

# Serious Occurrence Policy

## Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is a plan to deal with any serious incidents that may affect the health, safety and well-being of children and staff and that these serious incidents are reported, tracked and followed up on.

## Applicable Law:

Phoenix Child Centre will follow policies and procedures as described in the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA); Ministry of Education, Toronto Region (MEDU); *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (ECEA); *Child and Family Services Act's Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect: It's Your Duty*; Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing, Early Learning Division, Toronto Region; and, the College of Early Childhood Educators' *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. As well as any other applicable legislation, regulations, by-laws and policies that are relevant to professional practice.

## Definitions / Acronyms:

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions / acronyms apply:

- Phoenix Child Centre (The Centre)
- Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)
- Ministry of Education, Toronto Region (MEDU)
- Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007 (ECEA)
- College of Early Childhood Educators (the "College")
- Ministry of Education's Child Care Licensing System (CCLS)

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**Policy:**

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The Centre follows all legislated and regulated laws and guidelines in the care of children, and in reporting and analyzing serious occurrences.

The serious occurrence categories in CCLS are:

- 1) Death of a Child
- 2) Allegation of Abuse and/or Neglect
- 3) Life Threatening injury or illness
  - a) Injury
  - b) Illness
- 4) Missing or Unsupervised Child(ren)
  - a) Child was found
  - b) Child is still missing
- 5) Unplanned Disruption of Normal Operations
  - a) Fire
  - b) Flood
  - c) Gas Leak
  - d) Detection of Carbon Monoxide
  - e) Outbreak
  - f) Lockdown
  - g) Other Emergency Relocation or Temporary Closure

As per regulatory requirements during the COVID-19 Outbreak the definition of serious occurrence has been updated to include the following category:

- 6) (c.1) A confirmed or suspected case of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in respect of,
    - (i) A child who receives child care at a home child care premises or child care centre,
    - (ii) A home child care provider
    - (iii) A home child care visitor
    - (iv) A parent of a child mentioned in sub clause (i), or
    - (v) A staff member at a child care centre
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## Roles & Responsibilities:

### Supervisor:

The supervisor will ensure that:

- The policy is reviewed annually and updated as necessary
- The annual report is produced and shared with the board of directors
- Staff understand their responsibilities in caring for children and their obligations surrounding serious occurrences
- Staff sign off annually on the policy.

### Staff:

Daycare staff will read and sign off on the Serious Occurrence policy in order that they may follow the serious occurrence reporting procedures. As well, they will keep up-to-date on current legislation, regulations and other materials affecting their standard of practice in caring for children.

### Students / Volunteers:

Students and volunteers will take direction from the supervisor and staff. Students and volunteers will read and sign off on the Serious Occurrence policy.

## Procedure:

### Serious Occurrence Procedures:

1. Ensure that the child is provided with the medical care appropriate for the situation.
2. Take appropriate steps to address any continuing risk to the child's health or safety. Steps should be taken to ensure the health and safety of all the children present.
3. The staff or anyone else with information about the occurrence reports the matter to the supervisor, or their designate, who conducts the preliminary inquiries.
4. Interview all people who have knowledge of the occurrence. The report should include the following information:
  1. Description of the occurrence.
  2. Child's allegation (if applicable)
  3. Date, time and place of occurrence

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4. Time occurrence reported
5. Reason for the occurrence (if known)
6. People involved
7. Action taken.
8. Current status.
  1. Parties notified:
    - a. Coroner in all cases of death
    - b. Police/Children's Aid Society (CAS), as applicable
    - c. Parents
  2. Further action recommended, either specific to the situation or related to potential underlying factors

