and other relevant information must be in place and kept up to date.
- 5.3 Staying Safe plans are reviewed in response to incidents, concerns or new areas of risk becoming known. Staying Safe plans for perpetrators, as well as victims of incidents should be updated within 3 working days.
- 5.4 All service delivery colleagues will receive robust training and guidance in support planning and risk assessment, challenging behaviour, lone working and professional boundaries. Guidelines and structures will enable colleagues to work positively with customers to reduce risk, such as needs assessments and support planning, acceptable behaviour contracts and service delivery risk assessments.
- 5.5 Risk assessments are completed for all services and buildings in line with Health and Safety legislation. These are reviewed annually and in response to concerns, incidents, new risk coming to light or any changes in service.

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- 5.6 Colleagues are responsible for taking all reasonable measures to ensure their safety when working including following any relevant procedures such as lone working.

### **Communication**

- 5.7 Our services are delivered to practice standards that reduce risk to customers and colleagues through providing adequate levels of staffing and support to customers.
- 5.8 Services work in partnership with other local agencies in order to meet customer need and identify and manage risk.
- 5.9 Complaints or concerns raised by customers, colleagues or third parties are responded to swiftly and investigated in order to ensure that any related risk is addressed.

## **6 Incident response**

- 6.1 When dealing with an incident colleagues should:
- maintain their own safety
  - where possible maintain the safety of others in the vicinity  
call/radio for other colleague members to provide support
  - determine whether the presence of the emergency services is necessary
  - if there is a genuine need for medical assistance, contact the emergency services, even if the customer is refusing medical treatment
  - diffuse and de-escalate the situation by maintaining neutral body language and tone of voice
  - keep a safe distance from the person/s posing the risk
  - if colleagues are at immediate risk, they should leave the situation
  - if others are at immediate risk, colleagues should support them to leave the situation
  - if there is a verbal or physical confrontation between others, colleagues should seek to calm the situation, asking others to leave the area
- 6.2 Colleagues should not:
- put themselves at risk of harm
  - become confrontational themselves
  - make physical contact with a customer who is posing a risk
  - try to physically separate people or break up fights
- 6.3 Some incidents will attract media attention (press, radio, and television).  
Colleagues should make no response to media requests for information/comment (whatever the apparent urgency), and must inform the Director of Business Development or a member of the Leadership Team so that decisions can be made about who provides the appropriate point of contact, and the content of the response to be made.

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- 6.4 Any incident of abuse from a customer that is racial or homophobic, or that discriminates against someone due to a protected characteristic, should be treated as a hate crime.
- If this happens within office hours, the manager should call the police.
  - If this happens out of hours, on-call Tier 1 should be called and the hate crime reported to the police.
  - The manager should speak to the customer(s) involved and issue them with a warning.
- 6.5 Customers and colleagues should be signposted to relevant external agencies in order to receive specialist support, where appropriate, as the result of an incident. Information for signposting services must be readily available at each project.
- Colleagues should be debriefed by their line manager, or other appropriate manager following an incident, and reminded that the Employee Assistance Programme can offer additional support if needed.
  - All managers will be trained in debriefing.
  - The Area Manager will agree with the Deputy Director of Operations how to support the team and will follow the steps below:
  - The Area Manager will attend the service following a serious incident on the same day, but if this is not possible due to the timing of the incident then the following working day, and will check in with all those affected. If the serious incident occurs out of hours the on-call manager should attend and handover details to the incoming day manager and Area Manager. If the Area Manager is not available or on leave another member of the Senior Management team will attend the service.
  - If a colleague is adversely affected by a serious incident, they should be given the opportunity, but not forced, to go off duty. It is important to keep monitoring them. If the person takes leave, arrangements should be put in place for them to contact their line manager or a member of the HR to ensure their continuing welfare.
  - The Team Manager and Area Manager should arrange an open session to discuss emotions and concerns with the team within a week of a serious incident. Colleagues can also utilise reflective practice sessions where available.
  - It may also be advisable to seek support from the Health and Wellbeing Manager or other appropriately trained managers, who may be able to offer some direct support and advice to both colleagues and customers.

