

**ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

Subject: Special Incident Report

Number: F 13

Approved:

Date: 05-19-09

I. PURPOSE

To establish a uniform method of reporting adverse circumstances involving property; employees; and potential, former, and current clients.

II. POLICY

The Social Services Agency (SSA) requires that any event that may have a potential negative ramification to the Agency and its stakeholders should be reported using the Special Incident Report (SIR) electronic form available at the SSA Intranet (Attachment A). Completed SIR shall be immediately submitted by email following Section IV of this procedure. These circumstances may include, but not limited to:

- 1 1. Accident, injury, or death of an employee (Administrative Policies & Procedure (P&P) C 19) or client (Administrative P&P D 9);
- 2. Death of a child if their family received Social Services from Children and Family Services Division in the past (Administrative P&P D 9);
- 3. Death of a child when the death is suspected to be a result of abuse or neglect (Administrative P&P D 9);
- 4. A death or other serious incident involving a child that is under the supervision of SSA
- 5. Loss or damage to property, equipment, building, or grounds (P&P E 1);
- 6. Threats or assaults against staff (P&P C 38);
- 7. Breach of building security, bomb threats, suspicious substances (P&P E 20); or
- 8. Other incidents of major consequence involving employees or clients.

III. BACKGROUND

Special Incident Report (SIR)

The SIR form is a reporting mechanism within SSA. Completion of this report alone does not constitute fulfillment of reporting requirements. Additional reporting and follow-up action may be required to mitigate the reported problem.

Minor incidents, such as the theft of an employee's lunch or drink or minor injuries such as those treated with a Band-Aid, should be reported to the immediate supervisor for resolution but do not require filing an SIR.

Provisions of this procedure apply in addition to actions noted concerning specific incidents in referenced policies and procedures.

HIPAA Regulations

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, HIPAA, is a federal law enacted to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Health Care System and to protect consumers from health insurance fraud and abuse. The law includes provisions designed to encourage "electronic transactions" within the health care business. It also requires safeguards to protect the security and confidentiality of patient health information or Protected Health Information (PHI). For further information, refer to <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/enforcement/> or to the Orange County website: <http://ocintranet.ocgov.com/hipaa/training/default.asp>.

PHI means any information that reveals the identity of the individual whose health care is subject of the information or where there is a reasonable basis to believe such information could be utilized to reveal the identity of that individual. It can be either created or received by a **covered entity*** and is related to the past, present or future physical or mental health condition of an individual; provision of health care to an individual; or the past, present, or future payment for health care provided to an individual. For example, the Social Services Agency (SSA) Multipurpose Senior Services Program is subject to HIPAA Regulations and has outside agency service providers who are affected by the implementation of HIPAA.

HIPAA protected information should not be included in SIR. The SSA employees should exercise good judgment as to the information being disclosed and should follow the existing guidelines. Incidents should be reported with no disclosure of PHI.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Employee

The employee who has the best knowledge of the incident shall complete all applicable sections of the SIR using the template found at the SSA Intranet site under "Documents" (Attachment A) within 24 hours of an incident and electronically submit it to his/her immediate supervisor. If the employee is unable to complete the report and the supervisor/manager is aware of the incident that requires reporting, he/she shall complete the SIR to the best of his/her knowledge.

B. Supervisor/Manager

1. The supervisor/manager shall review and electronically forward the report by email attachment with copies sent to the appropriate parties as indicated below. If the incident could have been prevented, he/she should discuss the incident with the employee and indicate in the report the corrective action taken. Additionally, the supervisor should ensure that the employee is aware of applicable workers' compensation benefits.

If the incident occurred due to an unsafe condition, or if property damage is involved, the supervisor/manager should immediately contact a SSA Facilities Services Analyst and work with him/her to take appropriate action to correct the condition.

If the incident was a safety-related matter such as improper ergonomics, the supervisor/manager should immediately contact his/her Departmental Safety Representative (DSR). The DSR shall work with SSA Facilities Services Analyst to initiate an ergonomic evaluation for the employee.

If the incident has potential liability claims, the supervisor/manager shall advise the Custodian of Records at 714-541-7405 and briefly describe the incident by email.

2. The supervisor/manager shall send an electronic copy of SIR to the on-site manager for review. After the on-site manager has reviewed the SIR, s(he) shall send an electronic copy of the SIR concurrently to the SSA Director, Chief Deputy Director, Financial and Administrative Services Deputy Director, appropriate Division Director, and appropriate Deputy Director, within the timeframe as specified in the policies and procedures (P&Ps) appropriate to the incident being reported. Other copies will be required as directed in the P&Ps identified in the Reference section below.
- C. Financial and Administrative Services Deputy Director
- The Financial and Administrative Services Deputy Director shall review the reported incident and electronically forward a copy of the SIR to SSA Facilities Services Analyst for review and appropriate action. The Financial and Administrative Services Deputy Director shall follow-up any action deemed necessary for every reported SIR.
- D. Facilities Services Unit
1. The SSA Facilities Services Analyst shall be responsible to update and maintain records of the SIR database.
 2. The SSA Facilities Services Analyst shall follow up on any SIRs wherein an incident was reportedly caused by an unsafe condition of any building grounds, equipment or other unsafe condition. S(he) shall document action taken to alleviate or mitigate the unsafe condition. SIRs dealing with security issues shall be processed in the same manner.
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V. REFERENCES

SSA Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual:

- C 19 Reporting an Employee Death
- D 9 Client Death/Serious Incident Notification Dependent Children and Voluntary Supervision Cases
- E 1 Loss of County Funds/Property
- C 38 Appropriate Response to Workplace Violence;
- E 6 Subpoenas, Public Records Acts, Claims, and Lawsuits
- C 21 On-The-Job Injury/Illness Reporting Procedure
- E 20 Emergency Procedures and Evacuation Plan

County of Orange HIPAA Policies Manual

DHS All County Letter 03-18

CFS Operations Manual, Number H-0101, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA): Guidelines for CFS

VI. ATTACHMENTS

- A Special Incident Report (SIR), F063-03-48

Note: * **Covered Entity (CE):** Under HIPAA, this is a *health plan, a health care clearinghouse, or a health care provider* who transmits any health information in electronic form in connection with a HIPAA transaction. Also see Part II, 45 CFR 160.103.