

Reporting of Notifiable Incidents (Internal and External)



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SUMMARY	This guideline outlines the process to be undertaken when a notifiable and dangerous incident occurs in any of ISLHD work areas involving staff, visitors, patients, students, volunteers or Contractors.

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Section 1 - Background

The NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011 details the types of incidents that are notifiable to SafeWork NSW. An incident is notifiable if it arises out of the conduct of a business or undertaking that results in the death, serious injury or serious illness of a person, or involves a dangerous incident.

It is a statutory requirement that SafeWork NSW be provided with immediate notification of 'notifiable incidents'. This ensures SafeWork NSW can address risks to health and safety promptly. It also enables SafeWork NSW to investigate such incidents in a timely manner. ISLHD Senior Executives, and possibly the Ministry of Health, must be made aware when notifiable incidents have occurred within a timely manner.

This guideline outlines the process to be followed in these situations.

Section 2 - Definitions

- **Incident:** any unplanned event resulting in, or having a potential for injury, ill health, damage or other loss.
- **Injury:** any physical or mental damage to the body caused by exposure to a hazard.
- **Notifiable incident:** an incident for which you are legally required to notify SafeWork NSW (previously WorkCover). An incident is notifiable if it arises while carrying out work for ISLHD and results in or involves:
 - death,
 - serious injury or serious illness of a person,
 - a dangerous incident,
 - a dangerous electrical incident,
 - a serious electrical incident.
- **Serious Injury:** notification is required of a serious injury or illness of a person if they require any of the following:
 - immediate treatment as an inpatient in hospital
 - immediate treatment for the amputation of any part of the body
 - immediate treatment for a serious head injury
 - immediate treatment for a serious eye injury
 - immediate treatment for a serious burn
 - immediate treatment for the separation of skin from an underlying tissue (such as degloving or scalping)
 - immediate treatment for a spinal injury
 - immediate treatment for the loss of a bodily function
 - immediate treatment for serious lacerations
 - medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.

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- **Serious Illness:** any infection to which the carrying out of work is a significant contributing factor, including any infection that is reliably attributable to carrying out work:
 - with micro-organisms,
 - that involves providing treatment or care to a person,
 - that involves contact with human blood or body substances, or
 - that involves handling or contact with animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products.

Further clarification of these injuries or illnesses can be found in Appendix B and Appendix D

Section 3 - Responsibilities

Workers must:

- Implement emergency procedures immediately when an incident or emergency is identified.
- Report the incident to their line manager as soon as is safe to do so.
- Follow safety instructions provided by their manager or other response workers.
- Register and complete the incident in the Incident Information Management System (IIMS).

Line managers must:

- Ensure workers have been trained in the department's emergency response and incident management procedures.
- Implement the department's emergency procedures when notified of an incident or emergency.
- Ensure that an IIMS has been completed.
- Ensure that the incident location is preserved as required by WHS Act 2011.
- Ensure that the Safety Advisor and the relevant Tier 3 Manager are alerted to the possibility of a notifiable incident as soon as possible after being notified.
- Ensure that the internal investigation of the incident is completed as soon as practicable.

Tier 3 Managers must:

- Ensure that the relevant Executive Director (Tier 2) is advised of the notifiable incident within 24hrs of it occurring.
- Review and approve the Notifiable Incident Summary Report.
- Review, approve and publish (where relevant) any safety alert
- Ensure that the control actions and recommendations are implemented.
- Ensure all notifiable incidents that are classified as actual SAC 1 incidents are notified to the MoH via a Reportable Incident Brief, within 24 hours of notification of the incident in the incident management system IIMS ([PD2020_47 Incident management Policy](#)).

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Executive Directors must:

- Advise the Chief Executive of the notifiable incident with 24hrs of the incident occurring.
- Review and approve the Notifiable Incident Summary Report and its recommendations.
- Confirm the control actions and recommendations have been implemented and are effective.
- Communicate with staff about the incident and subsequent safety learnings via safety alert.