## **7 Reporting the incident: immediate actions**

- 7.1 Gather information and evidence for the incident report.
- Colleagues should make sure that they evidence all work that is conducted after the incidents, e.g. completing a safeguarding alert or issuing sanctions. Where risk management plans need to be reviewed, managers should check that these have been completed with the appropriate timescales.

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- 7.2 Colleagues complete and submit the incident report within 24hrs which needs to include the following:
- if a 'standard action' is required, a colleague name and a date must be assigned to each action
  - only the actions taken at the time of the incident should be noted in the 'immediate actions taken' section
  - SMART 'further actions' necessary to resolve & prevent recurrence (e.g. sanctions, contacting agencies) to be written by the colleague completing the incident report
  - where several actions involving more than one colleague are necessary, names and dates should be assigned to each action
  - as there can only be one lead person, in this case, this should either be the most senior colleague listed or the manager for the service
  - the 'by when' date should match the date of the last action to be completed
  - the 'comments' section is to be completed by managers, noting recommendations, support provided to all colleagues involved and any follow up action taken with those affected by the incident
- 7.3 If the incident involves a safeguarding concern, refer to the Safeguarding Policy and complete a Safeguarding Alert Form where appropriate
- 7.4 If the incident involves a safeguarding concern, actions related to both the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator should be completed, as well as updating Risk Management Plans of all involved.
- Safeguarding Alert forms must be prioritised over incident reports.
  - An appropriate adult or other representative is able to act as an advocate in situations that may have a serious or detrimental impact on a vulnerable adult (e.g. in discussions regarding the potential loss of accommodation, or decisions to take out an Appointeeship).
  - See the Safeguarding children & young people policy and procedure and the Safeguarding of adults at risk policy and procedure for guidance on Safeguarding Alert Forms.
- 7.5 Colleagues on shift must review and update the staying safe plan and support plan for all customers involved (where appropriate) within 3 working days of incident taking place
- Where there are changes to the level of risk and/or management plan for identified risks, the risk review section of the plan should be completed.
- 7.6 The Team Manager and Team Leader are responsible for reporting the incident to the local authority. It is the responsibility of the Team Manager to ensure they are aware of when an incident should be reported to the local authority. This can take the form of a brief email or telephone call.
- 7.7 Completed incident reports may need to be sent to the Local Authority. Where this is the case, the report must be reviewed by the area manager before it is sent (see also 9.8)

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- 7.8 Where more than one colleague is involved, the incident report can be written by any colleague, but only one incident record on Inform should be completed. Some incidents may be traumatic and in such cases the incident report will need to be completed by the most appropriate member of staff.
- 7.9 Any further developments regarding the incident must not be added to the submitted incident report once completed. Any further updates regarding incidents should be created as 'actions' on Inform with the incident number included in the title, and the action must be linked to the incident report via the 'related information' section.
- 7.10 Completed 'further actions' must be recorded on Inform as 'actions', these actions need to include the incident number to ensure there is a paper trail
- 7.11 Where a customer's accommodation is at risk or a move is required as the result of an incident, the Pathway Coordinator must be informed via email within one working day or on the same day where an immediate eviction, move or abandonment has occurred as the result of an incident.

## **8 Communicating serious incidents**

- 8.1 All **serious incidents**, as defined in section 4, must be reported to the Area Manager, the Deputy Director of Operations, and the Director of Business Development immediately.
- 8.2 **Serious incidents** should be reported to the service commissioners only after consulting the Area Manager
- 8.3 The Building Safety Manager must be informed of:
- **all fire alarm activations immediately,**
  - all accidents or 'near-misses', using the accident report form
- 8.4 The Director of Operations must inform the CEO of any fire incidents that involve actual fire or pre-fire smoke, and all serious incidents.
- 8.5 The Director of Operations is provided with a monthly report of all fire alarm activations and communicates this information to the Leadership Team and Board members where appropriate.

## **9 How to complete an incident report**

- 9.1 All incident reports must be completed on In-Form
- 9.2 The report should be completed immediately after the event to ensure the record is as accurate as possible. If the incident occurs at the end of a shift, and it is not possible to complete the report on Inform, a thorough handover of the incident must be provided.
- 9.3 The events should be described in chronological order and include specifics, such as location
- 9.4 Reports should be written objectively, with only the known facts included
- 9.5 Reports should be clear and concise
- 9.6 When completing a report, it is important to consider:
- Who?

