

Emergency and Critical Incident Policy

Location	CEO Office
Policy Type	Organisational Policy
Version	7.0
Issue Date	December 2022
National Regulatory Code	Performance Outcome 4 – Governance

1. OBJECTIVE

This policy outlines how Argyle Community Housing (Argyle Housing) prepares for and effectively responds to emergency situations and critical incidents through the appropriate use of resources. The policy outlines how Argyle Housing will assess how an incident could have been prevented and actions to prevent similar incidents. The prevention and effective management of emergency situations and critical incidents can assist to minimise the negative impact of an unexpected event. This policy applies to all staff, clients, volunteers, visitors, and Board members.

2. BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

- 2.1. Argyle Housing is committed to the protection and wellbeing of tenants, staff, volunteers, Board members, contractors, and visitors during emergencies
- 2.2. Argyle Housing swiftly and effectively responds to critical situations, with the foremost goals of preserving life, protecting the organisation's property, and restoring operations as quickly as possible
- 2.3. Emergencies and critical incidents in the workplace can affect people physically and psychologically, and affect program continuity at Argyle Housing
- 2.4. The purpose of this policy is to ensure Argyle Housing prepares for and effectively responds to emergencies and critical incidents through the appropriate use and application of resources. The prevention and effective management of emergencies and critical incidents can assist to minimise the negative impact of an unexpected event
- 2.5. This policy applies to all staff, tenants, contractors, stakeholders, volunteers, Board members and visitors

3. DEFINITIONS

Critical Incident	A critical incident can be defined as any event or situation that results in the unexpected death of, or severe injury to, an Argyle Housing client, occupant, staff member, visitor, applicant or contractor. A critical incident can also be an incident involving severe damage to Argyle Housing's property, reputation or financial integrity. A critical incident may result in physical or psychological injury to the staff members involved. Where this occurs, the physical and/or psychological injury should also be reported on a Report a Workplace Incident or Injury Form in CompliSpace.
Business Continuity Plan (BCP)	The document is used to restore Argyle Housing's business operations and ensure the safety of staff and clients in the event of a major incident or other business interruption event.
Employee Assistance Program	An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a work-based intervention, employee benefit program offered by Argyle Housing and designed to enhance the emotional, mental and general psychological wellbeing of all employees. The EAP also includes services for immediate family members. EAPs are intended to help employees deal with personal problems that might adversely impact their job performance, health, and well-being.
Critical Incident Flowchart	A procedural flowchart on display at all Argyle Housing offices and on CompliSpace, which clearly outlining how staff should respond to a critical incident that occurs at an Argyle office site or property, including detailed information on key roles and responsibilities.
Complispace Assurance Incident Management System	A secure online portal where Critical Incidents will be recorded, assessed, managed and resolved. Reporting from Complispace Assurance will include an assessment of how an incident could have been prevented and actions recommended to prevent similar incidents. This information will be included in a report to the Audit and Risk Committee

4. POLICY DETAIL

4.1 What is a Critical Incident?

Critical incidents include, but are not limited to, the following events:

- Abuse or assault on an Argyle Housing employee, tenant, visitor, or contractor
- Hostage or terrorist situation-death-robbery-physical (including sexual) assaults
- Serious injury to, or death of an Argyle Housing employee, client, visitor, or contractor
- Vehicle or other accident resulting in severe damage to an Argyle Housing vehicle or injury/death of an Argyle Housing employee
- Fire, gas, or water leak
- Severe damage to an Argyle Housing property (including leasehold property)
- Chemical, radiation or biological spill
- Drug contamination at an Argyle Housing property (including leasehold property)

- Bushfire-storm-earthquake-bomb threat
- Reputational damage to Argyle Housing
- Financial crisis effecting Argyle Housing's solvency and registration
- An incident that occurs in connection with providing life supports or services to a person with disability; and have, or could have, caused harm to the person with disability

4.2 Critical Incident Response

- Emergency evacuation drills will be undertaken in Argyle Housing exclusive sites every 6 months under the instruction of the Fire Wardens at that location
- The Business Continuity Plan will be reviewed annually and activated where there is a potential emergency, disaster or emergency that will impact Argyle Housing's ability to continue business as usual at any of its sites
- Argyle Housing will identify, prevent, and manage emergency and critical incidents situations within its sphere of responsibility and influence, until the arrival of appropriate emergency services
- Argyle Housing will maintain up to date information about the critical living/care needs and NDIS Provider and Care Team for NDIS participants in its Tenancy Management System (MRI) to help ensure a timely and effective response for clients in a critical situation
- Argyle Housing uses risk assessment processes to identify and control barriers to effective emergency management
- Where required, site specific critical incident response plans will be developed and communicated to relevant employees
- Documented site-specific induction will be conducted by an appointed person from Argyle Housing for all staff, visitors, volunteers, contractors who will include the correct procedure to follow in the event of critical incident or emergency evacuation
- All Staff will undergo annual familiarisation with policies and procedures relating to emergency and critical incidents
- All Staff will undertake emergency and critical incident training annually referencing Argyle Housing's Critical Incident Framework, Critical Incident Checklist and Business Continuity Plan
- Information about Argyle Housing's incident management system, including key personnel and contact numbers will be included on Argyle Housing website, in client newsletters and in the client welcome pack