Safety Advisors are responsible for:

- Confirming that the incident is a notifiable incident under WHS Act 2011 definition.
- Contacting SafeWork NSW and providing details of incident – if requested.
- Leading the investigation with the relevant line manager as soon as practicable following the incident.
- Notifying Senior Manager, Workforce Health and Safety of the incident.
- Completing the Notifiable Incident Summary Report and submitting to Tier 3 Manager within one month of the incident occurring (**Appendix A**).
- Advising Senior Manager, Workforce Health and Safety when Executive Director has confirmed that all recommended actions have been completed.
- Drafting “Safety Alerts” and submitting to relevant Tier 3 Manager.

Senior Manager, Workforce Health and Safety is responsible for:

- Notifying Executive Director Strategic Improvement Programs and Director, People Safety and Culture of any notifiable incidents
- Coordinating the provision of information to the Board regarding completion of incident investigation recommendations through the Notifiable Incident Register.
- Notifying Ministry of Health of any notifiable incidents on a quarterly basis (excluding SAC 1 incidents which are notified as soon as practicable).

Section 4 – Procedure

When a serious injury / illness or dangerous incident occurs, the following actions must be taken:

- Attend to any injured persons and notify emergency services if necessary. Enlist assistance if required.
- Make the site safe to prevent further injury, accident or incident.
- Notify the manager / supervisory staff member responsible for the workplace of the hazard or incident immediately, or as soon as safe to do so.
- The supervisory staff member to whom the hazard or incident is reported must determine if the incident falls under the definition of a notifiable incident (**Appendix B**)

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and D). The Workforce Support – Safety Advisor may assist with the determination of a notifiable incident.

- As required, the supervisory staff member must notify their Workforce Support – Safety Advisor of the incident as soon as practicable. The manager may need to contact SafeWork NSW if the incident is outside of normal hours (Refer [flowchart](#)).
- The information that may be asked by SafeWork NSW (refer Appendix C) should be obtained prior to contacting them.
- The incident must be reported in IIMS. This may be done by:
 - All workers involved in the incident, if they are able.
 - An injured worker, if they are able.
 - A line manager on behalf of an injured worker where they are unable to do so themselves.
- The relevant Tier 3 Manager must advise the relevant Tier 2 Executive Director of the incident within 24 hours.
- The Tier 2 Executive Director must advise the Chief Executive of the incident within 24 hours of it occurring.
- An investigation is to be conducted by the Safety Advisor and line manager, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, and once approved by the Snr Manager Workforce Health and Safety, the finalised investigation report is to be approved by the relevant Tier 3 Manager and Executive Director (Tier 2).
- A summary of the incident and any key learnings from the investigation are to be communicated with all relevant staff. This is to be done through a 'Safety Alert'. A Safety Alert is to be drafted by the relevant Workforce Support – Safety Advisor, approved by the Tier 3 manager and distributed via the Tier 2 or 3 manager (depending on the audience). Once published, the Safety Alert should be displayed on WHS noticeboards across the workplace. All staff that the safety alert applies to must have access to the safety alert.
- Monthly progress reports (refer [flowchart](#)) outlining progress with the implementation of any recommendations and actions are to be provided to Senior Manager, Workforce Health and Safety, by the Safety Advisor for inclusion in the Board's Notifiable Incident Register.
- The investigation of the incident for ISLHD is to be completed as per ISLHD OPS PROC 81 – WHS Incident Reporting and Investigation.

Section 5 – Preservation of the site

'The site' includes any plant, substance, structure or thing associated with the notifiable incident.

The Manager/Supervisor is to ensure the incident site is made safe/preserved in accordance with Section 39 of the WHS Act, which may include securing or taping off the area to prevent

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unauthorised access. When the notifiable incident is reported to SafeWork NSW they will advise if an inspector will need to attend the site.