## **SERIOUS OCCURRENCES**

### **Reporting Process – within 24 hours:**

1. Within 24 hours of the Supervisor becoming aware of a serious occurrence, or when an operator deems the occurrence serious, the Supervisor or designate submits the serious occurrence online using the Ministry of Education's Child Care Licensing System (CCLS).
2. Within 24 hours the parent/guardian/advocate and, if applicable, the person or agency who placed the client, are informed unless such notification is contra-indicated.
3. Following the submission of the Serious Occurrence Report to the Ministry of Education, a Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be completed by the Supervisor or designate and posted in a conspicuous location. The Serious Occurrence Notification Form is updated as further actions or investigations are completed and will be posted for a minimum of ten business days. When updated, the form remains posted for a further ten business days from the date of each subsequent update. All Serious Occurrence Notification Forms will be retained for three years from the date of the occurrence. The Serious Occurrence Notification Form should not contain any identifying information such as the child's name, staff names, the age or birthdate of the child or the daycare room where the child is placed.
4. Some serious occurrences, most notably an allegation of abuse or neglect, will give rise to the child needing protection. The person who has the reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or may be, in need of protection must make the report directly to the Children's Aid Society (CAS) and follow Child Abuse Policy. Licensees are only required to notify the program advisor and make a Serious Occurrence Report on CCLS if the alleged abuse or neglect occurred while the child was receiving care at the childcare centre.
5. Serious Occurrence Notification Forms pertaining to allegations of child abuse at the centre are posted as soon as it is reported for a minimum of ten business days and updated when the following has been concluded:

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- a. The Children's Aid Society (CAS) has concluded its investigation and the allegation is either verified or not verified; or, CAS has determined that an investigation will not be conducted and the Ministry of Education has investigated any associated licensing non-compliances.
- b. Information to be included with the Serious Occurrence Notification Form:
  1. CAS has verified or not verified the allegation;
  2. The daycare has taken action on the directions given by CAS, if any; and
  3. The daycare has addressed any associated licensing non-compliances identified by the Ministry of Education.

## **Reporting Process – within 7 days:**

Upon a review of the reported serious occurrence, the Ministry of Education may request additional information or a further review by the service provider of the serious occurrence incident. The service provider is then expected to submit online any related follow-up or outcome report(s) to the Ministry of Education. A new Notification Report is generated and posted. The Ministry of Education may also initiate its own review.

## **Reporting to Board of Directors:**

Depending upon the severity of the serious occurrence, serious occurrences are reported to the board of directors either the day of the occurrence or soon thereafter.

## **Annual Summary and Analysis Reports:**

1. Every licensee of a childcare centre shall conduct an annual analysis of all serious occurrences that occurred in the previous year. (O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 38(2)(a)) Based on an analysis of all serious occurrences during the reporting period, the report will describe any trends or patterns relating to staff, children, equipment and the physical plant or site that contributed to or caused the serious occurrence(s). This report stays on file at the childcare centre in the office locked filing cabinet for 3 years from the date it is made unless otherwise specified.
2. Every licensee of a childcare centre shall keep records of the actions taken in response to the analysis. (O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 38(2)(b)) Outline the action taken by your organization in response to the identified trends and patterns of serious occurrences, and describe additional plans to maintain compliance in these areas.
3. Every licensee shall ensure that a report is provided to a program advisor of any serious occurrence in the childcare centre within 24 hours of the licensee or designate becoming aware of the occurrence. (O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 38(1)(b)) Describe any issues, and actions taken, with regard to the timely reporting of serious occurrences.
4. The childcare licensee shall ensure that the policies, procedures and individualized plans it is required to have under this Regulation are implemented at the childcare centre. (O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 6.1(1))
5. At a minimum, the serious occurrence policies and procedures include:

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1. The identification of serious occurrences;
2. The immediate response procedures to a serious occurrence incident;
3. The expected steps in reporting a serious occurrence; and,
4. The serious occurrence notification form posing requirements.

The College of Early Childhood Educators may require the employer or any other person or body designated by the regulations to provide the College with information, including personal information, in respect of members of the College, and the employer, person or body shall provide such information. (ECEA, 2014, c. 11, Sched. 3, s. 31 (4)) The College may require mandatory reports.

