Administrative Procedure 608

Child Care Centre Serious Occurrence Policy and Procedures

Name of Child Care Centre: _____

Date Policy and Procedures Established: September 1st, 2026

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: September 15th, 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and the procedures within is to provide clear instructions for staff, students and volunteers to follow for how to identify, respond to and report a serious occurrence. It ensures that there is a plan to deal with any serious incidents that may affect the health, safety and well-being of children and those working directly with children, and that these serious incidents are addressed by the child care centre and reported to the Ministry of Education for review.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures with respect to serious occurrences for child care centres.

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

2. Policy

Identifying a Serious Occurrence

Under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, serious occurrences are defined as:

1. the death of a child who received child care at a child care centre,
2. abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a child care centre,
3. a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child

care at a child care centre,

4. an incident where a child who is receiving child care at a child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, or

5. 5. an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a child care centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving child care at the child care centre.

Reporting a Serious Occurrence

- Staff will notify the Before and After School Program Supervisor or designate of a serious occurrence as soon as they become aware of the incident.
- All serious occurrences will be reported to the Ministry of Education in the Child Care Licensing System (CCLS) within 24 hours of the licensee, supervisor or designate becoming aware of the occurrence.
- Identifying information such as children or staff names will not be included in the serious occurrence reports.
- If CCLS cannot be accessed (for example, where CCLS or an internet connection is unavailable), the licensee, supervisor or designate will notify the program advisor (PA) assigned to the license by email or by telephone within 24 hours of becoming aware of the occurrence. A serious occurrence report will be submitted in CCLS as soon as the system can be accessed.
- Where a Ministry of Education PA cannot be reached by telephone, a voicemail message will be left to notify the PA of the incident.
- All updates to serious occurrences will be reported in CCLS through update reports until the serious occurrence has been closed by the Ministry of Education.
- Where the Ministry of Education requests updates to a serious occurrence in CCLS, these will be provided as soon as possible though update reports.

- Serious occurrences reported to the Ministry of Education will be documented in the **daily written record.**

Posting a Serious Occurrence Summary (Notification Form)

- Within 24 hours of becoming aware of a serious occurrence, [individual's name/position] will complete a Serious Occurrence Notification Form in either CCLS or using the form available in Appendix A.

- The form will provide a summary of the serious occurrence and of any action taken by the Before and After School Program.

- The summary will not include identifying information (for example, names and ages of children, staff, or program rooms) and will contain gender-neutral language (for example, they, a child and more).

- The summary will be posted at the Before and After School Program in a place that is visible and accessible to parents for a minimum of 10 business days, regardless of the serious occurrence type and the status of any related investigation.

- Where a serious occurrence is updated or revised, the summary should also be updated to reflect this change.

- All serious occurrence summaries will be retained for 3 years from the date they are created or last updated (whichever date is most recent).

- Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

- If any person, including a person who performs professional duties with respect to children, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has suffered, or is at risk to suffer, physical or emotional harm or sexual exploitation or molestation inflicted by the person having charge of the child, the person will report the suspicion directly to a children's aid society (CAS).

- Suspected abuse or neglect that will be reported will include physical, emotional and

sexual abuse and/or neglect.

- Where a parent expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact their local CAS directly. The person who becomes aware of these concerns is also required to report the concerns to the local CAS.

3. Procedures

Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences

Steps for Staff, Students and Volunteers to Follow:

Immediately:

- Ask for assistance from other staff, students, or volunteers.
- Provide immediate medical assistance, if applicable, according to Standard First Aid and CPR training, where applicable.
- Call emergency services and follow direction from emergency services personnel, where applicable.
- Ensure that other children are removed from the scene and do not have access to the area, where applicable.
- Address any risks to the health or safety of the child and/or other children present to prevent the risk of further harm.
- Notify the supervisor/designate.

Ongoing and after the incident:

- Follow any direction provided by third-party authorities (for example, police, CAS, public health, and more)
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times.

Within 24 hours:

- Document the incident in:

  the daily written record;

the child's record of symptoms of illness, if applicable; and/or

in an accident report, if applicable.

- Where an accident report is created, provide a signed copy to a parent of the child.

Steps for Licensee/Supervisor/Designate to Follow:

1. Immediately:

- Provide assistance to children, staff, students, volunteers and families.
- Provide immediate medical assistance, if applicable, according to Standard First Aid and CPR training.
- Call emergency services and follow direction from emergency services personnel, where applicable.