The site can be disturbed/released when:

- Safe Work NSW has given permission as mentioned above.
- Assisting someone that is injured and when emergency services attend.
- Removing a deceased person.
- Making the site safe so that further incidents/injury do not occur.
- Disturbance is related to a Police investigation.

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Section 6 - Notify Relevant Personnel (Internal and External)

The following persons shall be informed of any serious injury, illness or notifiable or dangerous incident as soon as practicable:

Responsible Person	Who is to be notified	Method of notification
Internal Notification		
First person on the scene or Supervisor	<i>Designated First Aider:</i> If person is injured, seek assistance from First Aider in immediate work area.	For more information refer: <i>ISLHD OPS PROC 79 - WHS First Aid</i>
	<i>Emergency Services:</i> In the event of an emergency contact Emergency Services (police, fire, ambulance).	Land line Phone (0) 000 Mobile Phone 112
	<i>Security: (if on site)</i> Site security personnel are to be notified immediately of the incident so they can meet and provide directions to any external emergency services.	Security on site
	<i>Manager/Supervisor:</i> The relevant manager/ supervisor in charge of the workplace is to be notified as soon as practicable.	
	<i>Contractor:</i> In the event that a contractor or sub-contractor or their employee is involved, the principal contractor is to be notified as soon as practicable.	
Safety Advisor; or out of hours – Site/Service Manager	Senior Manager, Workforce Health and Safety is to be notified as soon as practicable.	ISLHD Workforce Health and Safety: 02 4223 8563/8561 or 0434 323 424
External Agencies		
Safety Advisor or out of hours – Senior Manager Work, Health and Safety	SafeWork NSW (formerly WorkCover NSW) Ph. 13 10 50.	The notice must be given: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By phone or if phone is not possible: • Email • Fax • letter
Site/Service Senior Management	NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Ph. 131 555	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone
*The person responsible for the notification may delegate this responsibility, if for example they are busy dealing with the incident site.		

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Section 7 - Employee Support

Following any work-related event such as a serious incident or injury, all ISLHD employees involved are encouraged to seek counselling through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This service is confidential and available to all ISLHD employees free of charge.

Section 8 - Documentation

- Appendix A – Notifiable Incident: Summary Report
- Appendix B – Notifiable Incident: Serious injury or illness table
- Appendix C – Notifiable Incident: What information will be requested?
- Appendix D – Notifiable Incident: Dangerous Incidents
- Appendix E – Notifiable Incidents Fact Sheet

Section 9 – References

- [NSW Health Policy Directive Work Health and Safety: Better Practice Procedures PD2018_013](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 No 10](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#)
- [Code of Practice – How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks](#)
- [NSW Health Policy Directive Injury Management and Return to Work PD2013_006](#)
- [NSW Health Policy Directive Incident Management PD2020_047](#)
- [ISLHD-OPS-PROC-79 WHS First Aid](#)
- [ISLHD-OPS-PROC-81 WHS Incident Reporting and Investigation](#)

Section 10 – Revision and Approval History

Date	Revision no:	Author and approval
Oct 2017	0	Safety Coordinator People, Safety and Culture
August 2019	1	Safety Coordinator People, Safety and Culture Review of process
August 2021	2	Safety Coordinator People, Safety and Culture Approval /Date: Director, Corporate Governance & Risk Management /August 2021

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Appendix A: Notifiable Incident Summary Report

AGENDA Notifiable Incident – **Site/Service Name** **DT19/xxx**
ITEM:
PREPARED **Relevant T3 Manager**
BY:

TYPE OF PAPER:

- Information only
 Decision
 Recommendation to the Board

Recommendation

That the Committee receive the information provided.

Purpose

To provide the Committee with information on a notifiable incident that occurred during the month.

