

Instructions and Tips for Creating Compliant Policies and Procedures: Home Child Care Agency Serious Occurrence Policy and Procedures (O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 38(1)(a))



Mandatory Information

The following information **must be included** in your home child care agency's serious occurrence policy and procedures to comply with requirements under the [Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014](#) and [O. Reg. 137/15](#):

- How to identify a serious occurrence
- How to respond to a serious occurrence
- How to report a serious occurrence

Other Considerations

The following are some tips and other considerations for developing your home child care agency's serious occurrence policy and procedures. These are not mandatory, but they will support the development of more comprehensive and high-quality policy and procedures.

General

- Provide definitions for ambiguous terms used throughout your document.
- Include a space to put the date that the policy was last developed and/or updated.
- Break down your procedures into a step-by-step process that is easy to understand and follow and that includes clear roles and responsibilities. Consider outlining steps required by the provider and steps required by the agency.
- Link this policy to other policies and procedures that have been established and implemented (e.g. anaphylaxis policy, children with medical needs, first aid, sanitary practices, written fire procedures, etc.).
- Be clear about the intent of your policy and what you are trying to achieve through its implementation.

Consultation and Resources

- Consult resources about best practices that could support your home child care providers in preventing and responding to a serious occurrence, and include them in your policy and procedures (e.g. Duty to Report in *Child and Family Services Act*, Public Health, College of Early Childhood Educators).
- Consult the Home Child Care Agency Licensing Manual to understand serious occurrence categories.
- Use the templates available on the Early Years Portal to complete serious occurrence annual analyses and serious occurrence summaries.

Processes and Expectations to Include

- Reflect other regulatory requirements in your policy and procedures (e.g. Duty to Report, daily written record, emergency contact information, drug and medication administration, accident reports, etc.).
- Contemplate how an internal review of the incident could be conducted with home child care providers, students and volunteers to establish next steps and manage risks.

When developing your policy and procedure on how to identify a serious occurrence:

- Include examples and scenarios from the Home Child Care Licensing Manual about reportable and non-reportable incidents.
- Set out requirements for home visitors, home child care providers, students and volunteers to regularly review serious occurrence categories.
- Establish a definition for ‘temporarily unsupervised’ and include it in the policy.

When developing your policy and procedure on how to respond to a serious occurrence:

- Describe who will be responsible for training home child care providers, students and volunteers on the procedures to follow in the event of a serious occurrence.
- Set out the frequency that training must be provided and refreshed, and how training will be documented.
- Consider within what timeframe actions will be taken when responding to a serious occurrence and how children will be supervised during an emergency.
- Include a process for consulting with parents on children’s allergies, dietary needs and individualized anaphylaxis plans and emergency procedures before children are enrolled with the home child care agency and regularly thereafter.
- Include steps to be taken to report concerns of an allegation of abuse and/or neglect by the home child care provider and home child care agency.
- Consider contracting with a third party to complete an internal investigation to avoid bias and subjectivity.
- Require that other agencies or individuals be contacted, as applicable (e.g. Ministry of Labour, legal counsel).

When developing your policy and procedure on how to report a serious occurrence:

- Include information about how the home child care provider will notify the agency of a serious occurrence and steps to be taken if an agency representative cannot be contacted.
- Include the regulatory requirements to provide a report to your program advisor within 24 hours of becoming aware of a serious occurrence by completing a serious occurrence report in the

Child Care Licensing System (CCLS), and to complete and post a serious occurrence summary.

- Set out how your Program Advisor will be contacted if CCLS cannot be accessed and set out that a serious occurrence report must be submitted in CCLS as soon as the system becomes available.
- Include information about how to complete a serious occurrence summary, such as
 - including a summary of the serious occurrence and of any action taken by the provider and/or agency;
 - ensuring that there is no identifying information (e.g. children's names, ages, etc.); and
 - using gender neutral language.
- Include information about posting the serious occurrence summary in a place that is visible and accessible to parents at the home child care premises for a minimum of 10 business days, regardless of the serious occurrence type and status of any related investigation.
- Include information about how serious occurrence reports will be updated in CCLS, what information the updates will include, and the requirement for the summary to be posted for an additional 10 business days each time any updates are made.
- State the requirement for summaries to be retained for 3 years from the date they are created or last updated (whichever date is most recent).
- Note that annual analyses are not required to be sent to the Ministry and must be available for inspection.
- Include information that outbreaks must only be reported in CCLS as a serious occurrence if the local public health department has deemed it an outbreak. An outbreak posting may be obtained from the local Medical Officer of Health for posting at the home child care premises.

When developing your policy and procedure, consider including:

- Information about who will be responsible for conducting an annual analysis of all serious occurrences.
- Consider overall serious occurrence trends as well as location-specific trends.
- Information about how to access the serious occurrence summary template in the Licensing Kit on the Early Years Portal.