



Tennessee Department of Children's Services

Terms and Definitions of Incidents

Supplemental to DCS Policy: 1.4, Incident Reporting

While the list below is not inclusive, it is meant to be used as a guide by those individuals charged with reporting incidents.

1. **Abduction** – A child/youth is taken from a placement by unauthorized individuals (*e.g.*, alleged perpetrators of abuse, non-custodial parents or relatives, *etc.*)
2. **Arrest/Police Involvement with Child or Youth** - A child/youth that is either arrested while in the custody of DCS and the arrest has been confirmed by a law enforcement agency; or a child/youth is involved in direct contact with a law enforcement agency, and they are not arrested.
3. **Assault** – An assault is a willful and malicious attack by a child/youth on another person (this does not include “horseplay”). A physical fight between youth is the willful participation between two or more youth in a physical altercation.
4. **Assault by Youth on Staff** - A youth in DCS custody physically attacks a staff member and the assault may or may not require medical attention.
5. **Confinement** - *Protective custody* is when a youth voluntarily requests to be placed in confinement due to a legitimate fear for his/her safety. *Emergency confinement* is used when a youth encourages other youth to act in a concerted effort and there is clear and present danger of harm to other youth/staff, seizing control of any part of the institution, or destruction of property which may significantly alter the living conditions of other youth or jeopardize the security of the facility.

NOTE: *This Incident Report (IR) type is for hardware secure settings only.*

6. **Contraband** - Any item possessed by an individual or found within the facility that is illegal by law or that is expressly prohibited by those legally charged with the responsibility for the administration and operation of the facility or program and is rationally related to legitimate security, safety or treatment concerns.

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- 7. Emergency Medical Treatment** - A child/youth is injured or suffered an illness that requires emergency medical attention beyond what the facility staff can provide.
- 8. Emergency Use of Psychotropic Medication(s)** – An emergency one-time dose of a psychotropic medication in the event of a psychiatric emergency when all other measures have been determined unlikely to prevent the child/youth from imminent harm to self and/or others.
- 9. Major Event at Agency** - An event at a congregate care location that causes a significant disruption to the overall functioning of the program AND necessitates notifying an emergency official. This event affects all, or nearly all, of the children and staff at the location, (e.g., riot, fire, flood, etc.).

NOTE: This IR type is for residential settings only, not for foster homes.

- 10. Mechanical Restraints** - The application of a mechanical device, material, or equipment attached or adjacent to the child/youth's body, including ambulatory restraints, which the child/youth cannot easily remove and that restrict freedom of movement or normal access to the child/youth's body.
- 11. Medication Error** -A medication error is when a medication is inadvertently not administered according to the prescribing provider and/or according to DCS policies and procedures.
- 12. Mental Health Crisis** - A child/youth is engaged in or experiencing self-injurious behavior, suicidal ideation or behavior, homicidal ideation or behavior, or acute psychotic episode.
- 13. Physical Restraint** - The use of body contact by staff with a child/youth to restrict freedom of movement or normal access to his or her body.
- 14. Property** - Any state property that is lost, stolen, missing or damaged with or without intent. Any personal property that is damaged, missing or stolen while the owner is in the performance of their duties for the state or on state property.
- 15. Runaway/Escape** - A child/youth who is away from home, residence or any other residential placement of the child/youth's parent, guardian or other legal custodian (DCS). Escape is defined as a youth who leaves the grounds of a hardware secure

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setting without permission or who leaves the care and custody of those transporting them off campus without permission.

- 16. Search** - A strip search is a visual inspection of the youth's body. A body cavity search is an in-depth search of a youth's body only by medical, or health care, personnel when probable cause exists that contraband is concealed within a body cavity that would threaten the safety and security of the hardware secure setting or its personnel.
- 17. Seclusion** - The confinement of a child/youth alone in a room or an area where the child/youth is physically prevented from leaving. This definition is not limited to instances in which a child/youth is confined by a locked or closed door.
- 18. Security Breach** - A violation of established security procedures that occurs either on campus or during the transport of a child/youth that places staff or youth at risk. May also include the loss of security equipment such as keys, restraints, radios or tools.

NOTE: *This IR type is for hardware secure settings only.*

- 19. Sexual Abuse** - This IR type was previously used to capture Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) allegations of Sexual Abuse. This IR type is now inactive and should no longer be utilized.
- 20. Sexual Harassment** - This IR type was previously used to capture Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) allegations of Sexual Harassment. This IR type is now inactive and should no longer be utilized.
- 21. Use of Chemical Defense Spray** - The discharge, either purposeful or accidental, of chemical defense spray assigned to a staff member.

NOTE: *This IR type is for hardware secure settings only.*

NOTE: **Entering an Incident Report does not replace making referrals to the Child Abuse Hotline. If there are allegations of abuse and/or neglect, a referral to the Child Abuse Hotline is still required.**

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