2. Within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident:

- Collect all pertinent information to report the incident to the Ministry of Education as a serious occurrence, including:
  - A description of the incident;
  - The date, time, place where it occurred, actions taken and outcome;
  - The current status of the incident and child/parties involved; and
  - All other parties notified (for example, emergency services, CAS, parents).

3. Report the serious occurrence in CCLS or notify the Ministry of Education program advisor by telephone or email where CCLS is not available. Note: Where CCLS is not available, a serious occurrence report will be submitted in CCLS as soon as it becomes available.

4. Post a summary of the serious occurrence and of any action taken by the in a place that is visible and accessible to parents.

5. Ongoing and after the incident:

- Follow any direction provided by third-party authorities (for example, police, CAS, public health, and more)
- Always maintain confidentiality.

- Update the serious occurrence report in CCLS, as required.
- Conduct an internal review of the serious occurrence with staff, students and volunteers to establish next steps and reduce probability of repeat occurrences.
- Provide children, parents, staff, students and/or volunteers with supports, if needed.
- Review with staff, students and volunteers the Before and After School Program's program statement policies and procedures that set out prohibited practices and expectations of promoting the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of all children.

Steps to Follow According to Specific Serious Occurrence Categories

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE: Death of a Child

Steps for Staff, Students and Volunteers to Follow:

Death occurs while a child is receiving child care:

See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for staff, students and volunteers.

Steps for Licensee/Supervisor/Designate to Follow:

See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for the Licensee/Supervisor/Designate, and

a) Death occurs while a child is receiving child care:

1. Immediately, upon becoming aware of the incident:
    - Contact a parent of the child, or where a parent cannot be reached, contact the child's emergency contact.

b) Death occurs while a child is not receiving child care:

Within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident:

- Contact local Children's Aid Society (CAS) or police services to find out if there is an investigation. If an investigation is ongoing, conduct an internal investigation after CAS or police services have completed their investigation, if applicable.

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE: Allegation of Abuse and/or Neglect

Steps for staff, Students and Volunteers to Follow, and:

Where there is a concern about the abuse or neglect of a child by any person:

1. **Immediately:**

- Report concerns to the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) as per the duty to report obligations under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act,* 2017 (CYFSA).
- Document the conversation with CAS and follow their recommendations.
- Notify the supervisor/designate of the incident and the report made to CAS, where appropriate.
- Refrain from discussing the allegation with others.
- Always maintain confidentiality.

Steps for Licensee/Supervisor/Designate to Follow:

See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for the Licensee/Supervisor/Designate, and **Where there is a concern about the abuse or neglect of a child by a staff, student or volunteer, or where a person has otherwise reported alleged abuse/neglect concerns to the supervisor/designate:**

1. **Immediately:**

- Notify the person who reported concerns about their duty to report obligations under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act,* 2017 (CFSA).
- Report the concerns to the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) as per the duty to report obligations under the CYFSA, unless it is confirmed that a report has already been made to CAS.
- Document the concerns.
- Contact and notify a parent of the child, where appropriate.
- Based on the nature of the allegation and/or the direction of CAS and/or internal policies, determine next steps such as disciplinary measures and additional actions, such as an internal investigation to protect children in care.

- Determine whether the individual alleged to have abused/neglected a child is registered with a professional regulatory body (for example, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers and more). If so:
  - Report the allegation of abuse to the appropriate regulatory body;
  - Report to the College of Early Childhood Educators when the employment of a registered early childhood educator (RECE) is suspended or terminated or if the RECE resigns.
- Refrain from discussing the allegation with others.
- Always maintain confidentiality.

2. **Once all external investigations are complete (for example, by police and/or CAS), if applicable:**
   - Update the serious occurrence report in CCLS, as required.
   - Update all other authorities to whom the allegation was reported (for example, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, CAS and more).

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE: Life-Threatening Injury or Illness

Steps for Staff, Students and Volunteers to Follow:

See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for staff, students and volunteers.

Steps for Licensee/Supervisor/Designate to Follow:

See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for the Licensee/Supervisor/Designate.

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE: Missing or Unsupervised Child(ren)

Steps for Staff, Students and Volunteers to Follow:

'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for staff, students and volunteers, and

1. **Immediately, upon becoming aware that a child or children are missing**:
   - Alert the supervisor/designate, and all staff, students and volunteers;

- Search the child care premises, including outdoor areas (for example, hallways, washrooms, playground, outdoor classrooms and more);
- Ensure that remaining children are supervised at all times.

a) Where the child or children are <u>not found</u> after being deemed missing:

- Continue to search the premises.
- Update the supervisor/designate.

b) Where the child or children <u>are found</u> after being deemed missing:

- Update the supervisor/designate.