Key Issues

Incident Details

Date of Incident:	
Location:	
SafeWork NSW Investigation Reference No:	
Date Investigation Completed:	

Brief Description of Incident

Causation

Initial Actions Taken

Recommendations

Action	By Whom	Due

Attachments

Nil

ENDS

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Appendix B: Serious Injury or Illness Table

Serious Injury / Illness	Example
Immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admission into a hospital as an in-patient for any duration, even if the stay is not overnight or longer. <p>It does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out-patient treatment provided by the emergency section of a hospital (i.e. not requiring admission as an in-patient) and immediate discharge. Subsequent corrective surgery such as that required to fix a fractured nose.
Immediate treatment for the amputation of any part of the body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amputation of a limb such as arm or leg, body part such as hand, foot or the tip of a finger, toe, nose or ear. <p>It does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bruising or minor abrasion or laceration to the skin.
Immediate treatment for a serious head injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fractured skull, blood clot or bleeding in the brain, damage to the skull to the extent that it is likely to affect organ/face function. Head injuries resulting in temporary or permanent amnesia. <p>It does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A bump to the head resulting in a minor contusion or headache
Immediate treatment for a serious eye injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injury that results in or is likely to result in the loss of the eye or total or partial loss of vision. Injury that involves an object penetrating the eye (for example metal fragment, wood chip). Exposure of the eye to a substance which poses a risk of serious eye damage. <p>It does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eye exposure to a substance that merely causes irritation.
Immediate treatment for a serious burn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A burn requiring intensive care or critical care which could require compression garment or a skin graft. <p>It does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A burn that merely requires washing the wound and applying a dressing.
Immediate treatment for the separation of skin from an underlying tissue (such as degloving or scalping)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separation of skin from an underlying tissue such that tendon, bone or muscles are exposed (de-gloving or scalping).
Immediate treatment for a spinal injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injury to the cervical, thoracic, lumbar or sacral vertebrae including the discs and spinal cord. <p>It does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acute back strain
Immediate treatment for the loss of a bodily function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of consciousness, loss of movement of a limb or loss of the sense of smell, taste, sight or hearing, or loss of function of an internal organ. <p>It does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mere fainting, or A sprain, strain or fracture.
Immediate treatment for serious lacerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serious lacerations that cause muscle, tendon, nerve or blood vessel damage or permanent impairment. Deep or extensive cuts. Tears of wounds to the flesh or tissues—this may include stitching to prevent loss of blood and/or other treatment to prevent loss of bodily function and/or infection.
Medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Medical Treatment” is treatment provided by a doctor. Exposure to a substance includes exposure to chemicals, airborne contaminants and exposure to human and / or animal blood and body substances.

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Appendix C: Notifiable Incident: What information will be requested?

Information required	Example
What happened: an overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an overview of what happened. Nominate the type of notifiable incident—was it death, serious injury or illness, or 'dangerous incident' (as defined in Appendix D)?
When did it happen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date and time.
Where did it happen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incident address. Details that describe the specific location of the notifiable incident—for example section of the hospital or the particular piece of equipment that the incident involved — to assist instructions about site disturbance.
What happened: detailed description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed description of the notifiable incident.
Who did it happen to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injured person's name, date of birth, address and contact number. Injured person's occupation. Relationship of the injured person to ISLHD – worker, volunteer, visitor.
How and where are they being treated (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of serious injury or illness - i.e. nature of injury. Initial treatment of serious injury or illness. Where the patient has been taken for treatment.
Who is the person conducting the business or undertaking (there may be more than one)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District. Business address (if different from incident address), ABN - 13567011035 and contact details including phone number and email – Include Senior Manager Workforce Health and Safety – Mob: 0434 323 424.
What has/is being done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action taken or intended to be taken to prevent recurrence (if any).
Who is notifying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notifier's name, contact phone number and position at workplace. Name, phone number and position of person to contact for further information (Senior Manager, Workforce Health and Safety).