4.3 Reporting Critical Incidents

All critical incident responses undertaken by the organisation are recorded immediately in CompliSpace Assurance and reviewed by management and Board to identify any ongoing risk or gaps in knowledge and/or training. Complispace Assurance records all actions taken to assess, manage and resolve an incident including identifying how the incident might be prevented in the future. Detailed Critical Incident reports are prepared for the Audit and Risk Committee quarterly or as required.

4.4 National Disability Insurance Scheme (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018

Certain incidents that happen, or are alleged to have happened, in connection with the provision of supports or services by registered NDIS providers are known as **reportable incidents**. These incidents include the death, serious injury, abuse or neglect of a person with disability, unlawful sexual or physical contact with, or assault of, a person with a disability, sexual misconduct, committed against, or in the

presence of, a person with disability, including grooming of the person with disability for sexual activity and the use of restrictive practices in particular circumstances.

If a reportable incident occurs, or is alleged to have occurred, the registered NDIS provider must give details about the incident to the Commissioner. Details of certain incidents (such as the death of a person with disability) must be notified within 24 hours, while others must be notified within 5 business days.

Registered NDIS providers must keep records about reportable incidents.

If the Commissioner is notified about a reportable incident, the Commissioner may take certain action, including requiring the provider to undertake specified remedial action, carry out an internal investigation about the incident or engage an independent expert to investigate and report on the incident.

The Commissioner has the power to authorise inquiries in relation to reportable incidents. An inquiry can be carried out even if a reportable incident has not been notified to the Commissioner.

The Commissioner can publish a report setting out his or her findings in relation to an inquiry.

5. NOTIFIABLE INCIDENTS

6.1 Appendix one – notifiable incidents factsheet

6.2 Safe work Australia information sheet

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-09/Incident-notification-fact-sheet-2015%20UD.PDF>

Notifiable incidents

A notifiable incident is when:

- a person dies
- a person experiences a serious injury or illness
- a potentially dangerous incident occurs.

Significant penalties apply if you don't notify us of a 'notifiable incident'.

You must also notify your insurer within 48 hours.

What we need to know

When you call us to report an incident, we will ask for:

- an overview of what happened, including date, time and location
- information about anyone who was injured, including their date of birth, contact details and their relationship to you (worker, site visitor, volunteer, contractor, member of the public)
- information about the injury, including treatment received and hospital details, if they were taken to hospital
- your details, including business information and contact details
- immediate action taken to make the site safe
- further safety action taken, or actions that will be taken, to prevent the incident happening again.

[More information on notifying a serious injury or illness, a death or a dangerous incident.](#)

<https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/safety-starts-here/safety-support/investigating-and-reporting-incidents/investigating-and-reporting-incidents-accodions/notifiable-incidents>

06-07-20

Except where otherwise noted, content on this site is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this licence, visit: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

5. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- Argyle Housing Business Continuity Plan Management Policy
- Argyle Housing Business Continuity Plan (BCM)
- Emergency and Critical Incident Framework - CompliSpace
- Emergency and Critical Incident Checklist - CompliSpace
- Critical Incident Report Form - CompliSpace
- Work, Health and Safety Policy
- [National Disability Insurance Scheme \(Incident Management and Reportable Incidents\) Rules 2018](#)

Version Control

Version No.	Review Date	Author	Position	Next Review Date
1.0	02/07/2015			
1.1	30/08/2015	W.Middleton	CEO	31/12/2015
1.1	15/12/2015	W.Middleton	CEO	14/06/2016
1.2	01/05/2016	M. Ward	GM Operations	01/05/2017
2.0	23/11/2017	J.McFarland	GM Strategy & Growth	01/06/2018
3.0	12/06/2018	Jackson	Work Health and Safety Specialist	12/06/2019
4.0	15/05/2019	W. Middleton	CEO	14/05/2019
5.0	01/10/2019	W. Middleton	CEO	01/10/2020
6.0	13/01/2022	C. Doherty	A/CEO	14/01/2023
7.0	14/12/2022	C. Woods	Client Engagement	13/12/2024