2. **After the child or children have been found, after being deemed missing**:

- Document the incident in the daily written record.

Steps for Licensee/Supervisor/Designate to Follow:

See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for the Licensee/Supervisor/Designate, and

1**. Immediately, upon becoming aware that a child is missin**g:

- Assist with searching for the missing child(ren).

a) Where the child or children are <u>not found</u> after being deemed missing:

- Call emergency services and follow direction from emergency services personnel.
- Contact the child(ren)'s parent(s), or where a parent cannot be reached, contact the child's emergency contact.

b) Where the child or children <u>are found</u> after being deemed missing:

- Update the child(ren)'s parent(s), or where a parent cannot be reached, the child(ren)'s emergency contact(s).

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE: Unplanned Disruption of Normal Operations

- Fire
- Flood
- Gas Leak

- Detection of Carbon Monoxide
- Outbreak
- Lockdown
- Other Emergency Relocation or Temporary Closure
- Public Health ordered closure

Steps for Staff, Students, and Volunteers to Follow:

'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for staff, students and volunteers, and

a) Where the incident is suspected to be an <u>outbreak</u>:

1. Immediately:
    - Notify the supervisor/designate on site of concerns.
    - Separate children who are showing symptoms of illness from other children.
    - Follow any directions provided by the local public health authority.

2. Within 24 hours:

- Record symptoms of ill health in the affected child(ren)'s records.
- Document the incident in the daily written record.

b) Where the incident is not an outbreak (<u>all other disruptions of normal operations</u>):

1. Immediately:

- Follow the Before and After School Program's fire safety and evacuation plan and/or the emergency management policies and procedures, as applicable.

2. Within 24 hours:

- Document the incident in the daily written record.

Steps for Licensee/Supervisor/Designate to Follow:

See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for the Licensee/Supervisor/Designate, and

a) Where the incident is suspected to be an outbreak:

1. Immediately:

Contact the local public health department.

b) Where the incident is deemed an outbreak by the local public health department:

1.Immediately:

- Follow instructions from the local public health department.
- Contact the parent(s) of the affected child(ren) and ensure the affected child(ren) are picked up by their parent(s) and/or taken to hospital.
- Obtain an outbreak posting from the local Medical Officer of Health and post in an area easily accessible for parents.

Note: Outbreaks must be reported as a serious occurrence only if deemed an outbreak by public health.

2. Within 24 hours:

- Notify all parents of children enrolled at the Before and After School Program of the outbreak.

c) Where the incident is not deemed an outbreak, follow any direction provided by public health.
d) Where the incident is not an outbreak (all other disruptions of normal operations):

1. Immediately:

- Follow the Before and After School Program's fire safety and evacuation plan and/or the emergency management policies and procedures, as applicable.

Note: a hold and secure (an external threat in the area) is not a reportable serious occurrence.

Glossary

Children's Aid Society (CAS): A local agency with the exclusive mandate, under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*, *2017* to investigate allegations of child abuse or neglect and to deliver child protection services.

Emergency: An urgent or pressing situation in which immediate action is required to ensure the safety of children and adults in the Before and After School Program.

Interact: To be or become involved in communication, social activity or work with somebody else or one another (Source: Encarta Dictionary). Examples of interactions with children include conversing, playing, directing, intervening, supervising or assisting in fulfilling their needs (for example, food/drink consumption, toilet use).

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each child care centre it operates (meaning, the operator).

Lockdown: A threat inside the building that will restrict movement within the Before and After School Program.

Parent: A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family (all references to parent include legal guardians but will only be referred to as "parent" in this policy).

Serious Occurrence: An incident that must be reported to the ministry of education within 24 hours.

Staff: Individual employed by the licensee (for example, program room staff).

5. Regulatory Requirements: Ontario Regulation 137/15

SERIOUS OCCURRENCES

38.

(1) Every licensee shall ensure that,

(a) there are written policies and procedures with respect to serious occurrences in each child care centre operated by the licensee and each premises where it oversees the provision of home child care, that address, at a minimum, how to identify, respond to and report a serious occurrence;

(b) a report is provided to a program adviser of any serious occurrence in any child care

centre operated by the licensee or any premises where it oversees the provision of home child care within 24 hours of the licensee or supervisor becoming aware of the occurrence;

(c) a summary of the report provided under clause (b) and of any action taken as a result is posted for at least 10 business days in a conspicuous place at the child care centre or home child care premises; and

(d) the summary of the report is kept in accordance with section 82.