### **On-going Monitoring:**

Generally, the service provider is expected to monitor their performance in-year, on an on-going basis, with respect to the reporting, management and follow-up of serious occurrences.

### **Approval & Revision History**

Version #:	Approved By:	Approval Date:	Change(s) to Document
v. 1.0			New policy
			Added to allegations of child abuse at the centre are <b><i>posted as soon as reported. &amp; updated when the following</i></b> is concluded.
			Added to Record Retention: <b><i>Phoenix shall keep the record, report or other document in a secure location for at least 3 years from the date it is made unless otherwise specified.</i></b>

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## Sample: Serious Occurrence Notification Form

<b>Phoenix Child Centre</b>	
<b>Date :</b> 2016/08/25	<b>Date of occurrence:</b> (yyyy/mm/dd) 2016/08/25
<b>Type of serious occurrence: Unplanned disruption of normal operations</b>	
<p><b>Description:</b></p> <p>Date of Incident: Aug 25, 2016 <span style="float: right;">Time of Incident: 15 hr : 25 min</span>  Date you became aware of the serious occurrence: Aug 25, 2016 <span style="float: right;">Time you became aware of the serious occurrence: 15 hr : 25 min</span></p> <p>Were all children in the program / age group involved in or impacted by the occurrence?: <span style="float: right;">No</span>  Age Group: Sesames</p> <p>Type of Serious Occurrence: Unplanned disruption of normal operations <span style="float: right;">Sub-Type: Flood</span></p> <p>Please describe what happened, where the serious occurrence took place, and the actions taken by the Licensee (do not use names, ages or dates of birth):  The valve supplying water to the garden hose was left on, the nozzle in the window well of the Sesame Room. We were able to relocate the Sesame children in the Cool Cat Room for the morning (these children were at school. The water was cleared and the floor mopped, disinfected and dry before lunch.</p>	
<p><b>Action taken by Licensee/Outcome:</b> (add update if applicable):  Who has been notified?: Parent/Guardian/Emergency Contact  Are police conducting an investigation?: No  Is the Children's Aid Society conducting an investigation? No  Has there been media attention?: No  Further action proposed by licensee: We will add making sure the water valve is turned off to the closing procedure.  Is this expected to be the only/last report submitted for this occurrence? Yes  Please explain: n/a  Update an Existing Serious Occurrence  Current status: We have added making sure the water valve is turned off to the closing procedure.</p> <p>Further action proposed by licensee to minimize reoccurrence: n/a</p>	
<b>Name:</b>	_____
<b>Date:</b> (yyyy/mm/dd):	<b>signature</b>

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## Serious Occurrence Notification Form

<b>Phoenix Child Centre</b>	
<b>Date :</b>	<b>Date of occurrence:</b>
<b>Type of serious occurrence:</b>	
<p><b>Description:</b></p> <p>Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____</p> <p>Date you became aware of the serious occurrence: _____ Time you became aware of the serious occurrence: _____</p> <p>Were all children in the program / age group involved in or impacted by the occurrence? Age Group: _____</p> <p>Type of Serious Occurrence: _____ Sub-Type: _____</p> <p>Please describe what happened, where the serious occurrence took place, and the actions taken by the Licensee (do not use names, ages or dates of birth):</p>          	
<p><b>Action taken by Licensee/Outcome:</b> (add update if applicable):</p> <p>Who has been notified?</p> <p>Are police conducting an investigation?</p> <p>Is the Children's Aid Society conducting an investigation?</p> <p>Has there been media attention?</p> <p>Further action proposed by licensee:</p> <p>Is this expected to be the only/last report submitted for this occurrence? Please explain:</p> <p>Update an Existing Serious Occurrence Current status:</p> <p>Further action proposed by licensee to minimize reoccurrence:</p>	
<b>Name:</b>	_____
<b>Date:</b> (yyyy/mm/dd):	<b>signature</b>

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