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- › Who was involved?
  - › Who discovered the incident?
  - › Who reported the incident?
  - › Who witnessed the incident?
  - › Who responded to the incident and who took what actions?
  - › Who was notified of the incident?
  - What?
    - › What happened?
    - › What property was involved and to what extent?
    - › What actions were taken and what was the result?
    - › What was said?
    - › What factors contributed to the incident?
    - › What follow up is required?
  - Where?
    - › Where did the incident occur?
    - › Where were customers found?
    - › Where was evidence found?
  - When?
    - › When did the incident happen?
    - › When did the emergency services or other agencies arrive?
    - › When will follow up actions take place?
  - Why?
    - › Why did the incident occur and was it accidental or intentional?
    - › Why did colleagues and customers take the actions they did?
  - How?
    - › How did the incident occur?
    - › How was the incident discovered?
    - › How, if at all, is this incident related to other incidents?
- 9.7 Reports should be written in such a way that someone who has no knowledge of the service would be able to understand the events described. Full names, where known, of those involved should be included, rather than just initials
- 9.8 If unknown, describe the appearance and characteristics of those involved, such as height, build, hair colour, race, clothing and approximate age.
- 9.9 Once the report has been completed and saved, it must be submitted to the line manager for approval. This is done by clicking the 'Submit for approval' button at the bottom of the page



## **10 How to approve incident reports**

- 10.1 The line manager assesses the report, completes the 'comments' section and approves or rejects the report. This must be completed within 24 hours of the reports being received. At the same time, the manager must check that the risk assessment and staying safe plans where relevant have been updated.
- 10.2 If the incident report is rejected, the line manager must note the reason why. Reasons for rejection can include:
  - › Report is unclear
  - › Lack of information
  - › Inclusion of personal opinion
  - › Use of inappropriate language
- 10.3 When an incident report has been rejected, the initial creator of the report must amend and resubmit on the same day they receive the notification
- 10.4 Where an incident report has been approved, the next manager must assess the report and approve or reject it.
- 10.5 When an incident report has been rejected at this stage, the first manager must amend and resubmit on the same day they receive the notification
- 10.6 The line manager is responsible for monitoring whether the actions have been completed within the specified timeframes.
- 10.7 All subsequent work must be evidenced on In-Form or other relevant records made.
- 10.8 Approved incident reports may need to be sent to the local authority or Supporting People team. It is Team Managers' responsibility in each service to establish what the local requirements are. Any report being sent to the local authority must be reviewed by the Area Manager prior to it being sent.

## **11 Reporting and monitoring**

- 11.1 Monthly reports on incidents and fire-related incidents are provided to the Director and Deputy Director of Operations.
- 11.2 Monthly fire-related incident reports are provided to the CEO and Chair of the board of trustees.
- 11.3 Incidents, both frequency, type and individual incidents are reviewed and discussed on a monthly basis by SMT.
- 11.4 Incidents are reported on quarterly, as part of Key Performance Indicator reports to the board of trustees.

## **12 Diversity impact assessment**

- 12.1 Evolve recognises that people can sometimes be discriminated against for a number of reasons, and this can lead to incidents occurring.

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- 12.2 This policy and procedure ensures that all incidents are dealt with in a structured way.
- 12.3 Colleagues will not discriminate against customers as every worker within Evolve will be expected to follow the same process in handling incidents and will not be making decisions based on value-based judgements.
- 12.4 Incidents will be monitored to identify any trends in relation to equality statistics.
- 12.5 The incident policy, combined with the sanctions policy, is designed to ensure that customers are treated with respect by other customers, colleagues, volunteers and any third-party contractors.

### **13 Relevant documents**

- › In-Form Guide - Incidents
- › Support planning policy and procedure
- › Safeguarding adults at risks policy and procedure
- › Safeguarding children and young people policy and procedure
- › Sanctions policy and procedure
- › Drugs policy and procedure
- › Anti-social behaviour policy and procedure
- › On call policy and procedure
- › Lone working policy and procedure
- › Missing persons policy and procedure
- › Locality management policy and procedure
- › Supporting People incident and safeguarding reporting policy
- › Safeguarding alerting forms
- › Accident report form
- › Supporting People incident reporting summary sheet
- › Supporting People adult safeguarding checklist