Introduction to Critical Incident Reporting Requirements, Frequently Asked Questions

Michael Pasillas
Critical Incident Policy Specialist
Michael.Pasillas@state.co.us

Andrea Behnke
Critical Incident Policy Specialist
Andrea.Behnke@state.co.us

Should service providers or case managers be concerned if they complete a Critical Incident Report (CIR) and it is determined later that one was not necessary?

Case managers and service providers should report all incidents they identify as critical incidents through the proper channels to ensure the health and safety of individuals enrolled in services is appropriately addressed. The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Department) reviews all Critical Incident Reports submitted. Follow-up is requested and individual situations are addressed as appropriate. Department staff and service providers or case managers will discuss next steps if it is determined after a CIR is submitted that one was not necessary.

As case managers or service providers, we encounter situations that are not clearly identifiable as warranting a Critical Incident Report (CIR) to be generated. How can we be sure if we should submit a CIR in those situations?

The purpose of a Critical Incident Report is to address those areas of concern in which an individual's health and/or safety is or may be at risk. Case managers and service providers should assess individual situations that arise to determine if health and/or safety of the individual is a concern and submit

a Critical Incident Report when that is the case.

Who is responsible for notifying the Department of critical incidents?

Case managers are responsible for reporting critical incidents to the Department. Service providers should notify the appropriate Case Management Agency of all incidents, including critical incidents.

Should Critical Incident Reports be submitted when individuals exhibit behaviors that are typical for him/her (e.g. self-injurious behaviors)?

Individual situations should be assessed utilizing the definition and requirements of critical incidents. An important component of reporting critical incidents is utilizing the data from those reports to identify trends and strategies to prevent future critical incidents from occurring. Therefore, service providers and case managers should work together and evaluate all incidents accordingly and submit Critical Incident Reports when warranted.

Can the initial notification of a critical incident be the Critical Incident Report? Or must a phone call, email, or fax be done first and then the paperwork?

The initial notification of a critical incident can be the Critical Incident Report. Service providers and case managers should be mindful of the timeline requirements for reporting critical incidents.

Should a Critical Incident Report be written even if it occurred outside the delivery of waiver services?

The responsibility of service providers and case managers to report critical incidents is to help assure the health and safety of individuals enrolled in services. Therefore, any time a service provider or case manager learns of a critical incident involving an individual receiving waiver services, (regardless of whether a waiver service was being provided when the incident occurred) a Critical Incident Report must be completed.

What should service providers and case managers do if they learn of a critical incident long after it occurred?

Service providers and case managers should report all critical incidents upon becoming aware of them. This will aid in the incident management process

and possibly the development of appropriate prevention strategies.

Does exploitation have a specific dollar value before requiring reporting?

Historically, there were dollar values assigned for reports of exploitation. However, those dollar amounts are no longer applicable. Service providers and case managers should look at individual occurrences and report accordingly.

Are peer-to-peer critical incidents to be reported?

Yes – all critical incidents are required to be reported. Also, if the situation requires mandatory reporting, case managers and/or service providers must follow the mandatory reporting process.