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Appendix D: Notifiable Incident: Dangerous Incident

Dangerous incidents (commonly referred to as 'near misses')

Notification is also required of any incident in relation to a workplace that exposes a worker or any other person to a serious risk resulting from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

- an uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance
- an uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire
- an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam
- an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance
- the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing
- collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant that is required to be design or item registered under the Work Health and Safety Regulations
- the collapse or partial collapse of a structure
- the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation
- the inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel
- the interruption of the main system of ventilation in an underground excavation or tunnel
- Electric Shock:
 - minor shock resulting from direct contact with exposed live electrical parts (other than 'extra low voltage') including shock from capacitive discharge
 - It does not include:
 - shock due to static electricity
 - 'extra low voltage' shock (i.e. arising from electrical equipment less than or equal to 50V AC and less than or equal to 120V DC)
 - defibrillators are used deliberately to shock a person for first aid or medical reasons

Any of these occurrences are reportable as a 'dangerous incident' (or 'near miss') if a person is exposed to a serious risk from immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard.

For most hazards such as plant or a structure collapsing, a person will need to be in the immediate vicinity to be exposed to a serious risk to their health or safety.

However some hazards such as an uncontrolled leak of a hazardous gas or a fire can travel towards a person and expose them to a serious risk to health and safety away from the original source.

A dangerous incident includes both immediate serious risks to health or safety, and also a risk from an immediate exposure to a substance which is likely to create a serious risk to health or safety in the future, for example asbestos or chemicals.

Only occurrences involving a 'serious risk' are notifiable taking into account the likelihood of a serious illness or injury occurring from the incident. This would include any situation which seriously endangers or threatens the health or safety of a person

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Appendix E: Notifiable Incidents Fact Sheet



Fact Sheet:

Notifiable Incident

What is a 'notifiable incident'?

A 'notifiable incident' as outlined in the WHS Act as:

- the death of a person
- a 'serious injury or illness', or
- a 'dangerous incident'

'Notifiable incidents' may relate to any person—whether an employee, contractor or member of the public.

What is a serious injury or illness?

"Serious injury or illness of a person" means an injury or illness requiring the person to have:

- immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital, or
- immediate treatment for:
 - the amputation of any part of body, or
 - a serious head injury, or
 - a serious eye injury, or
 - a serious burn, or
 - the separation of skin from an underlying tissue (such as degloving or scalping), or
 - a spinal injury, or
 - the loss of a bodily function, or
 - serious lacerations, or
- medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.

What is a Dangerous Incident?

A dangerous incident (usually called "Near Miss") is an incident in relation to a workplace that exposes a worker or any other person to a serious risk to a person's health or safety resulting from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

- an uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance
- an uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire
- an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam
- an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance
- electric shock
- the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing
- the collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant that is required to be authorised for use in accordance with the regulations (e.g. lifts)
- the collapse or partial collapse of a structure

- the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation
- the inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel
- the interruption of the main system of ventilation in an underground excavation or tunnel.

Who can notify SafeWork NSW?

Anyone can notify SafeWork NSW; however, management personnel of the area that the notifiable incident occurred generally make this contact within 24hrs or immediately if the incident resulted in a death to ensure efficient reporting and compliance with legislative requirements.

How to notify SafeWork NSW?

The notice must be given by the fastest possible means which could be by telephone or in writing, for example by facsimile, email or other electronic means. The ISLHD Workforce Health and Safety unit can also provide directions and assistance should a notifiable incident occur.

SafeWork NSW (formerly WorkCover) 13 10 50, and ISLHD Workforce Health and Safety 02 4223 8525

WHS Obligations

In summary Part 3 of the WHS Act requires:

- immediate notification of a 'notifiable incident' to SafeWork NSW after becoming aware of it
- if SafeWork NSW asks—written notification with 48 hours of the request, and
- preservation of the incident site until an inspector arrives or directs otherwise (subject to some exceptions).

Failing to notify is a criminal offence and penalties apply.

Who is Responsible for Notifying SafeWork NSW?

Refer to ISLHD CORP GL 02 Work Health and Safety Reporting of Notifiable Incidents.

Department: WHS
Trim: DT16/104637
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